



Northwest Paddling Festival Splashes Down May 6 & 7

Largest paddling festival in the Northwest includes tours, demos, seminars and Northwest Paddling Challenge race

Seattle – April 8, 2016 – For expert paddlers or those looking to dip their oar in the water for the first time, the sixth annual Northwest Paddling Festival is THE place to be to get started for a summer on the water. Held at Lake Sammamish State Park in Issaquah, Friday May 6 and Saturday May 7, the festival is the largest event of its kind in the Pacific Northwest. During the course of the two-day celebration of paddle sports, attendees can demo kayaks and stand up paddleboards, take kayak tours, attend seminars, compete in the Northwest Paddling Challenge and check out the latest in gear and accessories from more than 60 paddle sports businesses.

The event is **free** to the public to attend. Canoes, kayaks and SUPs can be demo'd at the event from the beach for a nominal \$7 fee. Those who register for the Paddling Challenge will receive a wristband which is good for the whole day of demos.

Featured activities include:

- **45-minute Sea Kayak Tours:** Friday and Saturday.

Tours take place along the park's wetland area—every 30 minutes on Friday and every 15 minutes on Saturday—by guides from Alki Kayak Tours, Kayak Academy and REI Outdoor School. The guides will lead paddlers to one of the biggest heronries in the state and explore the mouth of Issaquah Creek. There's a good chance of seeing bald eagles and great blue herons.

- **Kids Zone:** Friday and Saturday.

Kids eight years and older can kayak in a single or double up with their parents, but even the youngest of paddlers can join in the fun testing out the Aqua Paddler paddle boats. Life jackets will be provided. There's also Toy Boat Building in the Kids Zone—kids will use traditional tools provided by the Center for Wooden Boats to build and decorate their own wooden boat.

- **The Perfect Paddler Warm-up:** Saturday 9:30 a.m.

Blue Moon Explorations owner and yoga instructor Kathy Grimbly will get you ready to compete in the Northwest Paddling Challenge. Not competing? You can still join in and enjoy exercises that will prevent soreness and injury, improve breathing, unite body and mind, and feel great. Bring your

paddle and ground cover. Guaranteed to make you a winner (at least in your own mind). And ready for a day of paddling.

- **Northwest Paddling Challenge:** Saturday 10:30 a.m.

This spectator-friendly race features a six-mile course of kayakers, stand-up paddleboarders and outriggers in a three-lap race along the shores. There will also be a two-mile course for those interested in a shorter run or just new to racing. The cost to register is \$35 and includes a competitor race T-shirt and a wrist band for on-water demos during the remainder of the event. Pre-registration can be done at www.northwestpaddlingfestival.com or day-of at the event.

- **Join the Club:** Saturday 1:30 p.m.

Learn why belonging to a paddling club is important, safer, and how it can improve your personal participation in the sport. Hear the different strengths and advantages of each club and be inspired by tales of camaraderie and paddling adventures. Rob Sendak, executive director of Washington Water Trails Association will facilitate this panel discussion of northwest paddling clubs. For newbie and experienced paddlers . . . anyone looking to join the club!

- **Kayak Polo Exhibition Match:** Saturday 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Come watch the Kirkland Kayak Water Polo Club compete in an exhibition match with bragging rights on the line! It's as simple as it sounds, the game of water polo played in kayaks, each team trying to get the ball to the opposing buoy. But the action is intense as paddlers push, shove, thrust, and wedge their way into the opposing team's territory. This exciting exhibition match is compliments of the Kirkland Kayak Polo Club, many of whose members have been playing for 20 years.

- **Survival Skills Fire Lighting Competition:** Friday and Saturday.

Seattle Adventure Sports challenges you to test your survival skills and see how quickly you can light a fire with limited resources and burn through the suspended piece of string in the shortest time possible. Fastest time in the kids' category wins a free week at Kids Camp. The winning adult gets one free Kayak/Canoe Program.

- **Saturday Seminars Include:**

- How & Why to Paddle a Kayak with a Skeg
- Yoga for Outdoor Fitness
- Core Paddling
- SUP Basics

- Misadventures of a Cross Country Kayaker
- Kayak Basics
- Dressing for Paddle Sports
- How to Pack Your Kayak for Overnight Touring
- Choosing the Right Kayak for Your Paddling Goals
- Cold Water Safety

Check the website for schedule and seminar descriptions:

www.northwestpaddlingfestival.com

When: Friday May 6 - Saturday, May 7, 2016

Hours: Friday 2:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m., Saturday, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Where: Sunset Beach at Lake Sammamish State Park, 2000 N.W. Sammamish Road, Issaquah, WA.
From I-90: Drive east to exit #15, and follow the signs to Lake Sammamish State Park.

Parking: Parking is available at Lake Sammamish State Park using a Washington State Discover Pass. A one-day pass is \$10 or an annual pass is available for \$30. Passes can be purchased at the Park entrance. Passes are also available online or at select retailers for an additional handling fee.

Tickets: The event is **free** to the public to attend. Canoes, kayaks and SUPs can be demo'd at the event from the beach for a nominal \$7 fee. Those who register for the Paddling Challenge will receive a wrist band which is good for the whole day of demos.

Editor's note: High res photos available.

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