

## Carolina Cup Lands Major Support for 2016 Race



*Courtesy of Peter Newman and Aerial Images ILM*

WRIGHTSVILLE BEACH, NORTH CAROLINA, USA – The Carolina Cup, the world’s largest gathering of stand up paddleboard racers, landed key support from West Marine as the 2016 title sponsor.

“We are honored to have West Marine on board,” said race director Mark Schmidt. “Watersports and the water lifestyle are a unique and special family. West Marine has been a mentor and part of this family for almost 50 years.”

Organized by the Wrightsville Beach Paddle Club and sanctioned by the World Paddle Association, the 2015 Carolina Cup attracted top paddlers from roughly 20 nations and 40 states. An estimated 950 people registered for last year’s races and clinics.

“We’re so excited about West Marine’s title sponsorship of this event,” says Deb Radcliff, West Marine Senior Vice President, Marketing. “The Carolina Cup is one of the premier international stand up paddleboard racing events, and we’re proud to have West Marine associated with a race of this caliber. Getting people out on the water is what we’re all about, and The Carolina Cup encourages people to participate in stand up paddling at all skill levels. It’s a ideal partnership, and we’re looking forward to a great event!”

Schmidt also announced Surftech as presenting sponsor for The Carolina Cup. “Surftech is a pioneer of design and innovation in the paddleboard community, making some of the very best high-performance SUP equipment available,” said Schmidt.

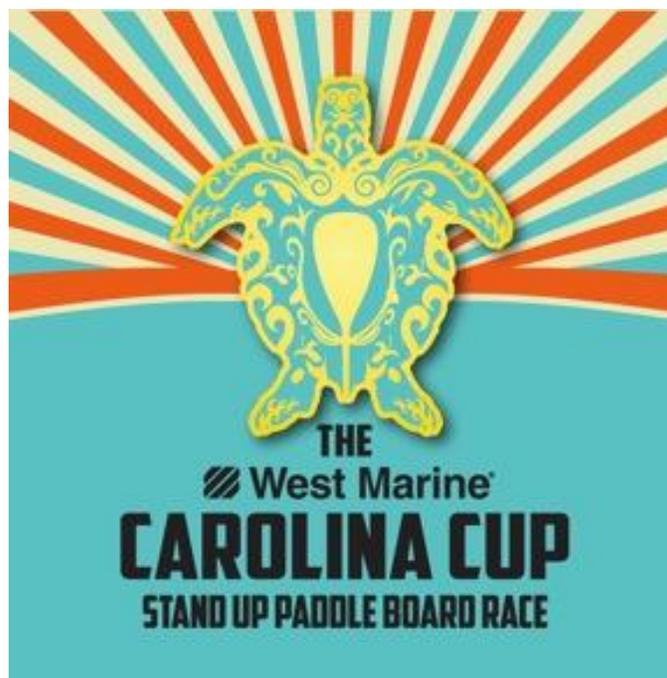
The 6th annual West Marine Carolina Cup presented by Surftech is expected to attract more than 1,000 competitors from around the world. Races, clinics, and expos will be in Wrightsville Beach, April 19-24. All races will begin and end at Blockade Runner Beach Resort.

Australian Travis Grant captured the 2015 men’s stand up paddleboard championship in The Carolina Cup’s grueling 13.2-mile

Graveyard Race. Danny Ching of California, multiple Battle of the Paddle winner and three-time champion of The Carolina Cup, placed second.

In the women's division of the elite Graveyard Race, the top-ranked paddler in the world, Annabel Anderson of New Zealand, returned to Wrightsville Beach and successfully captured her third consecutive victory. Sonni Hönscheid of Germany placed second in the women's division.

A portion of event proceeds benefits The Ocean of Hope, paddlers and ocean enthusiasts dedicated to raising awareness and funds for Sarcoma Alliance to help those fighting cancer.



### **About West Marine**

Founded by a sailor in 1968, West Marine Inc. has grown to become the largest omni-channel specialty retailer exclusively offering boating gear, apparel and footwear, and other waterlife-related products to everyone who enjoys recreational time on or around the water. With more than 260 stores located in 38 states and Puerto Rico and an eCommerce website reaching domestic and international customers, West Marine is recognized as the dominant waterlife outfitter for cruisers, sailors, anglers and paddlesports enthusiasts. West Marine has everything you need for your life on the water. For more information about West Marine, its products and store locations, visit [westmarine.com](http://westmarine.com) or call 1-800-BOATING (1-800-262-8464). West Marine's stock is traded on NASDAQ under the symbol WMAR.

### **About Surftech**

Surftech, "The original board manufacturing company," was founded in 1989 in Santa Cruz, California by Randy French. A pioneer of composite technologies, Surftech was the first company to introduce composite manufacturing to the surfing, paddling, and SUP industry. Surftech's business model has always been about giving board builders a way to scale and expand their businesses with a seamless solution that would complement their existing lineups. In the early

90's, Surftech partnered with a world-class international factory that matched their commitment to excellence, providing unparalleled capabilities, strong environmental practices, unmatched craftsmanship and most importantly could scale to meet demand. Surftech brands include Channel Islands, Donald Takayama, Bob McTavish, Robert August, BARK Paddleboards, Softtop, Blacktip and is the North American Distributor for the NSP brand (Nature, Science, Passion).

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