Eugene River Festival

Racers Guide (see Festival general Information at bottom, including)

Welcome to the inaugural Eugene River Festival, and Up-Canal Downriver Race! Our focus for this event is to bring together our river community, and highlight the unique opportunities we have along the Willamette River here in Eugene. Specifically, we have the ability to paddle upriver in the Canoe Canal, and down river in the river. This unique route combined with the focus of the City to expand river recreation opportunities helped drive the direction of this festival. Also, plans on restoring the canal for fish passage, and the interest to develop a whitewater park in town are also fueling the potential recreation opportunities for our city.

Last, but not least, the event takes place in Alton Baker Park, and passes under the Whilamut Crossing (i5 bridge restoration project). This bridge project brings forward the presence of the Kalapuya people through art work, and talking stones throughout the Whilamut Natural area. We have partnered with Esther Stutzman (Kalapuya Elder) and Susan Applegate (artist) to incorporate their designs into this festival. Esther and Susan will also be at the Opening Ceremony of the Festival.

Schedule of Events:
11-12:15 Boat Staging; unload and place your boat in the starting zone
12:00 Festival Starts
12:15 Opening – Race Committee, Esther Stutzman (Kalapuya Elder), and Susan Applegate (artist involved in Whilamut Crossing Bridge in Whilamut Natural area)
12:30 Kids races in pond
1:00:  Racer/Volunteer Safety meeting
1:15 Race Start
1:15 Paddle the Kalapuya Canoe!
& Self-Guided Passport to Adventure Geocache Tour in the Canoe Canal
2:00, 3:00 and 4:00 On the Hour:  Raffle; do not have to be present to win
4:00 Awards
5:00 End of Festival, booth take down and wrap up

Registration:  All Racers must register and sign the liability waiver; register with Course Code # 127131: https://recenroll.eugene-or.gov/Start/Start.asp (anyone who registers ahead of time will get the Racer’s packet)

Fee:  Festival is free, but racers must pay $30, or $40 for teams (of 2 persons, either in a tandem craft, or 1 person paddling upriver, then another paddles downriver).
Youth under 18 race for free, but still must register (and must have an accompanying adult at the Festival). Fee includes a free Festival Shirt, insurance, and support for free youth racers.

Boat staging:  begins at 11:30 – please have your race boat in place by 12:15 for opening ceremony.

Distance:  Approximately 5 miles roundtrip

Estimated time:  1:15 hours - 2 ½ hours, depending on how you handle portages, fitness, and boat design. Halfway checkpoint (at Aspen Street boat ramp) must be reached by 2 hours, or racers will be turned back down the canal. After 2 ½ hours the race will end, and race safety volunteers will be relieved. The sweep boat will take note of any racers that have not finished at that point, and relay to officials their numbers.

Recommended types of craft:  Any seaworthy (river capable) craft is allowed to enter.
**Racer Requirements:**

All racers **MUST:**

1. Follow all laws
2. Sign the Waiver of Liability form
3. Wear an approved PFD (Personal Flotation Device)
4. Have an appropriate signaling device on board each boat (such as a whistle)
5. Have proper training and experience to travel the route (class 2 whitewater)
6. Have craft that is suitable for class 2 rocky whitewater (including flotation and sea worthy) such as whitewater kayak or whitewater canoe or SUP or durable sea/touring kayak.
7. Show respect for the natural environment at all times
8. Finish with everything that the racer starts with (no trash left behind!)
9. Complete the course within the allotted time, approximately 2.5 hours (2 hours at top of canal)
10. Must pass through any designated “Gates”, markers or directions from Race Officials along the course; failure to do so automatically disqualifies the racer (this is a safety issue as well)
11. Provide assistance to any boater in need – record your time spent assisting and it will be subtracted from your finish time
12. Have an Aquatic Invasive Species permit if craft is over 10’
13. Racer numbers will be counted at the finish line; no split times available (partial times at top of canal, for example)
14. Follow all instructions and directions from race officials
15. Have a good attitude – this race is about building community and enjoying our natural areas!
16. Race Official will make all final decisions

**Recommendations:**

1. WE ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR DAMAGE TO YOUR CRAFT! Fiberglass/composite boats not recommended; although these boats are generally faster, there are many rocks to avoid on this route.
2. Paddle the course before – there will be a ‘preview’ run during the week before the race.
3. Contact organizers if you want more in-depth course descriptions, or boat suggestions: Salmon Norgaard-Stroich, 541.603.8362; ssstroich@uoregon.edu
4. Consider doing this as a “Team Event” – one person in one type of craft for the upriver, another person with another craft for the down-river portion.
**Boat drop off**: Please have your boats dropped off and in place by 12 noon, next to the Canoe Canal canoe rental pond. There will be temporary parking at the north edge of the parking lot. (Handicap access will be available for anyone that needs it)

**Race Route**: approximately 2.5 miles up the canoe canal, and approximately 2.5 miles downstream. Then a short jog to finish line at Basecamp (starting location) to complete the round trip. There are 4 portages throughout the course, each of varying difficulty (see pics below). How racers deal with portage will probably determine success.
**Race Route Continued**

**Rapids**

Several rapids and obstacles exist along the downriver section, including rocks, overhanging branches (sweepers) and strainers. A few rapids will be encountered, including:

- Horseshoe bend (pictured below) just upstream of i5 bridge — RACERS ARE REQUIRED to go right of the rock check dam, about 300 yards below the start of the downriver component
- I5/Knickerbocker rapid — rocky rapid requiring maneuvering to miss the rocks!
- Pickin’ and Grinnin’ — rocky riffle between Knickerbocker footbridge and Autzen footbridge
- Autzen Footbridge — RACERS ARE REQUIRED TO GO LEFT — wave train, with rocky shelves

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**HORSESHOE BEND & KNICKERBOCKER RAPID (under i5 bridge)**

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**PICKIN’ & GRINNIN’ and AUTZEN FOOTBRIDGE**
**Boat finish and sprint to finish line** – Boats will be handled by volunteers at the shore. Boats will be stored temporarily in the corral, for racers to pick up after the race, and load on their car. There will be a short sprint (or walk for some...) from the water to the finish line.

**Portages**

There are 4 portages required to complete the entire course. There will be an assistant at each portage, helping those that ask. Anyone attempting to win a race class, however, is not permitted to use assistance during portages. Some portages will also have ground coverings protecting the vegetation/soil, but also allowing for dragging of boats. If in doubt, you can easily ride your bike and inspect the course ahead of time (PLEASE DO NOT RIDE YOUR BIKE ON ANY OF THE CHIP PATHS – WE WILL lose our permit!).

Portage #1 put in
Portage #2

Portage #2 Take out

Portage #2 Put-in

Portage #3

Portage #3 Take out

Portage #3 put in
Safety Plan
Several volunteers with the American Canoe Association and local paddling clubs will be assisting in safety, including on-water helpers in boats, as well as folks on the foot bridges watching. Portage volunteers will be available to help in the canal, and there will be crossing guards at the shared use paths. The Eugene/Springfield Fire Department Water Rescue team will be on the water during the race as well.

After the race, there will be no volunteers assisting in the river, however, assistance will still be helping folks along the canal.