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Nation's Best Kayakers Descend on Country's Newest Whitewater Park for National Freestyle Championships in Cascade, Idaho

Jackson family sweeps top spots, REP-designed course passes with flying colors

Boulder, Colo. (July 13, 2011): The country's best freestyle kayakers converged on the country's newest whitewater park in Cascade, Idaho, for the USA Freestyle Kayaking Association's National Point Series Championships July 8-9, 2011, bringing national attention to the state's first-ever official river park and crowning new national champions in multiple categories.

Taking the top spot in the two-day affair, and lion's share of the series' \$15,000 purse, was four-time world champion Eric Jackson, with a 255-point ride narrowly besting second-place finisher Bryan Kirk's 228, with the two finishing first and second, respectively, in the overall standings. Taking third was Craig Kleckner with 206 points. "The competition was awesome; everyone really stepped up and gave incredible performances," says Jackson. "I also have to give a big shout out to Kelly's Whitewater Park for putting on a national-caliber event. They've built a state-of-the-art facility that will serve freestyle kayaking well into the future."



For the women, Emily Jackson took first both overall and at the Cascade event, followed by Haley Mills and Kat Levitt.. In Men's Junior, Dane Jackson won the Cascade and overall titles, followed by Evan Schehrer and Hunt Jennings; in Junior Women, Sage Donnelly took top event and overall honors, followed by Lauren Burress.

Idaho's first-ever river park, Kelly's Whitewater Park was spearheaded by locals Mark and Kristina Pickard and named after Kristina's sister, Kelly Brennan. It was designed and built by Boulder, Colo.'s Recreation

Engineering & Planning, the country's leader in whitewater park design, on the North Fork of the Payette River in August 2010. Converting a defunct lumber mill site into a beautiful park with three high-water channel structures, a separate novice channel and an island with sandy beaches, the \$3 million project has been heralded as one of the best river parks in the country, due to its user- and spectator-friendly design and clear, warm water feeding it from Cascade Lake just upstream. It also includes a 2,600-square-foot Welcome Center, outdoor amphitheater, trails and other amenities.

"It was a great event and a great venue for an event of that caliber," says KWP marketing manager Dan Gallagher, who is also campaigning to have it host a World Cup event in the near future. "It truly has some world-class features."

The park has also proved an economic boom to the city, drawing more than 3,000 spectators to the weekend's event. "It's been a huge boon to the town," says Cascade Mayor Richard Carter, adding that its grand opening was attended by Idaho Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter. "It's transformed what looked like a battleground into one of the most beautiful parks you've ever seen."

About REP

Since its founding in 1983, REP has created nearly 80 percent of all of in-stream whitewater parks in North America, with an aggregate value of more than \$70 million. The parks vary in size from an \$18 million park on Calgary, Alberta's Bow River and \$21 million National Whitewater Center in Charlotte, N.C., to projects in Dallas, Michigan, Iowa, Ohio, Colorado, Idaho, Wyoming and more. Info: www.boaterparks.com; www.b2inc.net.