

UW teams fired up at dragon boat festival Paddlers make a splash to raise money

July 25, 2003



(David Atos) Teams braved the early hours of the weekend in support of the Grand River Hospital. Over sixty teams took part in the Kiwanis Dragon Boat Festival at Laurel Creek conservation area July 19.

Over 60 teams hit the water at Laurel Creek conservation area on July 19 for the sixth annual Kiwanis Dragon Boat Festival.

The 40-foot boats, which come complete with a dragon head and tail, are filled with

20 paddlers, a drummer who sets the pace and a steersperson.

The team navigates a 500 m course (usually in under three minutes).

This year, participants were cheered on by an estimated 7000 people who attended the event, which also featured an arts and crafts fair.

Teams competed in two categories -- open, and colleges and universities. After initial heats, teams were divided into divisions based on time.

According to registration co-ordinator, Jamie Meek, eight teams affiliated with UW took part in the event.

The WLISA Paddle Pushers placed third in the Iron division consolation final. Hot & Groovy placed fourth in the Iron division final.

In the Silver division consolation finals, the Mennoknights placed fifth, Dragon Along placed third and PA DA Boat placed first.

In the colleges and universities division consolation finals, The Fast and the Furious placed fifth, Not-In-Sync placed fourth, and UW DA Boat placed first. UW Alumni Team Ruckus placed fourth in the universities and colleges division finals.

Tony Kim, a member of the UW grad association team, Dragon Along, said the event was "fun and well run."

"It was fantastic," said Kim. "I'll definitely do it again next year."

"I really enjoyed the comraderie and getting to know everyone on the boat."

A large portion of the funds raised by this event go to support the Grand River Hospital childbirth and children's programs.