

Racing

Last Updated Monday, 16 April 2007

Racing

I am totally amazed when I hear someone being totally amazed that canoe racing even exists, let alone that there are organized, regular occurrences and are world wide. But for our purposes, we will limit the scope of this page to canoe racing in Minnesota and its suburbs, Wisconsin and Iowa. We can divide canoe races into two categories, recreational and professional. We'll also list kayak races here too, both 'flatwater' and Inland Sea.

PUT REC RACING PICTURE HERE

Recreational

canoe racing is subjective. I believe when you get two canoes side by side, you have a race. You know human nature and all... But, for those who seek out others that are "dabbling" in this sport, you can find such races a Mora, Hacensack, Hoigaards Sries, and the Wisconsin River Race. These races are listed in the events calendar of this web site. [Click here](#) to see upcoming races.

Professional

Canoe Racing is a bit of a stretch. The name that is. No one really makes a living at this sport. Yet the athletes that participate in the ultimate level are equivalent to their counterparts in say, football, baseball... Canoe Racing is a common off season sport for many NHL players from Quesbec. Those that excel are putting much more practice time in than the Recreational Paddler. Yet, I have seen many a recreational Paddler show up at the starting line of a serious race, and within one block, turn around and try and catch the car that dropped them off rather than try and catch the canoes in front of them. PRO PICTURE HERE

The events page

is loaded with canoe races, kayak races and triathlons with canoe racing legs that are easily accessible to Minnesota Paddlers and are for all levels of experience. Check it out [by clicking here](#) . Most races have many divisions to put like racing teams together.

If

by chance you think this is an endeavour you want to try, I will totally support you. Yet, I will warn you - It is much more technical than you may think. It takes a good 4-5 years to mature into a serious racing machine. You will have to learn the right paddling techniques. BWCA stroke won't cut it. Wake riding, just like the drafting in bike racing is a must. You must learn upstream paddling, shallow water strokes, starts and someday, how to win. Most are happy with being a recreational racer. Most husbands/wives are happier with recreational racers over serious paddlers. Has to

do with that practice time thing again.

If this still

intrigues you, plan a few MONDAY NIGHT ROOKIE SESSINS. We meet on the Mississippi every Monday starting with Day Light Saving Time, and ending with the same in November. Just a few sessions will give you a base of information to either move forward to a few races this year, or re-examine your medication dosage. We meet at the University of Minnesota "Flats". We race down there at 5 pm and are in the water by 5:45 pm. We separate all by putting newbies with a more experienced Paddler in racing canoes. Bring water to drink, otherwise you will drag your tongue over the side of the canoe. Looking at the state of the water quality in down town Mpls, this would not be good. You should also bring money to 'feed the meters'.

Kayak Racing

Many of the races on the calendar have classes for kayak, too. While the majority of the kayaks in this region are day touring, or sea kayaks, there are getting to be more and more 'performance' boats - racing kayaks, surf skis and fast touring boats. These are distinctive designs, usually a little more tender than the average touring boat, but still something that can be mastered in 20-30 hours of practice. BUT - you don't need a racing kayak to race kayaks! Races like Hoigaards Canoe Derby, Wisconsin River Race (Muscoda) and the Snake River Canoe Race have kayak classes suitable to almost any boat. We'd suggest 14' being about the shortest practical length - anything shorter will have a built in speed limit on how fast you can make it go, but every year, there are 10 and 12 footers having a great time at Mora.

Canoe Triathlons

Can you ride a bike? Run? Paddle a canoe or kayak? Or do one of them and know somebody who can do the other? You could do a triathlon! Substitute paddle for swim, and you are set. These events are hugely popular out west, with several of the big events drawing a thousand TEAMS for the relay divisions. Most of the ones around this area are a little smaller, with fields of 100-200 people. Typical distances are a 5-6 mile paddle, 8-15mile bike, and 5K run. The longest one in the region, Chippewa Triathlon features a 14mile paddle with 7 portages, 28mile mountain bike, and 7 mile run. One of our favorite events!

Racing Calendars

- Canoe
- Kayak
- Tri-athalons

Racing Canoes and Kayaks For Sale

In addition to the broad array of 'regular' canoes and kayaks we have available for sale and rental, Wenonah also makes several of the

very best racing canoes (and kayaks) available anywhere. The Jensen V1Pro is *still* the standard after nearly 20 years, and the J203 is the benchmark design for C1 racing boats. On the kayak side, the Current Designs Stratus is one of the dominating designs in the '18 foot' performance touring kayak classes everywhere in the country.

To ease your entry into racing, we have a number of boats available for rent on a 'first-come, first-served' basis. These typically rent for a little more than our normal livery boats, but they cost a little more, too. We'll help you match your ability to the available boats. Renting the fastest boat won't help you succeed in a tri if you spend half the race swimming!