

HOW TO RIDE WHEELIES, TRAIN BETTER, TRAVEL RIGHT

women's Adventure

SUMMER 2012

SUP Queen
**Nikki
Gregg**
On Paddling
Like a Pro
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Standup Paddleboarding

Why SUP?

Why wouldn't you try it? "SUP has so many avenues: fitness, yoga, race, downwinders, surfing, cruising, recreational. Make it as extreme or mellow as you want," says WAM's cover girl and SeasonFive SUP pro, Nikki Gregg. "You can explore everywhere, anywhere. It never gets old."



"If you're not falling, you're not learning."
—Nikki Gregg

80% of people getting into standup paddling do it to get in shape.

Nikki Gregg **GET RIPPED**

Area of SUP expertise: **Fitness and surf**

Nikki Gregg "grew up in a gym" and has worked in the fitness industry for 12 years. She discovered standup paddleboarding while living on Oahu's north shore and, before she knew it, was standup paddle surfing twice a day, spending four hours a day on the water. She became a better surfer, dropped pounds, and toned up. "My gym clients asked what I was doing differently," Nikki remembers. "I said, 'I've been trying this new sport called standup paddling.'" Nikki ultimately created SUP boot camp, which spread to the mainland in 2009 as SUP became mainstream. "It's weird claiming it, but I'm considered the first lady or queen of SUP fitness," Nikki admits. "I was the first girl to run a river on an SUP and run a waterfall. I got into it early and therefore have lots of firsts." Now, champion SUP pro and a SeasonFive athlete, Nikki is the new editor of *SUPPIE* magazine and offered us her SUP fitness expertise. nikkigregg.com

fundamentals

Keep your lower body loose and upper body centered. Absorb choppy water with your knees. When you take your first few strokes, loosen your lower body. Take a deep breath, keep the knees soft, and take a few strokes. Don't look straight down when you're paddling. Look ahead and relax.

Safety

- Make sure you're able to go out in the current conditions.
- Check the boating laws in your area.
- Wear a leash, especially in sketchy conditions, and a PFD if you feel unsure about your swimming ability.

Key skills...

In choppy/windy conditions: Use shorter, quicker strokes rather than long, deep strokes. Get on your knees in extreme wind. Or lay down, put the paddle on your chest and paddle. But, firstly, remember to bend your knees and stay low.

In rivers: Go first with someone who knows what she's doing in the river, and start with class I rapids. Practice ferrying, upstream at an angle. Kayaking skills apply to standup paddling, except class II is like class IV on a SUP—unbelievably harder. Make sure you have the protective gear you need (i.e. butt pads under your dry suit, knee pads, and shin guards). The chance of you connecting with a rock is high.

On waves or in surf: Take a surf lesson and learn surf etiquette before heading out into surf. If not, at least go somewhere where nobody is around. "People think standup paddlers hog the waves, because they can get onto them faster," Nikki says. "New SUPers don't understand what it's like to be a surfer, laying down, paddling into waves, having someone stand over you." Hit the waves head-on, not at an angle. If paddling out, get your speed up, get in a low squatting position (Nikki calls it "crouching tiger"), and paddle as quickly as you can over the wave.