

North American Junior Olympics Festival 2009

It looks like we now have a North American Junior Olympics Festival scheduled for 2009... in Ontario, Canada. Back in the days of the 2005 Junior Olympics Chris and I determined that the cooperation of the Canadians was crucial and that we would like the location to spread from the West to the East. So the festival was held in British Columbia and Alberta (Kananaskis) and then Colorado and then Wausau and now back to Canada in Ontario for 2009. I had a nice phone conversation this afternoon with Ben Kvanli and he is excited about the prospects of paddling at the Minden course and other venues up near Ottawa.

Here are the details:

July 4-5 (Sat.-Sun.) The JO Festival will commence at the Gull Fest in Minden, the paddling park in the woods that has terrific paddling opportunities for a wide range of skills. There will be a slalom there, as well as a boater cross and freestyle.

July 6-7 (Mon.-Tues.) Will be open for training, probably at the Madawaska MKC Camp. Slalom, freestyle, and DR

July 8 (Wed.) Will have some downriver/wildwater races along with a slalom

July 9 (Thur.) Is open for training at MKC and also the possibility of a nice river run on the Ottawa River

July 10 (Fri.) Will be the freestyle events in Ottawa.

July 11-12 (Sat.-Sun.) Will be at Ottawa with the final slalom on that weekend.

Thus there is a 9-day period of lots of white water paddling. They are superimposing the youth festivities onto an existing schedule but will be separating the events so the cadets and juniors will have a prime time on the water.

A few more details:

The week before the Gull Fest on the 4th and 5th will be a week's training at Minden.

This is not an official part of the JOs, but still available. Excellent camping at Minden.

The MKC camp is 1.5 hours driving away from Minden and also has excellent camping.

The 3-4 days there will have practice in slalom, freestyle, and wildwater as well as the close proximity of sections of the Ottawa River.

Ottawa City is a 1 hour drive from MKC. The freestyle there is where international freestyle events have been held.

The Sat.-Sun. July 11-12 at Ottawa will take place at the Pump House Rapids.

Following this there is a week's training camp (not part of the JOs themselves) at Valley Field near Montreal. This is an excellent slalom course with a slalom race on July 18-19 for those who wish to stay in Canada.

Michelle and Ben Kvanli will be planning some top events in San Marcos, Texas for 2010. One of their interests is to have the JOs to be staged there in early August. This may be a better time as August is more of a family vacation time and the months of June and July are pretty much the times for school athletic camps of a different sort (football, basketball, soccer, etc.). They may be planning a similar August event in 2009 as a trial run. I didn't see any listing at this point on the International Canoe Federation web site about a junior pre-world slalom but in 2010 the Junior Worlds will be held on July 10-11 at Foix Pyrenees, France, if I read it right.

Dave Kurtz

Chair. USAWS JO Committee.