Ladies and Gentlemen ... er, Boys and Girls, Start Your Engines - Sort Of

Friday, 12 June 2009

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Erik Wander/KMXT

About 30 local racers will hit the hill Saturday, when the Kodiak Soap Box Derby takes place. The participants will vie for two spots in the All-American Soap Box Derby championships in Akron, Ohio.

The Soap Box Derby is a youth racing program, held annually since 1934, excluding the years during World War II. After local qualifying races across the country and abroad, championship finals are held each summer at Derby Downs in Akron, Ohio. This is the 10th year the event is being held in Kodiak.

The Kodiak Soap Box Derby takes place from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Saturday. The starting line will be at the intersection of Powell Avenue and Baranof Street next to Baranof Park.

William Kersch of the Lions Club, which sponsors the race, is the local race director. He said participation has been strong in Kodiak in previous years, and this year should be no different.

-- (Kersch 1 30 sec. "It seems like every year ... races in Akron, Ohio.")

Kersch said qualifying for the race in Akron is no easy feat, requiring not only skill and strategy in building and racing the cars, but a certain degree of endurance during the event.

-- (Kersch 2 12 sec. "The time trials and the ... show off their skills, so to speak.")

Kersch said that each year since the race started in Kodiak, the Lions Club has helped pay the way of two local qualifiers, one from each division, to compete in Akron. He said that about 500 qualifiers participate in the national championships, and that at least one Kodiak racer has fared well there in the past.

-- (Kersch
3 15 sec. "Cole Christiansen was one ... including
Dutch Harbor.")

In
addition to Kodiak and Dutch Harbor, Kersch said other Alaska
communities holding local Soap Box Derby qualifying races are Juneau and Homer. He described
the event as a worthwhile activity for youth and their families, and one that
teaches a variety of skills.

-- (Kersch
4 19 sec. "We have 30 kids that work ... when
parents are so busy.")

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Box Derby takes place from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Saturday. The starting line will
be at the intersection of Powell Avenue
and Baranof Street
next to Baranof Park. The 72nd All-American Soap Box
Derby takes place in Akron
July 25th.

I'm
Erik Wander.

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