

Rocky
McKinnon

A NEW WAVE

Grab a paddle and dive into the hottest trend to hit the seas.

Picture yourself standing on a board, gripping a paddle, in the ocean with waves crashing around you. Sound tempting? Already a sensation in Australia and Hawaii, stand-up paddleboard surfing (SUP) is poised to become the next big water sport in surf-crazed Southern California.

Surfing god Laird Hamilton has embraced the sport; he paddled on a stand-up board across the English Channel for charity. "I am convinced that everybody could enjoy this sport at different levels. It is a new application of old ideas for the sport of surfing," he says.

In fact, SUP dates back some 50 years to the "Beachboy" Waikiki surfers, who began teaching it to tourists enthralled by the spectacle of a surfboard guided by paddle.

"The paddle is like a fin," says Chasen Marshall, managing editor of *Longboard Magazine*. "You can lean into it, and use it for torque; it can turn the board a lot sharper than you could otherwise."

Surfing has always enjoyed a mystical reputation; it's a sport where fanatics are eternally in

search of the next adrenaline rush. SUP, on the other hand, is more renowned as a gnarly muscle-builder.

Pro surfer Rocky McKinnon, owner of McKinnon Shapes & Designs in Huntington Beach, CA (35 miles from LA), says, "It's great cross-training. Everything gets worked—arms, legs, back. You get a much bigger full-body workout."

Part of what makes the workout so intense is maintaining balance. The average stand-up paddleboard is 10 to 11 feet long and 4 inches thick, roughly 2 feet longer and 2 inches thicker than a standard longboard. While the extra thickness increases buoyancy, balancing takes practice. McKinnon advises beginners to get their feet wet in flat water before moving on to ocean surf.

Popular spots for SUP include the famed Trestle at San Onofre State Beach (about half way between LA and San Diego); the harbor at Marina del Rey (near LA); and Huntington Beach, where McKinnon offers lessons—and some advice about encroaching on surfer territory.

"There's definitely a backlash

SPORTING EVENTS CALENDAR

AUG. 8-11 • Red Sox vs. White Sox

U.S. Cellular Field • Chicago

It's the battle of the Sox (and Jermaine Dye versus Daisuke Matsuzaka) as Boston travels to Chicago for a heated four-game series that will determine which is better: red or white.

www.mlb.com

AUG. 25-SEPT 7 • The US Open

USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center • New York

Will anyone be able to prevent The Swiss Maestro Roger Federer from securing his fifth straight win? Will Maria Sharapova reclaim her spot on top? Only 14 days, six rounds, and countless forehands, backhands and aces will tell. www.usopen.org

AUG. 29-31 • Bell Isle Grand Prix

The Raceway at Bell Isle • Detroit

Celebrate Labor Day in Motor City with a few days at the track. Catch the action of the American Le Mans Series, the IndyCar Series, and—new this year—the SCCA SPEED World Challenge GT Championship. www.detroitgp.com

among traditional surfers," McKinnon says. "It's hard to be inconspicuous when you're standing on a giant 10-foot-plus board and you can catch any wave that comes in. It's up to the people embracing the sport to be ambassadors and tread lightly."

And to have a whole lot of fun in the process.

McKinnon: Clark Merritt; WildHareNIMages; Matsuzaka: courtesy of the Boston Red Sox