



2011 FIBArk Whitewater Festival and U.S. Wildwater National Championships

The 63rd Annual FIBArk Whitewater Festival is the venue for the 2011 U.S. Wildwater National Championships. The result of these races determines the 2011 Wildwater National Champions. USA Canoe/Kayak, a division of the United States Olympic committee, and the governing body for canoe and kayak racing in the USA sanctions the National Championships which have been a part of FIBArk in the past most recently in 2009.

On learning that the Championships are returning to FIBArk, Andy Corra, the 2009 USA Wildwater National Champion and winner of the 2009 FIBArk Downriver Marathon, remarked, "FIBArk has proven to be a great venue for the US Wildwater Nationals, and I'm happy it is back again this year. It is the biggest gathering of Wildwater boats outside of Europe, and is the oldest, boldest race in the country. FIBArk is the perfect choice for a national competition."



Wildwater competitions are point to point races, down a river, through whitewater rapids. Wildwater boats are designed for speed, and the resulting limitations in maneuverability provide excitement for both spectators and competitors. The championship series includes two races: a Sprint and a longer Classic race. The Sprint race, June 16, is held in Salida's Whitewater Park, while the Classic, the next day, starts in the Park and finishes at Bear Creek Rapid, approximately 4 miles downriver. The Park location, in downtown Salida, provides an excellent opportunity for spectators.

In addition to the National Championship Series, wildwater events at this year's FIBArk include the 63rd paddling of the internationally known FIBArk 26 mile Downriver Wildwater Marathon, June 19, and the Open Sprint Fun Race (Head to Head), June 18.

Mike Harvey, a local wildwater boater, noted "What makes FIBArk so unique is both its historical significance in whitewater paddle sports and its continued relevance as one of the premier whitewater events in the U.S. Having the Wildwater Nationals at FIBArk is a great chance for festival goers to watch some of the top whitewater athletes in the country battle for a shot at the national title. For the athletes, FIBArk is the one event where they can race with thousands of spectators lining the banks, cheering wildly. It is going to be a lot of fun!"



John Pinyerd USA Wildwater - Chairman
Ed Loeffel - FIBArk

(Photos by Ron Slaughter)