

Gettin' a tastin' for the racin'

BY LAURA PAYNE

Last Sunday's warm, sunny weather encouraged many people to venture outdoors, including football-throwing pirates.

The Seafair Pirates played an entertaining game of catch alongside a row of classic cars at Issaquah's 10th annual Tastin' n Racin' at Lake Sammamish State Park.

The Pirates, who rolled into the park on a ship with wheels, were among the many attractions at the weekend festival. According to figures compiled by park rangers, 36,750 people attended the two-day event. Sunday drew 28,000, one of the largest one-day crowds in the history of Tastin' n Racin'.

John O'Brien, co-chairman of Tastin' n Racin' and one of the founders of the event, was pleased with the turnout. Most of the time Sunday, O'Brien was in the hydroplane pits with his Thunder Valley racing crew.

"Everyone was coming up to me and saying the crowd was phenomenal," O'Brien said.

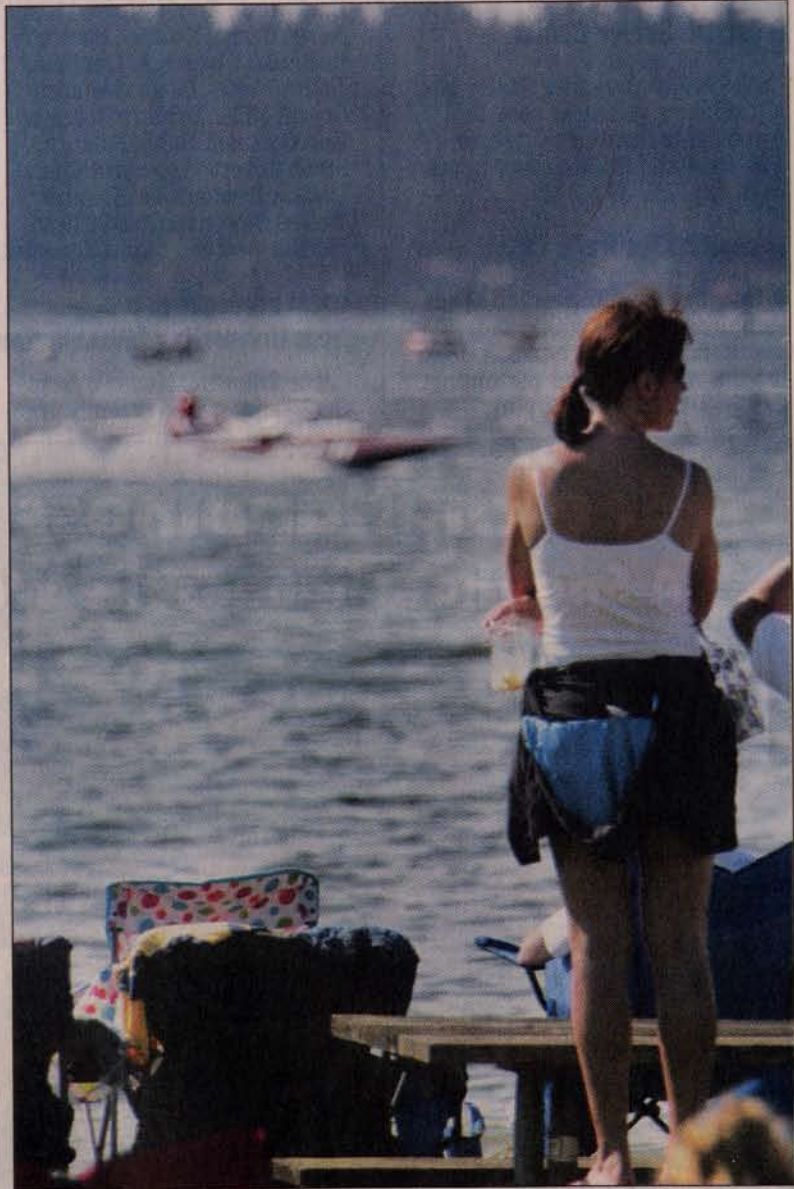
Finally, during a break in the action, O'Brien got curious and went up in a lift to view the park.

"It was just like everyone told me. It was phenomenal," O'Brien said.

Many people packed the shoreline to watch the races, which included unlimited hydroplanes, nostalgic circle boats and jet skis.

"This is the most people I've seen along the lake in years," O'Brien said.

The Pirates also landed in the park by boat. However, their boat



BY GREG FARRAR

Spectators watch the thunderboats on the hydroplane course Sunday during the Tastin' n Racin' hydro races, foot court, games and crafts festival at Lake Sammamish State Park.

See **TASTIN'**, Page B4

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 14, 2006

Tastin'

FROM PAGE B1

wasn't sail-propelled like pirates of old. Rather, the Seafair Pirates' "boat" rolled in on wheels and was motorized. Occasionally, the Pirates would fire a cannon and the thunderous noise vibrated throughout the park.

The sun invited families to the classic car show and booths filled with tantalizing treats.

With a play area of blow-up toys and obstacle courses for the children, and hydroplane races and classic cars for the older attendees, the event offered entertainment for everyone in the family.

Relaxing behind their 1955 Chevrolet Belair, classic car owners Warren Oas and Darryl Faille listened to the classic rock band playing nearby as they rested under the shade of their umbrella.

"This is such a great show," Oas said. "I love this show, with the boats and great food. There are so many things to do."

"It is great mainly because there is something for everyone," Faille added.

This year marked the third time that Oas and Faille, members of the Rainier Classic Chevy Club, have returned to Tastin' n Racin'.

While they take their classic cars to shows across western Washington, the appeal of Tastin' n Racin' draws them back to Is-

saquah annually.

"This is probably the best show to come to when the weather is nice. It's one of my favorite places," Oas said.

Their faces shining with sweat from the afternoon heat, 11-year-olds Maria Stevenson and Erin Williamson crawled through Verb's Yellow ball obstacle course, which promoted exercise and activity for young children.

While the two friends had explored nearly everything that the event had to offer, they repeatedly returned to Verb's obstacle course.

"We watched the boats and looked at the cars," Stevenson said. "But this is our favorite place," Williamson added, as she pointed

to the Verb Yellow ball station behind her.

While the two girls waited for Stevenson's father, a Seafair pirate, to finish work for the day, they bounced their way through the play stations, all the while reaping the benefits of free prizes.

"I'm really hot," Stevenson said. "We've done the obstacle course so many times I've lost count."

Their bags of goodies were evidence of the day's entertainment. With free backpacks, sweatbands, T-shirts and balls, the girls certainly did not leave empty-handed.

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