

Ramp Jump debuts at Lakeview, Ohio

Rounds 1 & 2 -- U.S. Grand National Watercross Championships

May 31st – June 1st, 2003

LAKEVIEW, OH -- The U.S. Grand National Watercross Championships of Region 6, kicked off it's 2003 Season at Lakeview, Ohio on May 31st – June 1st. Round 1, on Saturday brought about a chilly start to the 2003 season, as 50 degree temperatures, along with blazing winds made for some treacherous racing conditions. As Sunday rolled around, the sun came out, along with warmer temperatures bringing some hot racing action. Sunday, was also the debut of the Ramp Jump in Expert Ski competition. The anticipation was high in the air, as people watched riders attacking the Ramp Jump for the 1st time.



The 2003 U.S. Grand National Watercross Championships had a huge turnout for the 1st two rounds of the season, with riders from New, York, West Virginia, Missouri, and Canada attending. This brought some great racing action in several classes throughout the weekend. Several riders were on new watercraft for the 2003 season, making for some interesting racing action as well.

Expert Runabout 1200cc Class

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|---------------------|----------|-------------------------|
| 1. Evan Connell | Sea-Doo | Rec Mtrspts/Dean's Team |
| 2. Derick Parker | Kawasaki | Fepco/Dean's Team |
| 3. Ryan Leadbetter | Yamaha | Riva/Leadbetter Racing |
| 4. Justin Haverkate | Sea-Doo | Sea-Doo/Novi |
| 5. James Hostetter | Yamaha | Sobe/Maxima Oil |
| 6. Raymond Degrazia | Sea-Doo | Novi/Z-Force |
| 7. Ryan Pearson | Kawasaki | Full Spectrum/Slippery |

The ramp jump provided all the spills, and excitement the crowd could ask for in the ski races, but it was Evan Connell on his Dean's Team



Evan Connell nearly sweeps Expert 1200

specially prepared Sea-Doo, who was lighting up the water during the Expert Runabout 1200 Classes. Connell proved he is a top rider in the country when he won every race he entered on Saturday, sweeping the 1st round of the circuit, but it was on Sunday when Evan threatened to run away with the points lead. Going into his last race of the weekend, Connell was still undefeated in closed course, and slalom racing, but disaster struck on the last lap of that race. Leading the race with less than a quarter of a lap left, Evan's boat stuck a piston leaving him four turns from sweeping the 1st two rounds of the 2003 U.S. Grand National Watercross Championships. Even with a disappointing end to the weekend, Evan finished 3rd overall in the class, leaving him a huge lead in the Expert Runabout 1200 Overall Title.



Derek Powell picking up where he left off several years ago.

There was also some other sweeping going on that weekend, as Derek Powell from Syracuse, Indiana came out of retirement on his brand new Speed Racing Kawasaki. Derek Powell took off from where he left off, as he also dominated the Ski class, and almost swept the competition. Powell, as was Connell, was appearing to sweep the Expert Ski class, except he also had some problems of his own in the last race of the day. Derek was called for missing a buoy taking away the win, and the sweep for the weekend. He still ended up 3rd

overall, giving him a huge points lead going into Rounds 3 & 4 at Pontiac, Michigan. Powell never looked back as he battled with Jerry Schmidt, from Monroe, Michigan, Mike Remar, from Lowell, Michigan, and John Eidt, from Beverley Hills, Michigan.

Arguably the best race of the weekend was in the Expert Runabout 800cc Class, as Geoffrey Swan, from Arnold, Missouri took the overall points lead. Some not so good starts presented Geoff with some passing opportunities, as he had to battle his way to the top. There were some other battling going on as Eric Swann, from Arnold, Missouri, Cole Wagner, from Waterford, Michigan, Brian Strohsack, from Lorain, Ohio, and Ray Proulx, from Belle River, Ont, Canada provided some side by side exciting racing. Each were trading positions throughout the race with Geoff Swann coming out the victor at the end. If this is any indication of the racing action for the 2003 Season in the Expert Runabout 800cc Class, watch out.

Expert Ski Class

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|---------------------|----------|-------------------------|
| 1. Derek Powell | Kawasaki | Speed Racing/Z-Force |
| 2. Jerry Schmidt | Kawasaki | Factory Pipe/Slippery |
| 3. Mike Remar | Kawasaki | Wiesco/Watcon |
| 4. John Eidt | Yamaha | Jetski Unlimited/R&D |
| 5. Jeff Clark | Kawasaki | K&J Fab/PWC Partshop |
| 6. Jim Schraufnagel | Kawasaki | Rossier/Excel |
| 7. Marvin Bulas | Yamaha | PWCPartshop/Goggle Grip |
| 8. Doug Lavin | Kawasaki | No Fear/Team Adrenaline |
| 9. Tom McMannis | Kawasaki | Indy Cycle & Ski/VP |
| 10. James Cook | Yamaha | Riva/Hydro-Turf |

Other hot racing action was in the Novice Women's Ski class as Nanette Grissom, from Algonquin, Illinois battled with Debbie Hyde, from Hyde-a-away Hills, Ohio, and Tammy Schmidt, from

Monroe, Michigan. A almost full Novice Women's Ski class presented many passing opportunities, and some great side by side racing. Nanette Grissom, on her Woodfield Motorsports, Hydro-Turf, Kawasaki came out as the woman to beat, as she took the points lead for the Novice Women's Ski Class going into Rounds 3 & 4 at Pontiac, Michigan.

Another great battle that weekend was in the Pro-Am Stock Ski Class. A almost full class had riders trading positions on both Saturday,



Pro-Am Stock Ski Class provided some great Racing Action.

and Sunday. On Saturday, Mike Ballantyne, from Adrian, Michigan had the hot setup as he took the win, with Doug Lavin, from Warrenville, Illinois, and Mike Remar, from Lowell, Michigan both making the podium. Doug Lavin (2002 Novice Stock Ski World Champion), made a nice appearance in the Pro-Am Stock Ski Class after moving up from Novice taking a 2nd for his debut performance. On Sunday, it would be a different story as Mike Remar, from Lowell, Michigan took the win, with his flawless performance. Also making the podium were James Cebulski, from Lenox, Illinois, and Mike Ballantyne, from Adrian, Michigan. Doug Lavin was closing in as he finished

4th place, making the Overall Points race, one of the tightest races of the 2003 Season.

The added feature of the Ramp Jump at the 2003 U.S. Grand National Watercross Championships made for some exciting racing. It was a real crowd pleaser among the many local spectators that were in attendance. It was standing room only on the beach, for each of the Expert Ski Classes that weekend. With the addition of the Ramp Jump on the 2003 U.S. Grand National Watercross Championship Series, it promises to provide some real exciting entertainment.

An equalizer buoy was set up for those who chose not to go over the Ramp Jump, which also put some anticipation into the racing. If a rider chose not to go over the Ramp Jump, they had to go around an equalizer buoy that was well placed out on the race course. This provided extra passing during the race, as riders traded positions all weekend long. You can see Ramp Jump Pictures, and Video of Rounds 1 & 2 from Lakeview, Ohio at

watercross.com

Pro-Am Stock Ski Class

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|----|-----------------|----------|-------------------------|
| 1. | Mike Remar | Kawasaki | Wiesco/Watcon |
| 2. | James Cebulski | Yamaha | |
| 3. | Mike Ballantyne | Polaris | |
| 4. | Doug Lavin | Kawasaki | No Fear/Team Adrenaline |
| 5. | Jeff Clark | Kawasaki | K&J Fab/PWCPartshop |
| 6. | Tom McMannis | Kawasaki | Indy Cycle & Ski/VP |
| 7. | Marvin Bulas | Yamaha | PWCPartshop/Goggle Grip |
| 8. | John Shuper | Polaris | Polaris/Amsoil |
| 9. | Jesse Henthorn | Polaris | |

Rounds 3 & 4 of the 2003 U.S. Grand National Watercross Championships will be on June 28th – 29th, 2003, at Pontiac, Michigan. Make your reservations early, as this is one of the Riders favorite stops on the tour. The beautiful Pontiac Lake State Park makes for an excellent place to camp for the weekend.

The 2003 U.S. Grand National Watercross Championships is brought to you by; Kawasaki, Sea-Doo, Yamaha, Novi, Wiesco, Hydro-Turf, Budweiser, and Freelance Graphics.

For more information on the 2003 U.S. Grand National Watercross Championships, contact Jacque Bryant, Phone: (317) 846-0789, Fax: (317) 846-0789 or email: mwctour@iquest.net