



Sports News

## Largest, fastest field ever pushes Addison to Classic victory

### Six previous winners compete in Catalina Classic

by Kevin Cody

Six unlimited division winners from previous years lined up at the Catalina Isthmus Sunday morning for the start of the 23rd Annual Catalina Classic Paddleboard Race. Crossing the finish line at the Manhattan pier just over five hours later were seven unlimited division winners. Last year's second place finisher, Ryan Addison, held off the strongest and largest field in the race's history to win the 32 mile, open ocean race for his first time in 5:09:40.

As he did last year, Addison took an early lead. But unlike last year, when, in his words, "the piano fell on me at the R10," Addison appeared to get stronger as the race got longer. The R10 buoy is a mile off of Palos Verdes and eight miles from the Manhattan pier.

The Los Angeles County lifeguard credited his win to 50-mile-a-week workouts and some advice from Sean Richardson of Palos Verdes, who passed Addison last year at the R10 and went on to win that year's race.



Los Angeles County Lifeguard Ryan Addison sprints to the finish and first place in the 23rd Annual Catalina Classic Paddleboard Race Sunday morning at the Manhattan pier. Photo by Bob Wyler

Addison said he feared a similar fate awaited him this year when both his legs and arms started to cramp as he approached the R10.

"I was afraid I might have gone out too fast, but the after some stretching and Goo the cramps went away," he said.

Keeping the pressure on Addison were not only Richardson, but also 2001 winner Kyle Daniels, 2000 winner Brian Zeller, 1993 and 1996 winner Jeff Stoner, 1993 and 1994 winner George Kabris, and 1988 and 1989 winner Joe Bark.

Daniels, who heads the County Lifeguards' junior guard program, placed second, after reeling in Kabris, a Ventura harbor patrolman, at the Hermosa pier, a mile and a half from the finish. Zeller, a San Diego lifeguard, was fourth and Richardson fifth.

Bark, a Redondo firefighter, extended his streak to 22 consecutive races and finished in 20th place. His time of 6:03:32, was over half an hour faster than his decade old first place finish times. Palos Verdes firefighter Steve Fairbrother, who has five second place Classic finishes, was competing in the race for his 19th time. He finished 18th, in 6:01:17.

Prior to the start of the race, Fairbrother announced that the race was being dedicated to former Lifeguard Jimmy Miller, who died last month.

A measure of how competitive the field was is the fact that 15 top of the paddlers finished in under six hours, which just a few years ago would have been a winning time.

"Now we know a sub five-hour race is possible," Bohn said. The Classic record is 5:02:12 set in 1999 by Tim Gair

Tom Duryea of Coronado won the 12-foot stock division for the third consecutive year with a time of 6:03:32. Brian Szymanski was runner up in the stock division in 6:19:00.

Conditions were generally favorable, with flat water across the channel and a light cloud cover to keep the heat down. But hopes for a record time were abandoned after paddlers encountered a mile an hour southerly current when they rounded the R10 Buoy on their way north to the Manhattan Pier.

Several sharks, one blue whale, schools of dolphins and half a dozen freighters shared the course, but did not interfere with any of the paddlers, Bohn said.

The field started with 71 paddlers. One dropped out due to a shoulder injury. All of the other paddlers finished under the nine-hour cutoff time.

The paddleboard season's final, local race is the Riviera Mexican Grill R10 Race. It will be held Saturday September 18. This year's start is being moved to Veteran's Park in Redondo Beach. For more information call 540-2501.

On October 9 a new race will be held between Santa Barbara Island and the Catalina Isthmus. The First Annual Island to Island Paddleboard Relay Race and Beach Party Luau will benefit a fund for Bald Eagles on Catalina Island and end with a celebration of legendary paddleboard and surfboard shaper Dale Velzy' 77th birthday. For more information on the Island to Island race call (760) 436-5928 or visit [www.islandtoisland.org](http://www.islandtoisland.org). ER

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