

Swells, Challenges and the Mirage Drive Plug

Written by Paul Belmudes
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Kayak Fishing Hilo

Had an opportunity to join up with fellow Aquahunter and YakHawaii kayak anglers today in Hilo. A special thanks to our hosts, Pueo and DriftingSon for guiding us out and sharing their experience on the east side of the Big Island. Unfortunately, I ran into trouble right from the start of my launch. Again I snapped a rod in one of my turbo fins on my Mirage drive pedal system and I had to take the necessary steps to re-rig my kayak to accommodate paddling by removing my trampoline and moving in the stabilizers. One of the biggest mistakes I made today was not to have the mirage drive plug with me... let me share why.



The ocean condition today was like a roller coaster as we encountered 8 to 10 foot swells with some strong wind gusts. I did not even have the opportunity to drop a line in the water so I could fish today. With the power of the swells, the opening for the mirage drive was taking on water and filling the cavity covering the 8 inch hatch in front of my seat with ocean water trickling through the hatch seal filling the hull with about one inch of water. It was pounding out there

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and I feared that if I took the time to bilge pump out the water, more water would be engulfed into the hull. So I decided that it would be best if I streamlined back to the launch site.

Digging in and paddling hard, I had fear building up as when I was see sawing up and down. When my bow faced down on the swell, the water inside the hull rushed to the front of the kayak and I felt like a torpedo heading into the ocean. Then as nose of my kayak was pointing up, you could fill the water sloshing back to tail of the kayak. It definitely was a scary feeling. But with patience and keeping my cool, I was able to make it back to shore safely with the other kayakers.

Here is what I learned today. It is very important to carry spare parts for the mirage drive system. Secondly, I must bring my mirage drive plug with me at all times instead of keeping it in my garage. It is a vital piece of equipment and will prevent the cavity in front of the seat from taking on water. I thought I would share this to all Hobie kayak owners who have a mirage drive system so that it would prevent this experience from happening to you. The plug has a purpose and you never know when you will need it. {mos_fb_discuss:5}