

COSMIC SWELL

ESTEC Surf Club's monthly digest



Looking back on 2025, it's a great moment to pause and appreciate just how far our surf club has come.

This was without a doubt our most active year since the club was founded in 2023. What started as a small group of keen surfers wanting to share the stoke has grown into a proper community. After a quieter 2024 due to some unavoidable admin hurdles, we came back strong 2025, finishing with 46 members and, more importantly, a club that truly feels alive.

Of course, numbers only tell part of the story. What really matters is how many of us are out there—waxing boards, checking the horizon, and sharing waves. And this is where 2025 really shined. Attendance at our monthly meetups was fantastic, and the spontaneous surf sessions became a regular highlight. One standout moment was a July evening in Noordwijk, where nearly 20 of us shared glassy sunset waves together. Great conditions, great people—hard to beat.

*Anders
Svedevall,*
President of the
ESTEC Surf
Club

Join us!



Our growing membership also allowed us to seriously upgrade the club equipment. We now have nine boards in total, including three higher-performance boards that are perfect for those progressing from beginner to intermediate. This gives everyone the chance to surf a wider range of conditions, from cruisy longboard waves to faster sessions where sharper turns come into play. We've also expanded our wetsuit collection to seven—quite the improvement from starting the season with none. That said, having your own well-fitting wetsuit is still highly recommended (ask any of the club officials for advice). To round things off, we added two surfskates to the mix. I've personally tried the Katwijk skatepark with my own board—great fun once you get the hang of it, and excellent training for shortboard surfing.

There were many memorable moments this year, but two deserve a special mention: Pepijn's surf lecture early in 2025, which gave us plenty to think about next time we paddle out, and our summer collaboration with the arts club, which added a creative twist to the season.

Finally, a reminder: whether you're new to the club or been with us from the start, this is **your club**. Just as much as it belongs to me or any of the other officials/members. If you have ideas, suggestions, or things you'd like to see done differently in 2026, your input is always welcome and genuinely appreciated. I'm incredibly stoked for 2026—carrying this momentum forward and continuing to build a club that's fun, welcoming, and inspiring for all of us.

And to finish with a timeless bit of wisdom: *You miss 100% of the waves you don't take - Wayne Gretzky (Probably. If he'd been a surfer.)*

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Beginner Tips Corner (by Moritz Branco)

Your first waves (Pt3/8): Paddling

Every surfer quickly learns that surfing should instead be called **paddling—with a bit of surfing on top** if you're lucky and do things right. Paddling makes up about 99% of what we do in the water. Some advanced surfers claim it's closer to 95%, but I can't say that for myself yet. Either way, paddling is crucial and where we spend nearly all our energy out there.

There are three pillars of paddling, in order of importance: 1) Technique 2) Strength 3) Stamina.

In this issue, let's focus on technique. Good paddling technique is about minimizing drag and maximizing efficiency—finding the right cadence or flow instead of wasting energy. To reduce drag, recall our previous discussion on board positioning: keep the board flat with the nose slightly above water for optimal paddling. Once that's dialed in, paddle with your chest and head high. Catch the water with the elbow-to-fingers vector as perpendicular to the surface as possible—a vertical catch—to avoid wasting energy pushing water downward instead of backward. The arm should plunge as deep as possible without changing head position. Fingers stay slightly loose, the hand flat (not cupped) to prevent unnecessary tension in the wrist and elbow while maximizing surface contact. The stroke should be linear and parallel to the board, accelerating toward the end – the propulsive phase. Throughout the stroke, the elbow is slightly bent and positioned behind the hand, so the hand leads the motion. This alignment ensures better leverage and prevents shoulder strain.

Some cues:

- Count your strokes out loud ("1-2-3-4" or "1-2; 1-2") to maintain a steady rhythm and maximize efficiency.
- Visualize paddling with your elbows to avoid shallow strokes.

Wintersurfing in Portugal – Lisbon area (by Moritz Branco)

You might know Nazare, Ericeira, Peniche, or even Arrifana and Sagres, but the Lisbon area also offers a range of consistent breaks that let you surf everyday – as long as you have a car, and don't mind the occasional traffic. Winter swells light up the entire west coast of Portugal. The most reliable local options are **Costa da Caparica** (south of the Tagus river) or **Carcavelos** (north side, west of Lisbon). I stay nearby Carcavelos so that's where I usually surf. I recommend staying close to one of these two breaks. "Costa" is a chain of jetty-protected beach breaks with softer waves and easy channels to the back. Carcavelos, by contrast, is a powerful beach break capable of producing heavy barrels when the swell aligns, while still offering consistent, fun sessions on regular days. Other well-known spots within 30 minutes of Lisbon include Guincho (weather-dependent), São Pedro (a rocky point break), Torre, Santo Amaro, Praia Grande and Praia Pequena. Pro Tips: 4/3 mm wetsuit is enough, or even a good 3/2 can also work; bring boots; rent a car; padlock is a must, Line-ups can get busy and sometimes heavy, practice "serenity now" ☺; get in touch with me if you want to know more!

Know Your Surf Jargon

Behind the Break (Predicting the Swell)

- By Axel Widenfelt

Wave forecasting might feel like a modern surf luxury, but it actually comes from World War II-era science. Military planners needed to know when seas would be calm enough for amphibious landings, which pushed researchers to study how wind-generated waves form, travel, and change over long distances. They discovered that powerful storms could send organised swells across entire ocean basins, arriving days later with predictable timing. That same physics now sits behind every surf forecast, turning distant storms into reliable session plans.



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Basis Surf Paddle Trainer (Mark)

A little over a month ago, I received my Basis Surf Paddle Trainer, and here are some of my impressions so far:

- The packaging and overall quality are reasonable, though I'm not entirely convinced about the cost-to-quality ratio.
- You need a sturdy anchor point to train - window and door setups weren't practicable for me. Ideally you also get a bench (I don't)
- The first sessions are definitely confronting and development is slow (at least for me)
- It seems to engage very similar muscles to actual paddling in the sea.
- After a month of use, I can feel the impact - physically in my body, in pool swimming, and also in endurance and speed while surfing in the ocean.
- It feels effective though I combine it with pool training and home exercises so difficult to isolate benefits.
- As for whether it's worth buying, that's something each person will need to decide for themselves. Just to be clear, I haven't tried elastic bands or ski ergometers.

If you do decide to get one, I can share a 10% discount code: **MARK05289** ;-)

Surf Movie Review

Think **Surf's Up** is just another animated kids movie? **Think again.** This film goes far beyond colourful characters and lighthearted humor - it captures the raw, unfiltered emotions of surfing. At its core, it tells the story of a young dreamer chasing his passion, navigating life after the tragic loss of his father to a killer whale attack, and ultimately crossing paths with his idol, the legendary Big Z - brought to life by none other than Jeff Bridges. But **Surf's Up** isn't just about waves and wipeouts. Beneath the playful exterior

lies a profound narrative, the struggle between pupil and master, the challenge of conquering the big wave, and the acceptance of one's own path. These themes go deep, ambition, identity, which goes far beyond the surf theme. I guess that's why it's so popular among the surfing community. It's a celebration of the soulful connection between humans and the ocean.



Meet our Members!



Stefanie Kohl has been with the surfclub since its creation and is one of the most active members of the club, either in the water, or outside, while organising many activities, as well as this newsletter and running the club. Stefie is a Surf core lady!

Tell us a bit about yourself and your surf journey: I started surfing 4 years ago in Scheveningen. My surf journey has brought me to amazing places around the world. I try to surf every week and am also a big fan of wave pools (shout out to the Rif010!) to work on your technique.

What board do you ride: 8'4 Bufo

Favourite thing about surfing: Surfing is both an extremely physical and mental sport, so many aspects need to be mastered in order for you to catch that wave. No other sport is so challenging and so satisfying at the same time

Best surf advice: Don't compare yourself with others (easier said than done).

Favourite surf memory: Sunrise surf in Scheveningen on a wind still day with an empty lineup

Ideal conditions: Big, fat and slow waves

Join us!

