

Story Ideas – 70th AuSable River Canoe Marathon July 29-30, 2017

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Current press releases plus, entrants list, race course map graphics, logos, video and photo resources and more can be downloaded from the Marathon's Google Drive Media Assets Folder > <https://drive.google.com/open?id=0BxvIk0oi7oiuTTdHSzNFM5INKU>

Also, reference the entry list at: <http://www.ausablecanoemarathon.org/2017-entries/>

- Four countries, 15 U.S. states and 2 Canadian provinces are represented. This year, we have our first team from Australia competing. Rod and Judi Clark (Canoe #32) have traveled from Echuca, Victoria, Australia to compete in this year's Marathon. This is also a competitor from Belize in Canoe #44: Hener Cruz Esperanza, Cayo, Belize
- The Marathon will also have its first Asian-born competitor this year. Sinthang Has (canoe #81) was born in Cambodia and moved to MN with his folks when he was just four. He and his teammate will be flying the Cambodian flag on canoe spray cover along with the Marathon's hashtag "HupAllNight" in Cambodian.
- Michael Garon, a paddler in Canoe #36, will be attempting to earn his record-setting 19th consecutive finish. This is one of the more cherished and heralded Marathon records.
- Nine-time Champ Andy Triebold, from Michigan, is paddling in the Mixed Division this year with Mary Schlimmer, of New York
- Also, with the likely higher than normal river levels we'll have for the race this year, some teams might break, or come close to breaking, some record division times. Depending on rainfall leading up to race day, the all-time record time of 13:58:08 (13 hours, 58 minutes, 8 seconds) might be tested. It was established in 1994, a year with very high river levels, by Quebec's Serge Corbin and Saskatchewan's Solomon Carriere.
- The big Rabaska R-9 "freighter" canoes are returning from Quebec this year as well, for some exhibition races on Marathon weekend. (There is a Rabaska Race Press Release posted) Saturday, July 29th, they are set to do a race starting in Mio Pond. Sunday, July 30th, they will do the same race as last year; Five Channels Dam to Oscoda. The Rabaska exhibition race on Sunday should conclude about 30-60 minutes before the 1st place Marathon team finishes.
- There are six paddlers in their 70's competing this year.
- A record-tying five Women's Division teams are set to compete this year.
- The \$5,000 Dash For Cash takes place in Oscoda on Tuesday afternoon/evening, July 25th. It is exciting side-by-side ¼-mile "canoe drag racing", with the fastest canoes progressing to the final round.
- The Time Trial Sprints for starting position take place in Grayling Wed-Fri, July 26-28. There are good viewing and filming locations as teams individually sprint a looped course upstream

to a buoy in the center of town to score a time that determines their starting position for Saturday night's run to the river

- Fans can follow the race online and on the radio, as well as in-person. The Marathon has a robust social media presence, including live or nearly live video updates to the Facebook Page throughout the race. A GPS map hosted on the Marathon website updates canoe-team positions every 2 ½ minutes throughout the race. Live marathon reports are carried throughout the race on the 20+ affiliate AuSable River Canoe Marathon Radio Network. The reports are also streamed online on the two official radio stations of the Marathon 98.5 WUPS and also HITS-FM 103.3&94.9 Marathon social media resources:
 - AuSable River Canoe Marathon website – AuSableCanoeMarathon.org
 - Facebook – facebook.com/AuSableCanoeMarathon.org
 - Instagram & Twitter - @ausablemarathon #HupAllNight
 - YouTube Channel – youtube.com/AuSableCanoeMarathon
- Among the contestants this year are Lynne Witte (Canoe #54) and Ricky Joy (Canoe #11), who are two of the three paddlers in race history with 30+ prior Marathon finishes.

Canoe racing is a family sport, a family tradition, There are a lot of family connections in the race.

- If you're looking for a family who has raced a lot: father and son paddlers, Chuck and Chris Hewitt, are both Iron Paddlers (10+ Marathon finishes) and they are competing against each other this year. Canoe #61 and #50, respectively.
- Another family story: four of the Schlimmer siblings from New York are competing. Mary Schlimmer is racing with 10-time Marathon Champion Andrew Triebold (Canoe #01). Michael Schlimmer (Canoe #78) and Ben Schlimmer (Canoe #98) will also be attempting to earn their Iron Paddler Award this year.
- Tim Chapple, 43, of Interlochen, Michigan, is teamed with Vincent Bellmaire, 25, of Shawinigan, Quebec. Tim, who will gain his "Iron Paddler" designation (10 or more finishes) upon completing the race, will be joined in the Marathon by his Dad, Lauren, 70, also of Interlochen, Michigan. Lauren, who is teamed with Greg Zophy, 60, of St. Paul, Minnesota, is looking for his first Marathon finish; Greg has 4 Marathon finishes to his credit.

More family ties:

- #12 - Josh & Mike Kellogg - brothers from MI. Their first Marathon. Family members have raced the Marathon through several generations. Their dad & uncle (deceased) are being inducted into the Canoe Marathon Hall of Fame this year.
- #52 - Paul and JoAnn Olney, father/daughter from NY. (first Marathon)
- #88 - Shawn & Chase Spallinger, father & son from Oscoda, MI. Shawn's 4th Marathon, Chase's 1st
- #29 - Seth & Stephen Miller - brothers from Massachusetts doing their 4th Marathon
- #24 - Kristi and Katie Treston, sisters from Michigan doing their 3rd Marathon
- #72 - Ray (9th Marathon) and Mandy (4th Marathon) Trudgeon, brother & sister from Michigan
- #51 - Christian and Sylvain Marchand, brothers from Quebec. 1st Marathon
- #90 - Tommy (4th Marathon) and Jimmy (3rd Marathon) Pellerin, brothers from Quebec