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**PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

MADISON'S MOST UNIQUE SUMMER EVENT
29th Annual Paddle & Portage Next Weekend

Madison, WI (July 11, 2008) – The 29th annual Paddle & Portage canoe/kayak race will take place next Saturday, July 19, 2008 beginning at James Madison Park in Madison. On-site registration and check-in take place from 8:00 am to 9:30 am with the boats hitting the water at 10:00 am.

The race consists of a 1.5-mile paddle on Lake Mendota, a 1-mile portage across the Isthmus and past the Capitol, and a 1.5-mile paddle on Lake Monona. The race will again finish at Olin Park. The finish line festival will include food, beverage and live music by Matt Wahl.

"The race has continued to grow over the past few years," said John Eisele, Director of Operations for Wisconsin Sports Development Corporation. "We had to cap this year's event at 400 boats. We were at about 370 last year and if it continues to grow as it has we may have to consider a wave start or potentially using another beach."

Online registration is open until Wednesday July 16th. Onsite registration will be available if spots remain. The web site will be updated with information regarding remaining spots. Spots are filled on a first come, first served basis. Volunteers are also needed. They can also sign up at www.paddleandportage.org.

WHO: Quirky people with canoes running around the square

WHAT: Canoe race on both downtown lakes; requiring participants to carry their canoes from one to the other. Finish line festival with food, beverage and live music immediately follows the race.

WHERE: Start - James Madison Park with paddle on Lake Mendota, run up Hamilton Street, past the Capitol, down King Street to Lake Monona, paddle across to finish at Olin-Turville Park.

WHEN: Saturday, July 19, 2008. Onsite registration 8:00 am – 9:30 am; race start 10:00 am.

For more information, visit www.paddleandportage.org or call 608.226.4780.

The Paddle and Portage is presented by American Family Insurance, Isthmus and Rutabaga with support from 93.1 The Lake, Alpha Graphics, Budget Rentals, Bud Light, Group Health Cooperative, Kleenmark, The Madison Concourse Hotel, Magic 98, Northway Communications, Ozee Cars, Park Bank, Sprint and Two Men and a Truck.

Wisconsin Sports Development Corporation is a nonprofit sports management organization that helps develop sports tourism in Wisconsin and aims to foster participation, competition and memorable experiences through our events and programs that promote health, active lifestyles and a sense of community.

WSDC properties include the American Family Insurance Badger State Games, the Wisconsin Athletic Hall of Fame, Shape Up Wisconsin Kids, Lighten Up Wisconsin and the Fit Kids Challenge Duck. WSDC is also the local host of Ironman Wisconsin.

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