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Runners, paddlers, MTBers rejoice! The Weekend Preview is here

By Andy Thompson | September 24, 2014 | Posted In: James River (<http://www.richmondoutside.com/news/james-river/>), Mountain Biking (<http://www.richmondoutside.com/news/mountain-biking/>), Paddling (<http://www.richmondoutside.com/news/paddling/>), Running (<http://www.richmondoutside.com/news/running/>), Trail Running (<http://www.richmondoutside.com/news/trail-running/>), Upcoming Events (<http://www.richmondoutside.com/news/upcoming-events/>)



Maymont's paved paths and rolling hills will be the site of this weekend's X-Country Festival.

If you like to run, bike or paddle, this is your kind of weekend here in the RVA.

It starts on Friday for the **runners** with the Sports Backers' Maymont X-Country Festival (<http://www.sportsbackers.org/events/maymont-x-country-festival/>). The Open 5K (<http://www.sportsbackers.org/events/maymont-x-country-festival/open-5k/>) goes off at 6 p.m. and is a really cool opportunity to race in a place where you'd normally stroll and sightsee. As the Sports Backers' website describes it: *Maymont is a cross country runner's dream. From the lavish 1893 Maymont House to the scenic wildlife areas that house bison, bald eagles, deer, bears and other animals, the estate is the perfect backdrop for a fall race.*

The same is true for Saturday morning's James River Loop 8-miler (<http://www.sportsbackers.org/events/maymont-x-country-festival/james-river-loop-8-miler/>). This race is also open to the public, and while it starts and ends at Maymont, the course is really a showcase of Richmond's downtown trails (click here (<http://www.sportsbackers.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Maymont-8miler-course-map.pdf>) for the map). Trail lovers will navigate Buttermilk and North Bank trails, as well as the singletrack on Belle Isle (<http://www.richmondoutside.com/destination/belle-isle-jrps/>) before they arrive back at the finish line.

Paddlers have two great options on Saturday, but they'll have to pick one. At 9 a.m. the Friends of the Lower Appomattox River will host their annual 10-mile "Battle or Paddle" event – *your opportunity for a fun paddle or a competitive race in your canoe, kayak, or SUP. The event begins at Petersburg's Pocahontas Island and the full 10-mile length ends at the Hopewell City Marina near the convergence with the James River. There are also several take-out points along the river for those who do not want to paddle the entire route. At the finish a shuttle will return you and your boat to Petersburg. The entire course is flat water in the tidal section of the river.*

Events Calendar

September 2014						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
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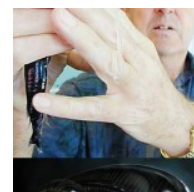
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River lovers also have the option of paddling the falls of the James on Saturday as part of the Tour de Fall Line (<https://www.bikereg.com/tour-de-fall-line>). This first-time event is half paddle, half bike (take your pick) and all celebration of the amazing natural resource we have in the middle of our city. For canoeists, kayakers, and SUPers, events begin at 10 a.m. (or earlier, if you prefer) at Mayo Island, where a shuttle provided by the VCU Outdoor Adventure Program will take everyone up to Huguenot Flatwater. At 10:30 a.m. paddlers can choose to run to Reedy Creek or keep going through the downtown rapids back to Mayo Island where beer, food and music await.



Buttermilk Trail will be part of the course for the 50-miler of Saturday's Tour de Fall Line. Credit: Phil Riggan

James River Outdoor Coalition (<http://jroc.net>) president Patrick Griffin said he wants paddlers of all abilities to come out and have a good time together, and, he added, "the river is very, very low so we will have sweep people to make sure everyone gets down safely."

Mountain bikers have three options as part of the Tour de Fall Line (<http://rvamore.org/>): a 50-, 28- and 14-mile ride. All feature the world famous downtown Richmond singletrack, as well as some of the less well known Pirate Trails (<http://www.richmondoutside.com/2014/08/07/if-stone-arrives-whither-an-rva-pirate-trail/>) and, for the 50-milers, Powwhite (<http://www.richmondoutside.com/destination/powwhite-park/>) and Larus (<http://www.richmondoutside.com/destination/larus-park/>) parks. The \$40 entry fee gets you a supported ride, a pint glass, one Sierra Nevada beer, Lee's Fried Chicken and a concert on Mayo Island when you get back (the same is true for boaters and their \$30 entry fee).

"It's a hellacious deal," said city trails manager Mike Burton. And he's especially right when you consider that any profit goes to JROC and local mountain bike/trail building club Richmond MORE (<http://rvamore.org/>).

So, there you have it folks. Lace 'em up; break out the paddle; pump up the tires. You have options this weekend no matter your outdoors pleasure.

About The Author



Andy Thompson (<http://www.richmondoutside.com>)

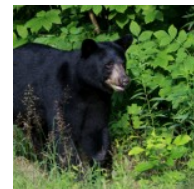
I was the Outdoors Columnist at the Times-Dispatch from 2007 to 2013, writing twice a week about mountain biking, fishing, hunting, paddling and much more. I live a 1/4 mile from the James River, close enough to see bald eagles soaring over my house on their way to find a meal. Pretty cool, eh?

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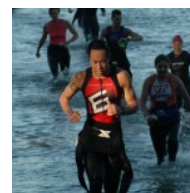
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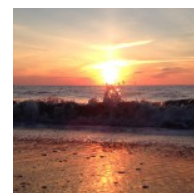
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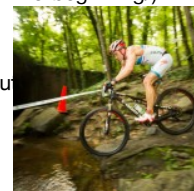
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