



Northwest Paddling Festival Adds SUP Jousting, Kayak Polo and Swap Meet to Line Up of Activities - Press Release

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

Seattle – April 2015 – For expert paddlers or those looking to try sea kayaking or stand-up paddling for the first time, the fifth 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, **May 8 and 9**, the festival the largest event of its kind in the Pacific Northwest. During the course of the two-day celebration of paddle sports, attendees can demo boats, take kayak tours, attend seminars and check out the latest in gear and accessories from the more than 60 paddle sports businesses. They can also try their hand at SUP jousting, watch a kayak polo exhibition match or sell their old gear at the swap meet before buying new gear— all new features for 2015.

Featured Activities include:

New! Kayak Polo exhibition match, 2pm on Saturday

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.



Other Featured Activities include:

NEW! SUP jousting, 3 - 4 pm on Saturday

All festival attendees are welcome to try their hand at this zany, fun twist on SUP-ing. The rules are quite simple: the first person to knock their opponent off the board wins. Equipment provided, including dry suits, PFDs, helmets and padded paddles.

45-minute sea kayak tours along the Park's wetland area, every 30 minutes, 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.

First Time SUPin'. For those who haven't tried SUP-ing yet, this is the perfect way to get started. First timers can jump on the dryland simulator located at the [Mountain to Sound Outfitters](#) booth to get a feel for the sport. After the dry run they can join [Alki Kayak Tours](#) instructors for a basic introduction on the water. Minimum age: 12.

Northwest Paddling Challenge, Saturday 10:30 am

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. Pre-registration can be done at www.northwestpaddlingfestival.com or day of the event.

NEW for 2015, the race is part of the [Northwest Paddling Series](#). The top three male and female finishers will qualify to race in the inaugural Seafair Northwest Paddling Championship on Saturday, Aug. 1. The four-mile Seafair championship race will take place on the hydroplane race course on Lake Washington, in front of tens of thousands of on-land and on-water spectators, and will be televised by KIRO TV.

NEW! Kids Zone

Kids 8 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.

• Seminars include

- Kayak Basics
- SUP Basics
- Kayak Fishing Basics
- Packing for Kayak Camping
- Packing for Kayak Touring
- GoPro Basics for Paddling
- Dressing for Paddle Sports
- Learn to SUP with your Pup



Check the website for schedule and seminar descriptions: www.northwestpaddlingfestival.com

When: Friday May 8 - Saturday, May 9, 2015

Hours: Friday 2pm – 7pm, Saturday, 9am – 5pm

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 wristband which is good for the whole day of demos.

