

Feeling the Heat: Solomons Dragon Boat Festival brings strong competition on race day

Posted by [Chelsea Heindel](#) On 08/18/2019

Photos by | Brian Haislip

Solomons, MD - According to the National Weather Service, Solomons reached a high of 91 degrees Saturday, with clear skies and plenty of sun for most of the day. Fortunately, the heat didn't stop the strong competition or the large crowd of spectators from finding a spot on the boardwalk to take in the race day events along the Patuxent River.

The festival is a function of SMCR Inc. (Southern Maryland Community Resources) a local nonprofit that helps to bridge the gap for individuals with developmental differences in the tri-county region. It was also sponsored by Cedar Point Federal Credit Union.

For the uninitiated, a dragon boat is essentially a canoe, but its about 40 feet long and outfitted in a dragon head and tail and paddles representing claws, per Chinese tradition. They are powered by 10 paddlers on each side. A drummer keeps the paddlers on time, and one person steers to keep the boat on course. The boats move fast; most teams finish a 200-meter race in less than two minutes. Dragon boat racing is often considered the ultimate team sport because each paddler has to stroke at the same time with the same form.

Some of this year's teams were sponsored by companies such as Smartronix and Avian. Local high schools, Great Mills and Chopticon were sponsored as well. Other groups such as Tidewater Dental, Cedar Point Federal Credit Union and Asbury Solomons were there to compete.

In the Championship Final, the team called Drag'n Butt defeated O'Brien River Rats and the Flying Water Dragons. The final times were Drag'n Butt - 1 minute, 13.12 seconds; O'Brien River Rats- 1 minute, 13.59 seconds; and Flying Water Dragons - 1 minute, 15.02 seconds.

Earlier in the day, Leadership Southern Maryland, Tidewater Dental and KBR's Pirates of the Patuxent competed in one of the closest races of the day. The Tidewater crew completed the 200-meter race in 1 minute, 13.43 seconds, the KBR crew was recorded at 1 minute, 13.42 seconds while the Leadership Southern Maryland crew logged a time of 1 minute, 13.29 seconds. Literally passing the finish line by a dragon's nose.

In addition to the races, the festival included several vendors at the Vendor Village including Center for Life Enrichment and So. Md Center for Independent Living. As well as plenty of food and entertainment, the Solomons Island Dragon Boat Festival provided a fantastic opportunity for artisans and food vendors to sell their homemade goods.

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