



USA Wildwater

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2009 USA Wildwater Nationals/FIBArk Whitewater-Festival **Our Best Nationals Festival Ever!!** **Salida, CO – June 16-21**

You don't have to run a scientific poll to know just how incredibly successful the 2009 USA Wildwater Nationals/FIBArk Whitewater-Festival was in every category. We had close to 100 athletes participating in one or more of the seven incredibly well run Wildwater events. And all of this was contained within one of the worlds largest, oldest, and best run whitewater festivals that included events and fun for the entire family.

Training Camp (June 16-17)

Andy Corra did a fabulous job providing an overview of how to prepare (physically and mentally for Wildwater racing). We then ran the river and compared our routes to other racers like Mike Harvey who runs the river on a regular basis. Day two was working out the details at Cottonwood. Andy's skills proved to be invaluable as the week wore on.

USA Nationals Sprint (June 18)

One of the challenges of the Sprint Racing format is that it takes the combined times of your first run and your second run. The results of one bad run can be devastating (as the slow time is included in the total sprint time). Ultimately one mistake in one of your sprints can not only ruin your sprint results, but also your entire national championships. The funny water of left side of Cottonwood rapid proved to be the spoiler at this year's nationals, effectively eliminating a dozen boats for medal contention in the Sprint and the Combined including yours truly in C2.

The top sprinters know where to race wide open and where to be more deliberate with boat control. Peter Lutter (who is still a Jr) took Geoff Calhoun's title of America's best K1 sprinter in the Nationals Sprint and then later in the head to head sprint. Tom Wier (C1), Tierney O'Sullivan (K1W) and Haley Popp (K1Wjr) had solid runs that placed them solidly in first and set the trend for the long weekend of racing. In C2 Roehner/Baker looked very solid and had two nice runs that would be enough to keep them in first place for both the Sprint and the Combined events.

Link to Sprint Results: www.usawildwater.com/news/2009/Nationals-Sprint.pdf

USA Nationals Classic (June 19)

The Nationals Classic Race turned out to be the “battle of the Titans” as Andy Corra, Mike Freeburn, Peter Lutter, and Geoff Calhoun battled it out for dominance. Ultimately the years of international racing experience of Corra and Freeburn would prove too much for the rest of the field and the duo from Durango placed first and second in the event. Corra’s percentage of victory was large enough to vault him past Lutter into first place overall with Freeburn finishing third overall. In C1, Tom Wier turned out a blistering performance finishing just 9.3% off of Corra. The top woman, Tierney O’Sullivan was 13% back and up and comer Haley Popp was 18% back. In C2, Murphy/Pinyerd when into “cruise mode” with solid lines in the big chop placing them in first by a couple percent.

Link to Classic Results: www.usawildwater.com/news/2009/Nationals-Classic.pdf

Link to Combined Results: www.usawildwater.com/news/2009/Nationals-Combined.pdf

Head to Head Sprint – Wildwater Demo for FIBArk (June 20)

The head to head Sprint was a blast. Here’s a link to an article and the results of the event. http://www.usawildwater.com/news/2009/090626_FIBArk_Head2Head.htm

The Wildwater Demo was held just before the Hooligan race in front of a growing crowd of 3000+/- . Team Members Peter Lutter, Geoff Calhoun, Tom Wier, Tierney O’Sullivan and Roehner/Baker, combined with announcer Mike Harvey put on quite the show. Ultimately it was the hole play of Geoff Calhoun (who did a flat spin in his Wildwater Boat) that got the crowd excited. The C2 Team of Baker/Roehner showed off the best C2 rolls I have ever seen.

FIBArk Wildwater (“Downriver”) Races

FIBArk still calls their Wildwater races “Downriver” races. Since they more or less helped invent the sport 60 years ago the can call it what they want to. And only FIBArk would call a 10 mile race through fairly continuous class 2-3+ whitewater an “Intermediate” race but they do that too. But call them what you may, the FIBArk Downriver races are some of the coolest events on the planet.

The 10 mile (“Intermediate”) race was one of the most fun Wildwater events I have ever done. Colton Popp (K1) and I (C1) were fairly equally matched and averaged a lead change every mile. Ultimately age, skill and conditioning won out over youth and determination.

The 26 mile race is the king of wildwater races and we had 7 returning FIBArk champions in this year’s race. Andy Corra extended his dominance of the Wildwater distance races by beating his lifelong friend and training partner Mike Freeburn by 1:20. Peter Lutter, our top Junior, was third. In C-1, Tom Wier set a new course record and beat everyone except 5 kayaks (Corra, Freeburn, Lutter, Calhoun and Lacy). Tierney O’Sullivan was the fastest woman, set a course record, and earned a berth on the front page of the Pueblo Chieftain newspaper in the process (with Corra taking up most of the front page of the Sports section).

Link to Downriver Results: www.usawildwater.com/news/2009/FIBArk-Downriver.pdf

RECAP:

There is an incredible amount of cool things to do at FIBArk both off and on the water. With events like the Hooligan race that are just fun to watch, it's hard to beat the setting for a national's venue.

But our racers are to be complemented on their performances. Peter Lutter (K1jr) continues to progress at an incredible rate and should do quite well at the Jr Worlds. Tom Wier (C1) looks awesome and appears to be well prepared to take on the World Cups in Tasmania. Tierney O'Sullivan continues to prove the point that if you start racing as a Jr and stick with it, good things will happen. Andy Corra and Mike Freeburn who went 1-2 in the distance races proved that you can be at the top of paddle sport at nearly any age.

Congratulations to everyone who participated! Wow, what a great week of events!

2009 USA Wildwater Nationals Festival - FIBArk Whitewater Festival Wildwater Gold Medal Summary at a Glance June 18-21, 2009

Name	Class	Cat	USA Nationals Sprint	USA Nationals Classic	Nationals (combined results of Sprint & Classic)	Head to Head Sprint	FIBArk 10 Mile Race	FIBArk 26 Mile Expert Race	Total First Place Wins
Wier, Tom	C1		1	1	1	1		1	5
Lutter, Peter	K1M	Jr	1	1	1	1		1	5
O'Sullivan, Tierney	K1W		1	1	1	1		1	5
Corra, Andy	K1M		1	1	1			1	4
Popp, Haley	K1W	Jr	1	1	1		1		4
Adams, Craig	C1	Jr	1	1	1				3
Roehner / Baker	C2		1		1				2
Pinyerd / Murphy	C2			1		1			2
Pinyerd, John	C1						1		1
Popp, Colton	K1M						1		1
Kurt Smithgall	K1M	Jr				1			1
Adams, Laura	K1W	Jr						1	1

A few of the Wildwater athletes have posted their perspectives of the FIBArk events and Nationals on their blogs. Here are the links:

Tom Wier – tomwier.wordpress.com

Jeremy Rodgers – www.jeremyrodgers.blogspot.com

Tierney O'Sullivan - tosullivan.wordpress.com