

Bed-Hur

Drag-racing beds through the streets of Eugene

Imagine, if you will, two standard single-size beds flying down the street neck and neck. Drawn by four burly Eugeneans, these gaudy chariots are taking their passengers somewhere other than the land of Nod this time. They're taking them to the finish line, where the immortal glory of winning the inaugural Eugene Celebration Bed Race awaits. They get a "big trophy," too.

Bed racing is an sonombu-tastic phenomenon. There are official guidelines and rules, restrictions on team size, and strategic decision-making on which team member switches places mid-race — all for what will amount to an informal drag race while lying down in a comfy bed.

Aesthetics are another important aspect to the competition. Saturday's bed race at the Eugene Celebration will feature both a race and a beauty pageant.

"Encouraging the most outlandish theme and decorations

is our goal," said Cecile Blumm, the event coordinator.

Bed decoration and team uniforms are crucial. These aren't static, dull floats; these are racing instruments. One cannot go for broke to win the pageantry only to be eliminated after the first race. To win the Double Crown, aesthetics and aerodynamics must be united. Thematic differences aside, the competition will be equal. NASCAR has restrictor plates and thorough inspections to ensure an even playing field; all of the bed racers will be using the same basic beds, tailor-made for the event. It is up to the natural ability, grit and determination of the teams to triumph.

The race pits eight local companies against each other in a single-elimination format. Each team consists of four people to push the bed and run while one pajama-wearing person lies down on the bed. Eugene's bed race deviates from Standard Bed Racing Rules on one key aspect: the

person lying on the bed must switch places — and clothes — with one of the pushers midway through the race. Team uniforms could be a major strategic choice.

The field is limited to eight teams this year, running the gamut from Northwest Community Credit Union to small local law firms. Due to the logistics of making beds and organizing the event, Blumm and company thought it best to start out small. If the inaugural race is as popular as expected, the league will talk expansion.

The Bed Race is the newest event added to the Eugene Celebration, the annual parade to celebrate the unique culture of the city and raise money for Habitat for Humanity in our community.

"Eugene used to have this sense of a tight-knit community," Blumm said. "The Eugene Celebration is trying to bring it back." — *John Locanthi*

10 years

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