



Mission Statement

"To challenge paddlers in a world class wilderness event – a race to the midnight sun - the Yukon River Quest."

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – June 10, 2005 Updated Version

Record field of 67 teams signed up for Yukon River Quest 2005 race starts at 12:30 p.m. on Wednesday, June 29 in Whitehorse

A record field of 67 teams have signed up to compete in the seventh annual Yukon River Quest, which begins at 12:30 p.m. on Wednesday, June 29 in downtown Whitehorse, Yukon Territory. The 740-kilometer (460-mile) race on the historic Yukon River to Dawson City is the longest annual canoe and kayak race in the world.

Registrations actually went one over the new 70-team limit set this year by race officials, but four teams withdrew early from the field. The 67 teams that are expected to start this year will break last year's previous record of 51 teams.

This year there are four overseas entries from Austria, Australia and the United Kingdom joining several teams from Canadian and U.S. jurisdictions. Canada will be represented by teams from the Yukon, British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec, Alberta, and the Northwest Territories. The United States will have teams from Alaska, Washington, California, New York, Minnesota, Michigan, Texas, Utah, Connecticut, Idaho, New Jersey, Georgia, and the island of Guam.

For the first time, the number of kayaks in the race will exceed the number of canoes. There will be 24 solo kayaks in the field, 14 tandem kayaks, 26 canoes (including defending champion Steve Landick of Michigan with a new partner, Fred Mynar of Texas), and three voyageur canoes (two from the Yukon and one from Ontario). Among the entries are 11 women's teams and nine mixed teams.

Teams will compete for almost \$15,000 in prize money. The top 10 overall finishers receive cash prizes, and bonus money also is given to the top three men's, women's and mixed teams in each class, as well as in the voyageur class.

Teams will race through the night under the midnight sun, stopping only at mandatory rest checkpoints in Carmacks and Kirkman Creek for a total of 10 hours. The first teams are expected in Dawson City on Friday evening, July 1, Canada Day.

Yukon River Quest safety boats patrol the river, and will be assisted this year by teams from the Canadian Rangers, Yukon EMO branches, and the navy vessel HMCS Whitehorse, which is sending up 24 sailors to help with the event while they are docked in Skagway, Alaska. The White Pass & Yukon Route and Yukon Alaska Tourist Tours have donated their transportation.

In addition to the organizations above, official race sponsors this year include: The Whitehorse Star (which will produce a special race supplement this year), Acuvue Contact Lenses, Clipper Canoes, PR Services, Integraphics, and Kanoe People. Many other Yukon and Alaska businesses also contribute to the event through in-kind sponsorships or purchasing bibs that racers wear from Whitehorse to Dawson.

Race organizers have received many compliments from participants on the organization of the event, but with the increased numbers, more volunteers are needed. Volunteers can sign up by contacting the race cell phone at 867-33FLOAT or by emailing the race at info@yukonriverquest.com. A volunteer meeting will be held at Sport Yukon in Whitehorse on Tuesday, June 14 from 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Yukon River Quest festivities kick off with a pre-race function for racers at the Yukon Visitor Reception Centre on June 28. Canoes and kayaks will start lining up on the river bank by Rotary Park the morning of June 29 in anticipation of the start. Racers will gather at noon under the start banner on Main Street for a welcome by Tourism and Culture Minister Elaine Taylor and team introductions by Mayor Ernie Bourassa. When the gun sounds at 12:30 p.m., the nearly 130 racers will run down to their boats and the 67 teams will hit the river for the “City of Gold.”

The event concludes with an awards ceremony and barbecue at the Dawson City waterfront park starting at noon on Sunday, July 3.

The race is organized by the Yukon River Marathon Paddlers Association, based in Whitehorse. For more information and to follow results of this year’s event, visit the race website: www.yukonriverquest.com

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