

Three prime surf events return to North Carolina in August 2019

Aug. 16-18: The O'Neill/Sweetwater Pro-Am Surf Fest (including the Red Bull Tow-At); Aug. 19: Surfers Healing; Aug 24-25: Wrightsville Beach Wahine Classic

WRIGHTSVILLE BEACH, NORTH CAROLINA, USA, July 16, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Three headline surf events return to Wrightsville Beach, North Carolina in a span of ten days in August.

First, Aug. 16-18, one of the largest surf contests on the East Coast – the 14th annual O'Neill/Sweetwater Pro-Am Surf Fest. The Surf Fest attracts 200 professionals and amateurs from Florida to Rhode Island, with some of the pros flying in from California, Barbados, Puerto Rico, Ecuador, and Hawaii.

“You have so many good athletes that show up, and a different set of circumstances every year as far as waves and the conditions,” said Brad Beach, Event Manager. “I don’t think we’ve had a repeat pro champion in our 13 years.”

Adding to the excitement of the first-rate shortboard and longboard competition in 2019 is the addition of extreme surfing with the Red Bull Tow-At.

“Jet skis will tow the surfers into the wave,” said Beach. “We’re selecting five surfers known for their aerial skills to compete. It’ll be exciting. They’re known for flying out of the wave and doing tricks. Whoever wins that, will compete in the Red Bulls Night Rider event in Jacksonville, Florida.”

“We are super stoked to renew our partnership with Reef ... one of the original sponsors of this event,” said Beach. “Reef will partner with Surfrider Foundation to keep the beach clean during Surf Fest. They’re also planning to bring in Evan Geiselman, a team rider and world-class surfer.”



O'Neill/Sweetwater adds Red Bull Tow-At in 2019 – Vasco Ribeiro photo by Ricardo Bravo



Izzy Paskowitz, founder of Surfers Healing – Courtesy of DJ Struntz

O'Neill/Sweetwater also presents Saturday's Music and Art Fest in the park, combining local musicians, arts, crafts, and family activities. "It's one of the best side events of the Festival," said Beach. Proceeds benefit the nonprofits Hope from Helen and the Surf Club at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington.



2018 Wrightsville Beach Wahine Classic – Courtesy of Ed Potter

Next up on Aug. 19th is Surfers Healing, an organization dedicated to enriching the lives of those with autism by exposing them to the experience of surfing.

Surfers Healing is celebrating twenty-two years of providing camps at no cost to children in Australia, New Zealand, Mexico, and the United States.

Izzy Paskowitz, a professional surfer and father of Isaiah, a child with autism, is the founder of Surfers Healing. When Isaiah was five, Izzy discovered the power of surf therapy for his child, inspiring him to start a camp for children with autism.

"I wanted to do something to give back," said Paskowitz, in a recent interview on Boston public radio, WBUR. "I am so grateful for the gift that he's [Isaiah] given me. I have the most unique life, and I get to share that with thousands of people. I love my autism family."

Wrapping the trio of surf events Aug. 23-25 is the 7th annual Wrightsville Beach Wahine Classic, open to lady surfers of all ages. Competitors include teenie-wahines, amateurs, and professionals.

"There are only a handful of surf competitions on the East Coast for ladies," said Jo Pickett, Event Organizer. "The Wahine Classic at Wrightsville Beach is recognized as one of the major events. The Classic offers a fun weekend at the beach for the family, and the athletes enjoy the surfing competition and building camaraderie."

Pickett expects 90 to 100 surfers, with most coming from North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, Georgia, and Florida.

"Young girls are competing in increasing numbers," said Pickett. "Surfing is now in the 2020 Olympics in Japan, with each country represented by female and male surfers."

Blockade Runner Beach Resort, a short walk on the beach to each of these events, is a supporter and host hotel for Surfers Healing and the Wrightsville Beach Wahine Classic.

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