



RACE ORGANIZERS GUIDE

SANCTIONING OF RACES

- ▶ Races are sanctioned by the Ontario Marathon Canoe and Kayak Racing Association following the completion of a Sanctioning Agreement by the Race Organizer and payment of the Race Organizer's membership fee, subject to approval by the OMCKRA executive. OMCKRA members competing in a sanctioned race earn points towards the OMCKRA Annual Points Awards.
- ▶ Please send your sanctioning request to the sanctioning committee early. Once sanctioning is granted, Certificates of Insurance can be provided to sponsors and to owners of property where the race start and finish is located.
- ▶ **PLEASE SEND YOUR RACE RESULTS TO THE OMCKRA RACE SECRETARY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE** after your race with the name, address, email address and \$5 for each non-OMCKRA member racing.
- ▶ If you have any other questions about organizing and running a canoe and kayak race don't hesitate to contact the Race Secretary or any OMCKRA Executive member.

REGISTRATION FEES

- ▶ Decide well ahead of the race date how much you will need to charge each racer to cover the cost of running your race. Sometimes Juniors and Bantams pay a lower fee. Be sure to advertise registration fees when you promote your race.
- ▶ How you choose to advertise race fees is up to you, but race fees for OMCKRA members should be discounted \$5 compared to paddlers who are not; they pay a "day membership fee" that goes to OMCKRA to cover the necessary insurance costs and administration.
 - OMCKRA members will self-identify using their OMCKRA membership card or you, the organizer, will be provided a membership list at your race. (Current members of Whitewater Ontario and the Ontario Sprint Canoe Racing Association should also receive the insurance discount)

ADVERTISING

- ▶ Take advantage of free ads in HUT! (OMCKRA's newsletter) and the OMCKRA Web Site www.omckra.com
- ▶ Send information in WELL in advance of your race to: info@omckra.com.
- ▶ Advertise in your local newspaper, on local radio, or television, concentrating on the recreational classes you offer
- ▶ OMCKRA members will read about your race in HUT!
- ▶ Advertise directions to the race start, the course, parking, camping facilities, any free food or drink for competitors, sponsors names, proceeds going to charity, or other fun events going on at your race.

ONTARIO MARATHON CANOE AND KAYAK RACING ASSOCIATION

HINTS AND INFORMATION FOR ORGANIZING AND RUNNING AN OMCKRA-SANCTIONED CANOE RACE

RACE CLASSES RECOGNIZED BY OMCKRA

- The chart below summarizes the race classes that are recognized by OMCKRA. Some of the classes that are most commonly offered have been highlighted for your convenience.
- Most races will not have all of these classes. Some races may just hold recreational classes.
- It is important to note that the age as of January 1 is for the January preceding the current racing season.
- Class Gender Boat Type Age as of January 1

<u>Senior Men C2 19 – 39</u>	Master III Men C1 60+
Senior Women C2 19 – 39	Junior Men C1 14 – 17
<u>Senior Mixed C2 19 – 39</u>	Junior Women C1 14 – 17
<u>Master I Men C2 40 – 49</u>	<u>Open Men Recreational/Stock</u>
Master Women C2 40+	<u>Open Women Recreational/Stock</u>
Master Mixed C2 40+	<u>Open Mixed Recreational/Stock</u>
Master II Men C2 50 – 59	Junior Open Kayak 14 – 17
Master III Men C2 60+	Bantam Open Kayak up to 13
Junior Men C2 14 – 17	Touring Open Kayak open
Junior Women C2 14 – 17	Adult – Junior Open Minimum 15 year’s difference between Adult and Junior.
Junior Mixed C2 14 – 17	North Canoe Open Minimum 2 Women
Bantam Open C2 up to 13	Montreal Canoe Open Minimum 2 Women
<u>Senior Men’s C1 19 – 39</u>	Outrigger * OC1 *Classes same as C1
Senior Women C1 19 – 39	Outrigger * OC2 *Classes same as C2
<u>Master I Men C1 40 – 49</u>	Outrigger Men/Women
Master Women C1 40+	OC6 Mixed 3 men and 3 women
Master II Men C1 50 – 59	Stand-Up Board (SUP)

BOAT SPECIFICATIONS

- OMCKRA recommends that the following boat specifications/definitions be adopted by Race Organizers:
 - **C2:** Maximum overall length 18 feet 6 inches; minimum width 27 inches, 3 inches above the bottom, measured within 12 inches of the longitudinal centre, not counting keels, at the widest part of the canoe. Minimum width at the gunwales, skin to skin, shall be 33 inches, within 12 inches of the longitudinal centre. Minimum 15 inch high bow measured from the bottom baseline.
 - **C1:** Hull specifications shall conform to current USCA specifications in effect. In addition, OMCKRA recommends that tarps and bailers be permissible.
 - **RECREATIONAL CANOE:** Any non-racing canoe 17 feet long or less with a minimum width of 32 inches at the 4 inch waterline or at the discretion of the race organizer, is acceptable.
 - **STOCK RACING CANOE:** Any canoe 17 feet long or less with a minimum width of 32 inches at the 4 inch waterline is acceptable.
 - **KAYAK:** Any of the following Kayak specifications may be used by race organizers:
 1. ICF K1 sprint
 2. Kayak KA must meet specifications for down-river single seaters, delta hulls included: Length no more than 14 feet 9 inches (4.5 meters); Width not less than 23 5/8 inches (60 centimeters). No steering devices allowed.
 3. Touring kayaks to include recreational, sea and stock kayaks.
 - **OUTRIGGERS:** All outrigger canoes are acceptable. The OC6 hull shall be min. 400 lbs.
 - **SUP:** OMCKRA has approved no specifications; they are up to the race organizer.
- It is a Race Organizer's responsibility to see that measuring is done at a race. OMCKRA Executive members may be able to help with this, if necessary, but please arrange this well ahead of the race date.

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CHOOSING A COURSE

- The race can be of any distance to meet OMCKRA specifications. A circular route is the most convenient for racers. A point A to point B course involves vehicle shuttles and other complications, but cannot be avoided in some cases. As well, these races are very popular with recreational class racers who like to paddle down river with a current on a course that is visible on a map.
- Features such as shallow water, weeds, portages, rapids, dams, locks and winding rivers make the race more interesting.
- Remember that very shallow water can result in damage to expensive canoes and paddles so paddlers should be notified.
- Any rapids should be Class 1 or 2 at most (This means that waves are not high and relatively little manoeuvring is required).
- In any advertising for a race, clearly define location of the start as well as the registration and start time. Provide a course briefing for all racers prior to the start. Outline the race course, highlighting any tricky areas, marked dangers, portages, rapids, rocks to avoid, etc. Tell paddlers which way to turn at buoys (left to right, or vice versa to avoid collisions) and how turns are marked.
- Outline important points of the OMCKRA Safety Policy that applies to all racers.
- If the course follows a river that opens up into a lake, have floating markers or a patrol boat with a large, colourful flag to indicate the course direction on the lake.
- Let the racers know ahead of time which colour of markers or flag you will be using.
- It is helpful to have a large map drawn on a piece of Bristol board or other stiff backing material at your registration area.
- The map should show the race course and all the markers you have set.

THE RACE SITE

- Have one or two well-marked registration tables set up. Registration staffers should know which classes are offered and be able to determine which class a particular canoe or competitor should race in.
- A labeling system should be developed to identify each boat and the class it is raced in and these labels should be distributed to each team upon registration. White Mac-Tac and a black magic marker work well for this job. Be sure to instruct the racers where to display this on the boat so that it can be easily seen by spotters along the course and the finish recorders.
- Race officials should wear some sort of identifying marker that indicates they can be of help to paddlers with questions.
- On-site washroom facilities, whether permanent or portable, are most desirable. If these are not available; arrange washroom facilities at a nearby restaurant or town building.
- Competitors and spectators appreciate the convenience of refreshments and food at the end of the event.

THE START

- The starting signal should be audible to all race participants. A very effective signal is a blank gun shot. Another effective starting signal is an air horn.
- Whatever starting signal you choose, be sure to try it out before the race, including in windy weather. If all else fails, use an arm signal to start the race: hold up your arm and drop it for the start.
- Ideally a race has most of its finishing close together. To achieve this result, start the slowest classes first, leaving the fastest class, usually the Senior Mens C2, or the ICF K1s, for the last.
- Sometimes there aren't enough canoes in a class to warrant a separate start; therefore several classes can start at the same time.

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- › Be sure to time and record the START time of each class and FINISH time of each boat, as racers like to compare their times.
- › If possible, use a rope as your starting line. Have each class line up in front of it at the start, with the sterns man holding onto the rope with one hand. This provides a fair start for all. Failing this, have racers line the bows of their boats up between two buoys.

DURING THE RACE

- › Depending on the length of the race, there should be one or more checkpoints on the course. This ensures that no racers have dropped out or have had trouble on the way.
- › If possible, have race officials with CB Radios or cell phones follow the race by road, or stationed at checkpoints. They can relay information about the progress of the race back to the race site.
- › If your race has places where the spectators can watch the progress of the race, provide maps showing bridges, turn-around points, etc., and directions to get there.
- › Be sure to have a sufficient number of timers ready at the race finish, to accurately time all the finishing teams and record their finishing place in their class.

AWARDS

- › Be prepared to present any awards as soon as the final results are in or as soon as possible after the race finish, as some racers have a long way to drive home!
- › Prizes are usually awarded to the teams finishing first, second and third, in each class, one prize per paddler.
- › It is best to present the awards in reverse order, e.g. third, second, then first place.
- › A few examples of awards commonly presented include, ribbons, medallions, trophies, T-shirts, gift certificates, local artisan's creations, etc. Don't be afraid to be original!
- › Registration fees should cover the cost of the awards.
- › Some race organizers present a small memento to all the participants regardless of their placing, such as a crest, button, or other souvenir your town or region may distribute (usually your local chamber of commerce is willing to supply these).
- › Be sure to thank your sponsors at the awards ceremony, as well as the volunteers who helped make your event happen.

FOLLOWUP

- › Inform the local newspapers of the results of your race right away, even if it is only the results of your local paddlers. If money permits, send the race results to all participants. We all like to compare times and people will remember your race.
- › Send letters of thanks to sponsors or volunteers who deserve recognition.
- › SEND YOUR REGISTRATION SHEETS AND FINISHING RESULTS BACK TO THE OMCKRA RACE SECRETARY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE with the name, address, email address and the \$5 fee for every "day member" who took part.

Prepared by Sue Schloegel, 1988.
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