



**ROB MACHADO, PERENNIAL U.S. OPEN OF SURFING FAVORITE,
SETS SIGHTS ON A RECORD FOURTH EVENT TITLE**

*Following two-year absence, three-time U.S. Open champion
and Hurley spokesperson returns to world's largest pro surfing competition*

HUNTINGTON BEACH, Calif. – Hurley U.S. Open of Surfing crowd favorite Rob Machado is the ultimate surfers' surfer. An accomplished professional athlete, musician and family man, he chooses to live life on his terms, foregoing the exhaustive travels of the elite world tour, choosing instead to follow a different, more serene path. But even after semi-retiring from competitive surfing in 2005 and a two-year absence from the U.S. Open, Machado remains the man to beat.

The 35 year-old laidback former Junior, National, Pipeline Masters and three-time U.S. Open Champion, one of the most successful "goofyfooters" in California history with nearly two dozen major career victories under his belt, has his sights set on the U.S. Open record books and an unprecedented fourth event title. The world's largest professional surfing competition is held at the Huntington Beach Pier from July 18 to 26, 2009.

The stylish Machado, who is often compared to Gerry "Mr. Pipeline" Lopez, turns assassin during the U.S. Open, assaulting the waves with speed and precision, often delivering last second miracles. Rob's weapon, or in this case strategy of choice, is a modest sand bar at the southernmost boundary of the contest site; appropriately dubbed "Machado's Peak".

Rob first captured the imagination of U.S. Open fans in 1995 when he defeated Kelly Slater in front of a then world record crowd of 75,000 people. The victory catapulted him in the ratings and an eventual showdown with Slater during the season-ending Pipeline Masters in Hawaii, a world surfing title on the line.

In one of professional surfing's more poignant moments, Machado "high-fived" Slater after blasting out of a perfect tube ride. He would lose to Kelly in the semi-finals that day and finish second in the overall ratings race, but Rob's unique character was etched in surfing lore. "We just clicked into a whole different world out there that heat," said Machado. "Everything, the beach, the crowd, the world title, seemed distant at the time. We just went surfing."

Back in Huntington Beach Machado's legend grew; surfing's version of a fine wine – getting better with age. Machado won the U.S. Open again in 2001 and 2006, while placing second in 1999, 2000 and 2005. He started as a trialist in 2003 and advanced through an incredible 11 heats to make the semi-finals, exhausted rubber arms and all. In 2005 he didn't lose a heat from the round of 96 until the final – six straight wins whether it was four-man, three-man or two-man heats. He came up just short against then reigning world champion Andy Irons.

And even that loss was controversial.... With less than 30 seconds remaining and needing a 7.77 to overtake Irons, Machado launched into an unbelievable repertoire of maneuvers; off-the-top, cutback, floater into the inside and then closed with a mind-bending upside down aerial in the shore

break. Thousands of spectators swarmed to the shoreline to offer congratulations. The judges awarded only 7.33, much to the chagrin of the cheering...then jeering crowd. The legend grew even more.

Rob would recapture the U.S. Open crown in 2006, defeating Hawaii's Roy Powers in front of a record crowd of 105,000 cheering spectators at the Huntington Beach Pier.

Machado came to Cardiff by the Sea, California via Australia where he was born in 1973. A prolific amateur career was followed by 12 illustrious years on the pro tour (he began in 1993). These days staying closer to home as a team rider and spokesperson for Hurley, Rob is able to devote more time and energy to another passion: philanthropy.

A Surfers' Hall of Fame inductee and this year's SIMA Waterman of the Year, Rob has established The Rob Machado Foundation, which through his annual golf tournament supports various charities dedicated to environmental programs within Southern California. His foundation also works closely with the Cardiff Education Foundation on efforts to green Machado's hometown's elementary school district. He has also created the Rob Machado Surf Experience, a highly anticipated surf contest for girls and boys 16 and under in Rob's hometown of Cardiff-by-the Sea, Calif.

Rob's goodwill does not stop on the local-level, as this surf legend has also donated his time for an Indonesian well digging project with the Sumba Foundation, and for the Water Innovation Now (WIN) contest, which gave 500,000 kids the opportunity to come up with innovative ways to conserve our water as a result of Southern California's water crisis. On behalf of Surf Aid International, Machado played a major role in raising money and awareness for the plight of children in the Mentawai Islands, an exotic surf destination located off the island nation of Sumatra near Malaysia.

Machado still competes at select competitions, most recently performing well at the Nike 6.0 Lowers Pro in May. As spokesperson and team rider for Costa Mesa, Calif.-based Hurley international, Rob still travels, spreading the "stoke and passion" of surfing – in his own inimitable way – to the sport's next generation. His next stop is Huntington Beach in July.

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About Hurley

Founded in 1999, Hurley is an authentic "Microphone for Youth" brand rooted in surf, skate, art, music and beach cultures. Driven by creativity and freedom of expression, Hurley develops world-class products for guys, girls and kids, including sportswear, footwear, eyewear, accessories, loungewear, swimwear and wetsuits. A wholly owned, independently run subsidiary of Nike, Inc., Hurley's corporate headquarters are located in Costa Mesa, CA, with international offices in Tokyo, Sydney, Barcelona and Bali. www.hurley.com <<http://www.hurley.com/>>.

About the U.S. Open of Surfing

Staged at the famed Huntington Beach Pier, the Hurley U.S. Open of Surfing is the world's largest professional surfing competition. Produced by IMG Action Sports, the leading sports, media and entertainment company, the massive event hosts 500 world-class athletes and draws more than 400,000 spectators over nine days—July 18 to 26. The U.S. Open features North America's only combined men's and women's six-star World Qualifying Series (WQS) competitions along with junior divisions for boys and girls, and longboarding. In addition to world-class surfing, the U.S. Open showcases skateboarding, BMX, music, fashion and art. More information is available at www.usopenofsurfing.com.

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