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Saturday, July 16 is scheduled for demonstrations and practice, and the competitive events will start at 2:30 PM on Sunday, July 17. These include a kite-boat race on Elliott Bay, kite fighting, the long-line event, the highest flyer, and the most beautiful kite. Big news is that the Port of Seattle is providing \$500 in merchandise gift certificates, with a \$100 first prize for each event.

Distinguished guests from overseas will include Peter Travis from Sydney, Australia, one of the major exhibitors at the Flags, Banners and Kites show at Seattle Center, and Tsutomu Hiroi from Tokyo, the authority on kites in Japan.

Travis is visiting the U.S. under the sponsorship of the Australian Council, enroute to a crafts seminar at Banff. His large and elaborate fabric kites have been exhibited at art museums around the world, and are the outstanding features of the Seattle Center show. He will fly several of them both days.

Hiroi is well-known to many Seattle kitefliers through his several excellent books, and from his last visit to Seattle in 1973, following his visiting professorship at Denver University. He is enroute to a big exhibition of Japanese kites at Edmonton, and is bringing over 100 with him.

The kite fighting event will be conducted in 3 heats. All contestants may participate in the first 2 heats, with the last 3 to finish in each competing in the third and final heat. First place will be awarded to the last kite in the air at the end of the contest.

The objective of the long-line event is to let out as much line as possible in 2 minutes, at the flattest possible angle. Takeshi Nishibayashi won this contest last year.

The winner's kite in the highest flyer event will be one flying at the highest possible angle (most vertical) at the end of 3 minutes.

The most beautiful kite will be judged on the basis of esthetics and workmanship in the opinion of the judges, whose opinion will be final. Kites must fly for at least 5 minutes to qualify.

The objective of the new kite-boat race is to run the prescribed course in the minimum elapsed time with a kite in the air continuously from start to finish. Course is from Pier 57 to Pier 91 (about 1.3 miles), or the reverse depending on wind conditions. Kite must be launched on takeoff, and must remain airborne for entire length of course. If kite dives into water, crew is permitted to retrieve it provided it is re-launched immediately at point of retrieval, thereby forfeiting time lost for recovery. Same kite must be used for entire run. Emergency repairs are permitted provided kite is re-launched at point where it comes down. Minimum crew is 2 persons - boat pilot and kiteflier - plus an optional observer who must not operate boat or fly kite, but may help with retrieval. If kite is modified enroute (adding tails, etc.) boat must be stopped at kite re-launched at same point. Find a friend with a power boat, come on Saturday for practice and sea trials. Or call Bob McCortt at 345-2240 (days) or 743-7081 (home), coordinator of this event, who is trying to match boaters and kitefliers.

If you haven't seen the International Exhibition of Flags, Banners & Kites at the Flag Plaza Pavillion, don't miss it. There are over 250 entries from 13 countries, with many unusual and beautiful kites - the largest and best show of its kind ever held, according to a visitor from New York. It's free to the public (sponsored by the City, County, and State Arts Commissions and the National Endowment for the Arts), open from noon to 8:00 PM daily through July 24. The catalog of the exhibition doubles as a 1978 engagement calendar, with 53 beautiful color photographs of selected entries - for sale by Allied Arts Foundation, the principal sponsor, at \$7 - a great gift.

During the exhibition The Pacific Science Center is showing a new color and sound film, Kites of Japan at 1:30 and 3:30 PM daily, and also at 5:30 PM weekdays. This beautiful film was produced by The Japan Foundation with the cooperation of the Japan Kite Association, under the direction to Tadao Saito. It includes sequences on traditional kitemaking, kite painting, and flying of many different types of Japanese kites. This showing is the U.S. premiere, thanks to the cooperation of the Japanese Consul General in Seattle.

Dave Checkley

Jul 12, 1977

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