

06 Keats Island, BC _ Keats Camps

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Keats Island is located just off the coast of Gibson's which is accessed by a sea taxi or barge. Keats has a long history of highly successful summer kids/youth camps and has offered limited mountain biking camps but wanted to step up their program to formalize their riding area and offer more diverse riding experience.

Hoots was contacted by program director Andrew Miller to come up with a plan which covered design, build and a Risk management policy. As Keats Camps is a private land owner, special care was taken to manage risk at the facility.



Initial conversations led to a late March 2006 site visit which helped understand what the camp had been building/using for features as well as a much clearer understanding of materials available. Discussion involving timelines, scheduling and staff held center stage and it was decided that a week in May would offer the best timing for build.



As with every park there are challenges and soon we found that the schedule was in jeopardy so we moved

the build date to the last week of June and used the extra time to finalize overall design, stock pile materials, pre build what could be done and coordinate last minute details.



A barge was sent to pick up Hoots, bike, gear and tools and after accommodations and camp operations tour was completed a site inspection revealed all the prep work that had taken place through the spring season.



Some of the many challenges faced on Keats was lack of good quality dirt, only one backhoe that was in demand from other departments and the mill broke down, however Keats Camp rebounded with highly motivated staff who were willing to go the extra mile!



Two separate crews were created to build the park, one to handle the technical features and the second (Dirt Monkeys) to work with dirt shaping for the jump lines. Very progressive table sets were installed over a couple of days with the balance of the week going to safety routes and fine tuning.



Over the eight days of the build a dedicated crew built the features section with on and off again help from the dirt side or extra staff when available. Due to the materials at hand the features section turned out very

rough and rugged, reminiscent of what mountain biking really is, a nice change from dimensional lumber for sure.



Progressive lines and heights through the technical area combined with a progressive drop zone were built as per design specification with the camp staff who would be teaching riding to the youth and kids during the summer. Taking input from everyone involved and finding ways to have the park touch each of them, was a commitment and it was easy to see how everyone who built took great pride and ownership over their sections and how it fit into the overall park.



Keats Camp provided many new experiences and new process to building. The overall build was long and tiring however the camp leaders and staff were refreshing and motivated making it easy to maintain focus. This skills park is truly one of the most progressive, well rounded, organic parks in existence.





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