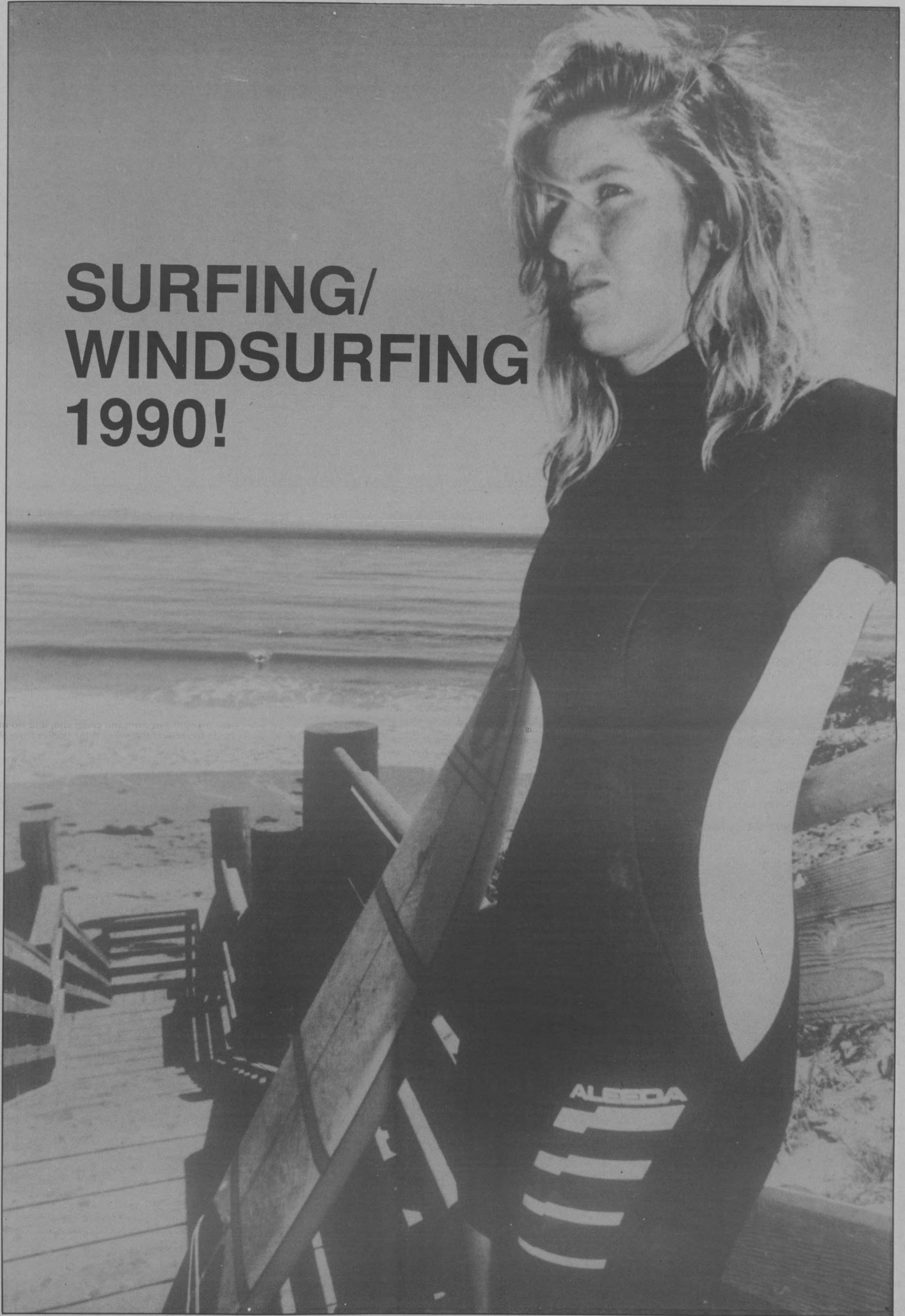


SURFING/ WINDSURFING 1990!



Hobbs off the Isla Vista coast.

Surfing With Michelle Hobbs

By Tony Pierce p.2A

Woman Surfer

Michelle Hobbs:
Surfing Around
With Uniqueness

By Tony Pierce

When the sun sets over the Pacific Ocean and the traffic creeps along the Pacific Coast Highway, sometimes the postcardish silhouettes of surfers and their boards cross the sand, forming the near-perfect image.

If one had looked a little closer a few years ago they would have seen an even prettier picture as the surfers were actually two junior high school girls coming home after a long day learning how to surf. One of those girls was UCSB senior Michelle Hobbs.

According to the athletic literature major in the College of Creative Studies, the idea of surfing developed when some of her male classmates let it be known to the 15-year-old Hobbs that she would be a one-of-a-kind at her new high school if she'd pick up the sport.

"These two guy friends of mine said, 'you should surf because you'd be the first girl surfer at Pali(sades) High,'" Hobbs explained.

"Me and my girlfriend just went out every single night that summer at 6 (p.m.), when no one else was out," she said, adding that she usually surfed Santa Monica's jetty that summer of 1982—a historical year, Hobbs points out, for Southland surfers.

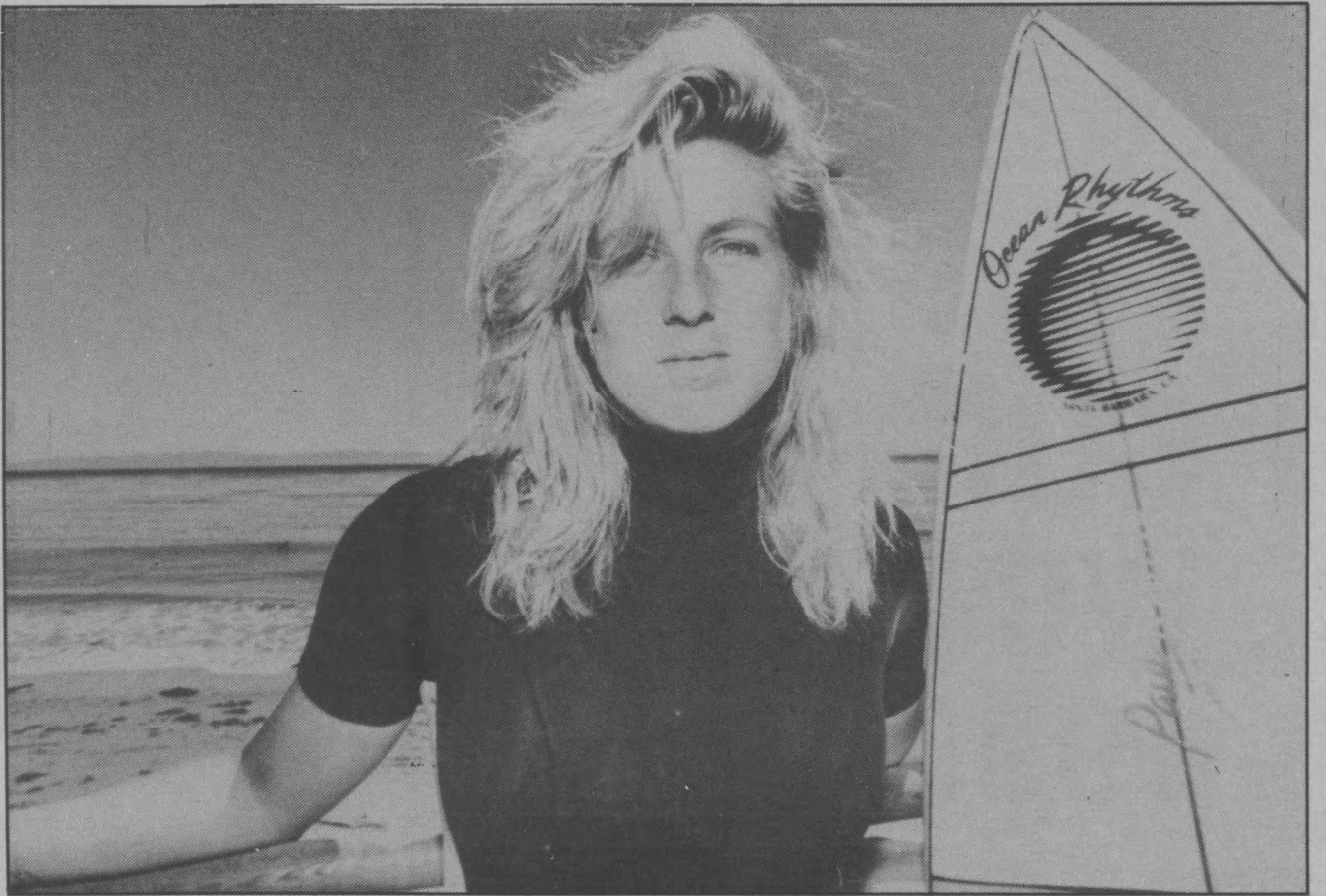
"That was the year the Santa Monica Pier got tossed," she laughed, explaining the size of the waves. "It was the biggest winter in 20 years, so every place (my friends) took me (to surf) was bigger than I've (still) ever seen. It was double overhead very frequently."

"Surfing was just something to do," Hobbs said. "We didn't have jobs, so we surfed every day and stayed at the beach and as winter came the swells were really huge."

As Hobbs got older, her love for the sport grew to the point that she made it one of her top priorities, at times ranking it higher than the more traditional goals.

"My junior and senior years I'd skip school with my friend Jill Schmidt. We had to forge notes to get out of school," Hobbs admitted, saying that on the mornings that she would attend school, she and Schmidt would surf at the crack of dawn and show up for class with wet hair.

"It was just a way of life," Hobbs recalled. "It was compelling, but you didn't think it was at the time—we weren't



thinking about it. In ninth grade I had high school figured out and I had to move on. I'd say for the next five years straight I didn't change my point of view. The cliques (at school) were lame, high school was boring, the pre-sorority girls were lame; we'd rather be with cool people, cool guys and be at the beach. It was a whole different way of looking at everything."

Hobbs said that through the sport she gained a higher understanding of the world around her and received a richer feeling concerning her place in the big picture.

"You learn about perspective," she said, "about yourself on the planet, about the energy and power of the ocean. You realize how little you are when you're sitting on your board looking around."

That first gnarly winter was an unexpected initiation which paid off quick for Hobbs, she said, explaining that during her junior year of high school she was starting to see that she was getting better than the guys who had taught her. So at the end of her senior year, Hobbs began entering surf contests and competing directly, at times, with the men.

Finding it hard to recollect her very first competition, Hobbs is pretty certain that it was The Homeboyz Surf contest in Santa Monica "on the south side of the pier," an event which matched up the 18-year-old Hobbs with "boys" between the ages of 13-14. "I think I got a second," she said.

Hobbs really started surfing seriously when she moved to UCSB and participated on the highly successful co-ed Gaucho Surf Team, she said. The experience wasn't very stressful because as a woman, there wasn't much competition for her.

"If I won it wasn't that great because there were usually only four or five girls to compete against," Hobbs explained. "It was kind of a joke because I'd always get first, second, or third." It was important to the team for her to win though, because her points helped the squad as a whole, she said.

Hobbs makes it clear that competition hasn't been all that important compared to her participation and love of the sport. She feels that contests sometimes take away from the primary point of surfing—the basic fun of it.

"For me, competitions sort of defeat the point of surfing," Hobbs said. "The point is to really enjoy (the surf) without the crowd, with friends dawn patrolling or evening glass off."

Hobbs says that she now complements her surfing with rowing, a sport that she feels brings about rewards that she never discovered in surfing.

"I switched over to rowing because of its discipline," Hobbs said. "I didn't learn anything about discipline in

See SURFER, p.4A

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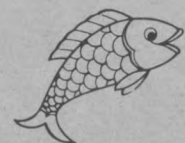
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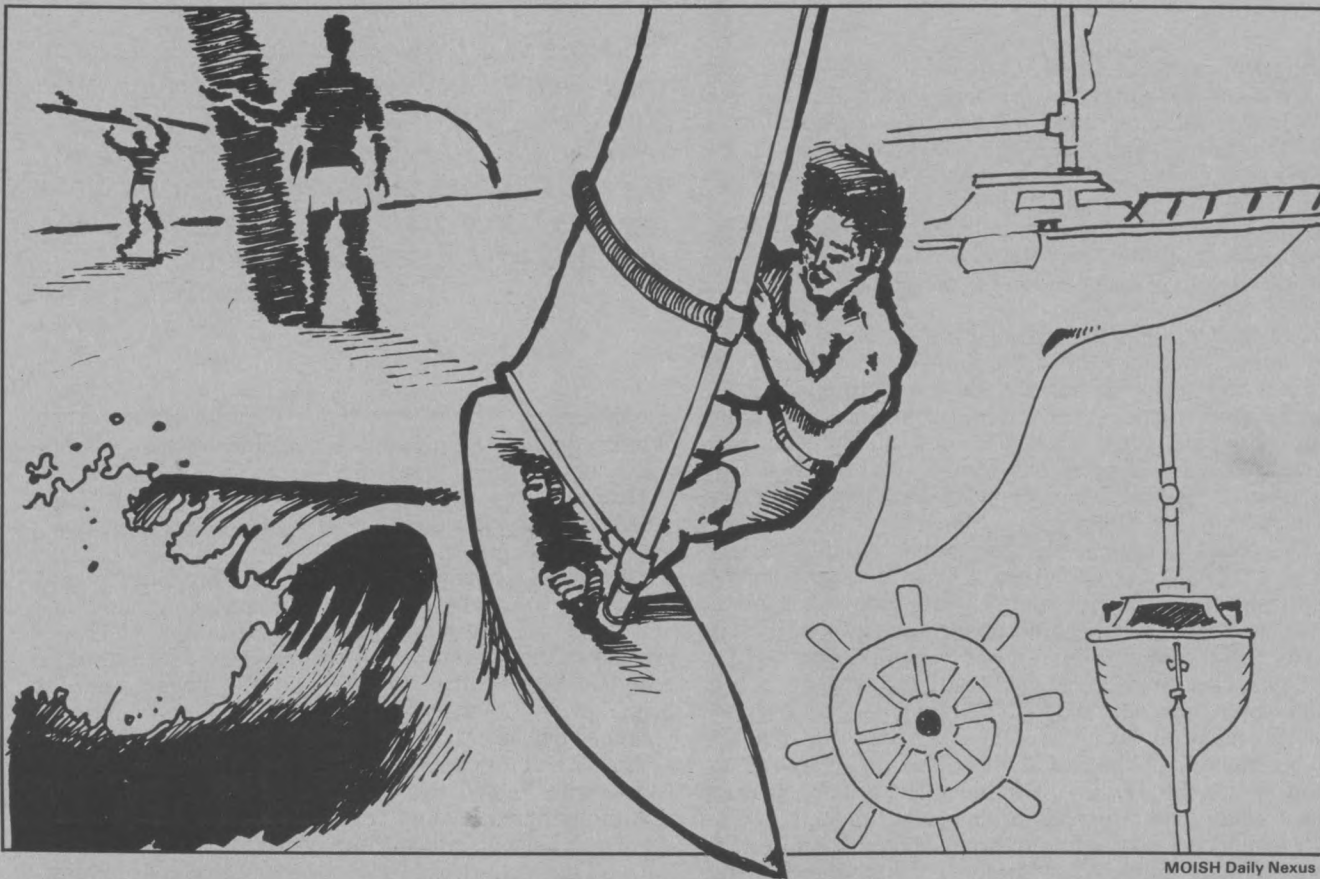
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SURFING/WINDSURFING 1990!



MOISH Daily Nexus

Windsurfing — Surfin' n' Sailin'

By Jon Meyers Meyers

The morning was sunny, cut by a cool breeze which stirred the sand and added frosty caps to an otherwise glassy surface. My eyes slowly scanned the water, looking for big swells, searching for the hills and valleys that would provide the most fun.

The wind started to pick up as if in anticipation of my board's presence. The usual icy sting of my suit, still wet from the previous day, was as welcome as any lover's touch as I slipped it over my body. This suit was an old friend — it had been with me through the coldest, windiest days, protecting me then as I knew it would now.

I stepped into the ocean and set my board atop the gently shifting surface, scooping a handful of water and spreading

it down the length of my fiberglass beauty. The straps soaked up the salty water hungrily, softening and settling as the liquid rejuvenated them. A strong gust blew by, one of many. I felt that ol' speed jones in my bones, knowing full well that I'd soon be rewarded.

My feet slid into the straps and I grabbed the bar, leaning slightly backward to balance the pull that would at any moment yank me into a state of complete freedom. Muscles tensed in my arms, bracing for the impact. My feet twitched nervously. After what seemed like hours, the call came and I answered by leaning into it with every ounce I had.

At first, this may have seemed like any surfer's typical day on dawn patrol, but you've probably noticed a small yet important difference. My board comes equipped with a twelve

See WINDSURF, p.4A

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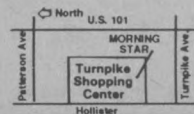


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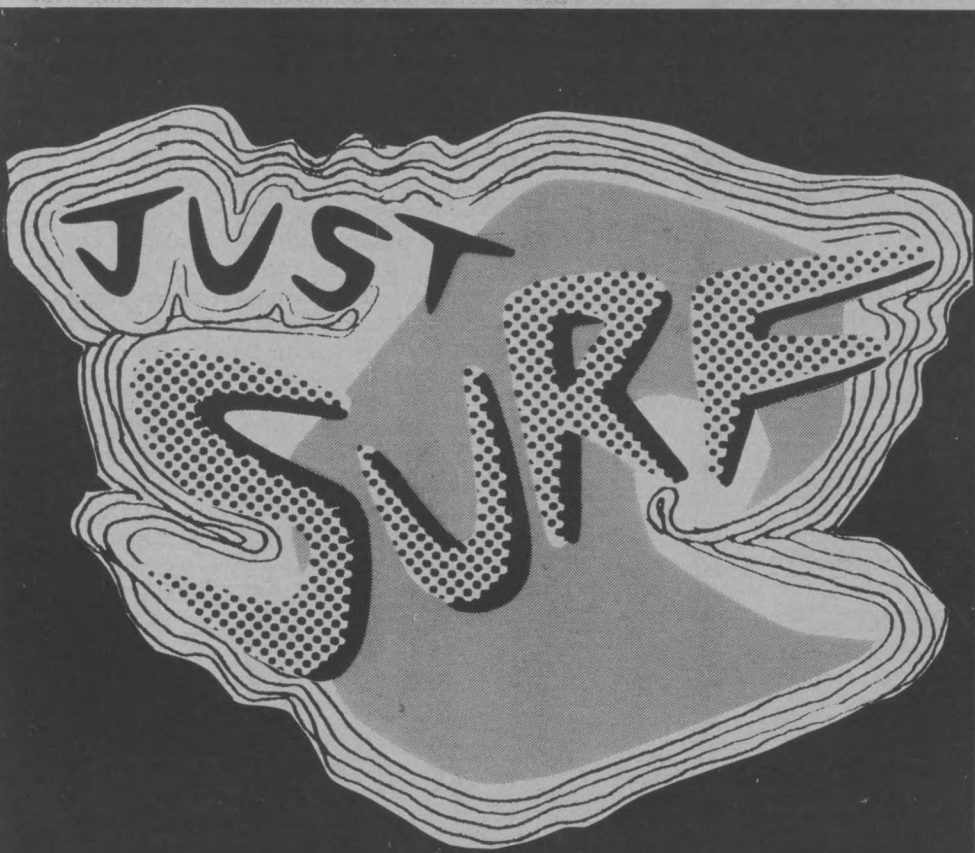
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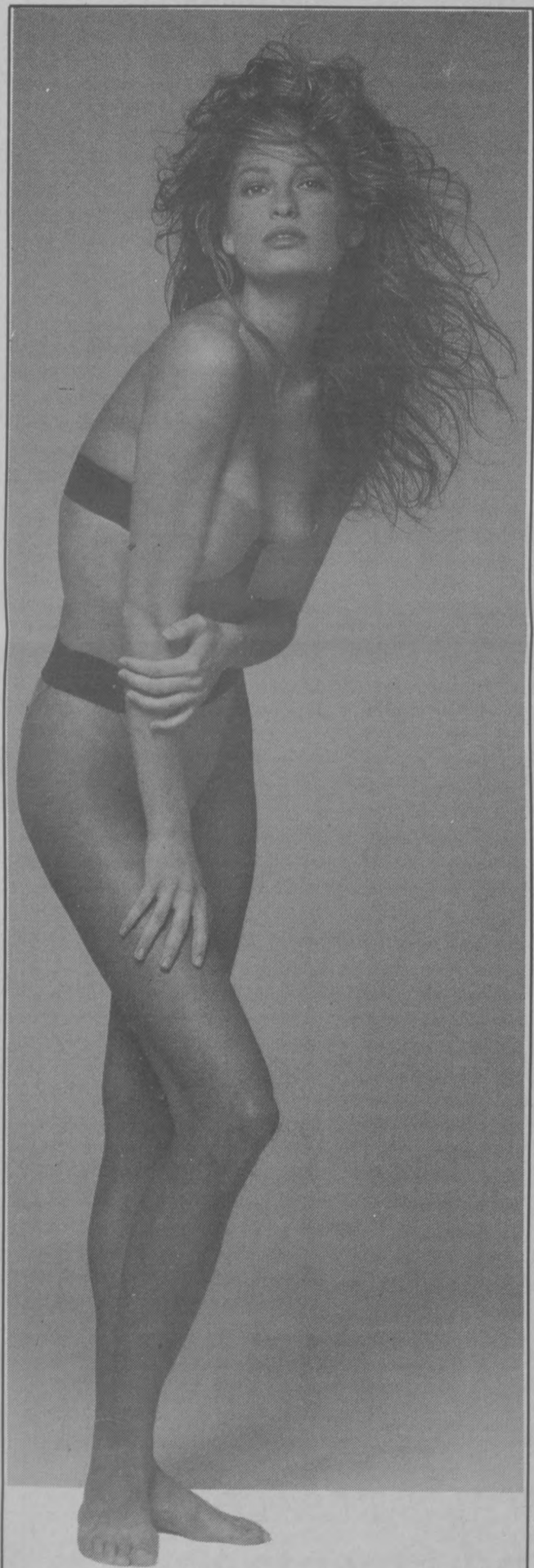


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SURFER

Continued from p.2A

surfing. Rowing teaches you how to achieve goals ... surfing is more about using the creative side of your brain. Surfing is passionate, irrational, emotional. Rowing completed something that was missing in surf: the 6 days a week, do-or-die pain. You don't have the pain in surfing — when you go out on big waves it's not painful."

Being a woman in a male dominated sport has brought about more good memories than bad, Hobbs said, adding that unfortunately men still look at women on a different, lower level.

"They'll say things like, 'she's good for a girl,'" Hobbs said, adding that they don't use the word "woman." "Of course it bothers me. It seems to me that (surfing) is such a graceful sport and its more feminine, to me, than masculine — but when it's judged it's judged masculinely," she said.

Hobbs is quick to point out, though, that nearly everyone, from her parents to her perspective employees, are very supportive of her hobby.

"Everyone thinks its really neat, even in job interviews," she said. "That's the first thing they notice: surf team."

During her near decade spent surfing, Hobbs has found San Diego's Trestles as her favorite surf spot, although she is also fond of the famous Rincon waves south down the 101.

"Trestles is a huge, long beach, with fast, speedy, beach break waves," she described. "It's so long it seems endless. There is a mile-long path and at the end is a Carl's Jr. that me and my friends call 'the end of the rainbow.'" According to Hobbs, when she reaches the rainbow she usually orders a "huge" salad, and proceeds to "mack at the salad bar".

"(Trestles) has six-foot point break waves like a Rincon wave," Hobbs notes. "You know, I think Rincon's my favorite."

Concerning bikini contests which normally coincide with big surf competitions, Hobbs frowns upon them, saying that they don't shed the right light on women.

"I personally hate it," she said. "There are so many reasons. I don't like the image that it promotes, they're basically dumb blondes and browns and they just aspire to be beautiful and that's just it. I'd rather see them out in the surf."

WINDSURF

Continued from p.3A

foot sail that adds a whole new dimension to surfing. That's right, I'm talkin' windsurfing. Those of you that have already experienced this incredible sport know what comes after that first strong wind has picked you up and started your journey, but many people have yet not had that chance.

At its best, windsurfing is a perfect blend of the best aspects of its two parent sports, surfing and sailing. It requires some of the balance and ability to "feel" the waves of surfing, without relying solely on the wave or power of the rider for propulsion. When a wave starts to die while surfing, you must expend a great deal of energy "milking" it.

With windsurfing, the wind works with your wave, and it can be manipulated so that it never dies. By turning into the wind, switching stances, and tilting the actual sail as well as using the wave strength, a rider can extend the length or speed of his ride. Just as a surfer "milks" a wave with his legs, a windsurfer can milk a dying wind by pumping the sail with his arms. Surfing on a windsurfboard is slightly trickier than surfing, but allows the extra freedom of the sail as a wing.

You've probably seen windsurfers on television turning back into waves and launching up to fifteen feet in the air. This is possible by using the sail as a combination wing-parachute to capture the wind and boosting off of it. A windsurfer will then use the surface area of the sail to slow his descent and gracefully settle back in the water. So far, no surfers have been able to match the air times achieved by experienced windsurfers.

Windsurfing is not just for surf, however. No doubt

SURFING/WINDSURFING 1990!

"Surfing is always with me and is always in my heart. I only go out in the best conditions now and it'll probably be like that from now until I die. But how many times I go out in between will depend on how big the waves are, how little the crowds are, and if I can get off work."

Michelle Hobbs surfer

What ultimately bothers me is that they're selling themselves out to guys."

Hobbs is equally vehement about some local graffiti which pops up, discouraging aspiring surfers from trying their hand at the sport.

"It's just a way to make surfers look like big fishes in small ponds," Hobbs said of the "if you don't surf, don't start" sayings. "It's just a way of making your group elite. There's enough waves for new people who have healthy, respectful attitudes about other people and the ocean and the beaches."

Hobbs has been riding an Ocean Rhythms thruster ever since she met and befriended designer/entrepreneur Paul Kuhn, who helped sponsor the UCSB Surf Team.

Although graduation is calling Hobbs, and even though she hasn't been able to surf the swells as often as she once did, and hasn't been able to cut as many classes as in previous years, she thinks that she'll never stop being one of the silhouettes against the crashing waves.

"Surfing is always with me and is always in my heart," Hobbs said. "I only go out in the best conditions now and it'll probably be like that from now until I die. But how many times I go out in between will depend on how big the waves are, how little the crowds are, and if I can get off work."

At its best, windsurfing is a perfect blend of the best aspects of its two parent sports, surfing and sailing. It requires some of the balance and ability to "feel" the waves of surfing, without relying solely on the wave or power of the rider for propulsion.

you've also seen a myriad of colorful sails decorating your local lake or lagoon on any windy day. Stillwater riding takes the skill of sailing much more into consideration, because you rely entirely on the wind. Only a basic knowledge of sailing is required — you learn to sail more by feel than anything else, and switch stances instead of switching sail lashings. Lake or lagoon riding takes much less wind than actual sailing, mainly because of the weights involved, but still retains the swift, smooth gliding feeling that makes sailing so relaxing.

As difficult as it may look, windsurfing is picked up rather easily. It does require a good deal of arm strength and a decent sense of balance, but with practice quickly becomes as easy as it is fun. I encourage anyone who is interested in starting up windsurfing to contact your local surf shop or divers' supply, and find out the availability of instruction and equipment. If you like to sail, surf, or just tool around, the possibilities could be endless.

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