

Paddlers prep for Stand Up Paddle For Men's Health

Simon Whitfield and 10 others to attempt Vancouver to Victoria crossing

Vancouver—Simon Whitfield and ten other athletes will gather at First Beach on English Bay today at 1PM to assemble their supplies and equipment and do final safety checks prior to their 5AM departure tomorrow morning on the Stand Up Paddle For Men's Health powered by Duracell.

The 11 paddlers will spend the next three days attempting to paddle 140 kilometres from Vancouver to Victoria Harbour. The paddle is organized by Whitfield and the Canadian Men's Health Foundation (CMHF) to coincide with Canadian Men's Health Week and draw attention to men's health issues. The CMHF recently launched a national campaign called Don't Change Much, to inspire men to make small changes to feel better and live healthier.

"Far too many Canadian men needlessly go missing from our daily lives, not because they die, but because they have become very unhealthy or sick," says CMHF Founder Dr. Larry Goldenberg. "We need to change that." Goldenberg will be at the event to thank the paddlers and BC Health Minister Terry Lake for their efforts to raise awareness of men's health issues and support CMHF.

"Raising awareness about men's health is something that benefits all of us," said B.C. Health Minister Terry Lake. "Most British Columbians know that better health often means that we have to

make healthy choices every chance we can. As a father and a husband, I owe it to myself and my family to make any changes needed to ensure I'm part of their lives for as long as possible." Musqueam story teller Henry Charles will perform a traditional First Nations ceremony asking for the safe passage of the paddlers across the Salish Sea and the success of the challenging expedition.

Whitfield says he sees the Stand Up Paddle For Men's Health as a metaphor of how small steps can have a profound effect on people's lives. "It takes about 600 paddle strokes to go 1 KM," says Whitfield. "Over 3 ½ days we will travel 140KM, spending up to 12 hours per day on the boards."

Whitfield says the paddlers will push the limits of endurance while exploring many aspects of men's health. "There is physical activity," says Whitfield. "Nutrition and sleep are important. Our mental state will be critical. We will need to ask for help, work together, find ways to deal with stress, fear, and exhaustion. The team will all need to pull together."

Joining Whitfield for the paddle across Georgia Strait, through Porlier Pass and down Haro Strait and around the southern tip of Vancouver Island are Jack Bark, George Plsek, Lina Augaitis, Chad Guenter, Markus Pukonen, Duff Gibson, Roch Frey, Yannick Michaud, Mike Darbyshire and Morgan Hoesterey.

To support CMHF and the Stand Up Paddle For Men's Health, Duracell has announced they will donate \$1 to the Canadian Men's Health Foundation for every pack of Duracell Quantum batteries purchased at Canadian Tire between June 1-15, 2014. The money will help raise awareness of the problems around men's health and create a new social movement that will

motivate them with health information and lifestyle programs in a way they can truly hear, absorb and act on.

People can follow the paddle at www.DontChangeMuch.ca or on Twitter at #SUP4MH.

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About Canadian Men's Health Foundation

Canadian Men's Health Foundation (CMHF) is a national, non-profit organization founded by Order of Canada recipient Dr. Larry Goldenberg. The mission of CMHF is to inspire Canadian men to live healthier lives. 70 % of men's health problems can be prevented by adopting healthy lifestyles. CMHF will create a new social awareness and motivate men and their families using health information and lifestyle programs in ways they can hear, absorb, and act on. Funding for CMHF has been provided by private donors, grants from the British Columbia Provincial Government and Sun Life Financial.

For more information or to book an interview, please contact: Michael Davis, Director Public Relations, CMHF
michael@menshealthfoundation.ca
604.505.3932