**WKC’s 63rd Annual Salmon la Sac Races Trip Report**

60 racers aged 7 to 75 came from Washington, Oregon, British Columbia, Idaho and Montana. They converged on the Cle Elum River June 1-2, 2024 to celebrate and participate in the longest consecutively run slalom race in the United States - WKC’s Bottoms-Up Regatta!

Eight energetic volunteers were there Thursday morning to construct the slalom course designed by David Johnson from Portland. It was a somewhat unique course this year as water level was on the low side so new moves were in play. The last few years we’ve had more than enough water. ☺

Twenty folks got on the river that afternoon to run from SLS down to the reservoir. Fon Friday morning we had more volunteers arrive so the final gates were up by noon and everyone was practicing moves in glorious sunshine.

Saturday’s downriver race had 20 participants – paddlers were represented in all kinds of boats. In first place was Boo Turner in a wildwater race kayak, then Tom Wier in a wildwater C-1, followed by Jacob Norman in a Wavehopper (plastic wildwater boat) and then Jacob Selander in a plastic sea kayak.

Our campfire gathering was the largest in some years with lots of delicious dessert, drinks, and camaraderie.

Sunday was a bit damp, shall we say…… I think we were in the eye of the Atmospheric River! That didn’t dampen anyone’s spirit, however. Fastest boat of the day was Joel Martin, Boo won the Women’s Cup, Merle Long from Idaho won the Junior trophy, and Marc Leonard the OC-1 trophy. We had over half a dozen racers who had never paddled before! And at least 3 folks who raced eons ago and made a come-back.

Brain Schatz won the infamous “Tip-Over Trophy” with his flip and masterfully executed save. Not that the other four nominees didn’t have great stories, too. We had quite the diversity in age and type of boats on the course. 14 kids 17 years old and younger, 4 individuals 70+. And we had a full open canoe class and lots of plastic boaters. After everyone did their 2 race runs, we then did Team Runs. This is where a team of three randomly selected Individuals, run the course together and end within 15 seconds of each other. This made for some fun “weaving” moves and a fun event to watch, too!

Also seen was a K-3 in a K-2! ?\*! So glad they didn’t flip……

See you June 7-9, 2025 for the 64th annual event near Roslyn, WA!

Will you still boat me, Will you still float me, When I’m 64! 

(with apologies to the Beatles – When I’m Sixty Four)