

# PADDLE UK SPRINT RACING COMPETITION RULES



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## Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide the Rules that govern:

- a) Sprint Racing (named Canoe Sprint by the International Canoe Federation)
- b) The conduct of that Racing

It follows as closely as possible the wording and sequence of the International Canoe Federation Canoe Sprint and Paracanoe Competition Rules taking effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2025. However, it also contains some additional regulations or changes to those rules as determined from time to time by the Paddle UK Sprint Racing Committee. Where there is ambiguity, or these rules are unclear, the ICF ruling should be applied and will take precedence.

The following words, acronyms and abbreviations are referred to in this document:

**BOA** **British Olympic Association** (the National Olympic Committee for Great Britain)

**ICF** **International Canoe Federation**

**IOC** **International Olympic Committee**

**NF** **National Federation**

**NOC** **National Olympic Committee**

**PW** **Paddle Cymru**

**PNI** **Paddle Northern Ireland**

**PS** **Paddle Scotland**

**PUK** **Paddle UK** (the Governing Body for Canoeing in Great Britain)

**SRS** **Sprint Racing Section of Paddle UK** (responsible to PUK for the control of Sprint Racing competitions in canoes and kayaks over distances up to and including 5000 metres)

**SRC** **Sprint Racing Committee** (elected by the Sprint Racing Section to carry out the objectives of the Section on a day-to-day basis).

**RC** **Regatta Committee** (a sub-committee of the SRC responsible for organising and conducting National Championships and other competitions on behalf of PUK)

## Aims and Definition of Sprint Racing

The aim of a canoe sprint competition is for people to race each other in kayaks and canoes over a clearly defined unobstructed course in the shortest possible time according to the rules. The course should be as flat and still as can be obtained. Although the course length may be any distance up to and including 5,000 metres and competition organised for any craft, the official events and distances recognised by PUK and ICF are the following:

For men and women:	K1, K2, K4, C1, C2, C4	200, 500 and 1000 metres
	K1, K2, K4, C1, C2	5000 metres
For some Junior events:	K1, K2, K4, C1, C2	2500 metres
Paracanoe, men and women Kayak:	KL1, KL2, KL3	200 metres
Paracanoe, men and women Va'a:	VL1, VL2, VL3	200 metres

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## Part I - GENERAL REGULATIONS

There are three levels of competition – International, National Status and Club/Regional

### 1. INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS

- 1.1 The ICF has ruled that all International Competitions must take place in accordance with the ICF Canoe Sprint Competition Rules. All competitions organised by either PUK or a PUK Club are considered international if competitors of a foreign country are invited to participate.
- 1.2 These competitions must be supervised or managed by at least two accredited officials in possession of valid ICF Canoe Sprint Official cards.
- 1.3 Foreign Nationals (Complies with ICF GR 3).
  - 1.3.1 No member of a foreign Federation or club may compete or be invited to compete in an open or national competition within the United Kingdom without permission of the RC.
  - 1.3.2 Only athletes who are members of a club or associations affiliated with a National Federation have the right to participate in an international competition.
  - 1.3.3 An athlete having satisfied 1.3.2 and having obtained the written consent of their National Federation is permitted to compete individually in an international competition.
  - 1.3.4 A competitor may take part on behalf of PUK provided they are domiciled in the UK, if they obtain the authorisation of their Federation of origin. This authorisation has to be sent before 30th November prior to the year concerned to the ICF Headquarters with a copy to the Chairman of the ICF Canoe Sprint Committee.
  - 1.3.5 If they have lived for 2 (two) years or more in the UK, the approval of their Federation of origin is no longer required.
  - 1.3.6 An athlete cannot compete for more than one (1) National Federation in any calendar year.

### 2 BRITISH NATIONAL STATUS COMPETITION

- 2.1 All competitions announced as National Status competitions shall be held in accordance with Paddle UK Sprint Racing Competition Rules.
- 2.2 Athletes who are members of clubs affiliated with a National Federation have the right to participate in a National Status Competition.
- 2.3 National Status Competitions are those at which promotions within the National ability classes take place.
- 2.4 National Status Competitions are organised on behalf of Paddle UK.
- 2.5 All competitors at National Status Competitions must be fit and healthy to compete at this level, and registered with the RC as holding current PS, PC, PNI or PUK, On the Water membership or, if racing in a Junior 'D' class or Mini Sprint, be a Club Associate member of an affiliated club.
- 2.6 Organisers of National Status Competitions shall declare the competition is being held under PUK sprint racing rules.
- 2.7 National Status Competitions require permission from the SRC. Applications shall be directed to the Secretary of the SRC. Such permission would require:
  - 2.7.1 Observance of PUK Sprint Racing Competition Rules. With inclusion of the words "Under Paddle UK Sprint Racing Rules" on all printed matter issued in connection with the competition
  - 2.7.2 Within 14 days of the date of the competition, event risk assessments are to be sent to the SRC.
  - 2.7.3 Compliance with Rule 13.2 regarding Regatta Officials.
- 2.8 National Status Competitions will be included in the official Paddle UK Calendar of events.
- 2.9 Within 14 days of the close of a competition a completed regatta programme with the official results, shall be sent by the Organisers to the SRC Secretary  
[canoesprint.secretary@vol.paddleuk.org.uk](mailto:canoesprint.secretary@vol.paddleuk.org.uk).

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## 3 CLUB AND REGIONAL REGATTAS

During 2025 the rules below will be reviewed and may be changed. Any changes made will be published on the SRC website. This review will be undertaken by the working group which the SRC has set up to look at expanding the number and diversity of local and regional sprint

- 3.1 PUK members are allowed to participate with non-PUK members.
- 3.2 No promotions will be made at Club or Regional Regattas. Performance will not affect National Ranking.
- 3.3 The Rules and Classes may be altered to suit the event requirements.
- 3.4 Organisers of Club & Regional Regattas can include their event in the Handbook Competition Calendar (at no charge) and may place an advert in the Handbook for the event on payment of the appropriate fee.
- 3.5 Club & Regional status competition can be included in the official PUK Calendar of events.
- 3.6 Organisers are asked to encourage all who take part to become PUK members. Where fees are charged, PUK members should be charged a reduced fee.
- 3.7 To ensure uniformity, organisers are to forward the event Risk Assessment to the SRC and follow PUK Sprint Racing Competition Rules as far as possible. Organisers are asked to make it clear in all literature what the event rules will be. Within 14 days of the close of a competition a completed regatta programme with the official results should be sent to the SRC Secretary [canoesprint.secretary@vol.paddleuk.org.uk](mailto:canoesprint.secretary@vol.paddleuk.org.uk).
- 3.8 Paddle UK's information paper 'Running a local Sprint Regatta' is available from the SRC website on this link: [14.-Running-a-Sprint-Regatta.pdf \(paddleuk.org.uk\)](#)

## 4 COMPETITIONS OUTSIDE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM

- 4.1 No Club or member of a Club or individual member of PUK may compete at a Canoe Sprint event outside the United Kingdom without permission from the SRC. See Rule 1.3.3

## 5 MEMBERSHIP OF MORE THAN ONE CLUB OR CHANGE OF CLUB

- 5.1 When a competitor is a member of two or more clubs, they shall, by **March 1st** have declared the name of the club in whose colours they will race for that year.
- 5.2 A competitor joining a second club after March 1st must continue to race for their first club, unless prior consent of their old club has been obtained. The consent shall not be withheld in the case of a change of residence from one area to another.

## 6 ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY AND SPONSORSHIPS

- 6.1 The rules of the International Canoe Federation or the National Olympic Committee shall apply to all matters relating to Amateur Status. At present there are no regulations specific to Amateur Status other than as broadly listed in 6.3.
- 6.2 **Foreign Teams** may receive compensation/assistance authorised by Paddle UK to cover financial expense to participate in a UK competition. Under no circumstances shall any payment exceed the sum of actual expenditure.

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## 6.3 **A Competitor May Not:**

6.3.1 In the practice of sport and in the opinion of PUK manifestly contravene the spirit of fair play in the exercise of sport, particularly by the use of doping or violence.

6.3.2 Have allowed their person, name, picture or sport performance to be used for advertising, except when PUK or its Committees enter into a contract for sponsorship or equipment. All payments must be made to PUK and not to the individual.

6.3.3 Participate in any competition on condition of a financial consideration.

6.4 **A Competitor May Accept**, financial support during a period of preparation and/or actual competition which shall be limited by the rules of PUK and its Committees.

6.4.1 Assistance administered through the BOA or PUK Performance Programmes: living expenses, insurance cover in respect of accidents, illness and disability; personal property, sports equipment and clothing; cost of medical treatment, physiotherapy and authorised coaches.

6.4.2 Compensation authorised by their NOC or PUK Performance Programmes, in the case of necessity, to cover financial loss resulting from their absence from work or basic occupation in the Olympic Games and sports competition or other canoeing activities. In no circumstances shall payment made under this provision exceed the sum which the competitor would have earned in the same period. The compensation may be paid with the approval of PUK or BOA at their discretion.

6.4.3 Prizes won in competition or other canoeing activities, within the rules established by PUK and its Committees and the ICF.

6.5 In all cases which are not covered by the above regulations (6.2 and 6.3), the corresponding rules of the ICF or the BOA shall apply.

6.6 **Procedures to be undertaken by those seeking, obtaining and disbursing sponsorships, sports scholarships and awards.**

6.6.1 Details of all personal sponsorship arrangements, sports sponsorships and other awards, offered to or negotiated by individuals or organisations, must be submitted by beneficiaries to the PUK Committee responsible for administering the particular activity, for registration and approval. When doubt exists regarding the appropriate Committee to whom information should be furnished, PUK Headquarters will arrange for the necessary action to be undertaken.

6.6.2 A central registry of all personal sponsorship arrangements will be maintained by PUK Headquarters and will be available for inspection by authorised officers of PUK.

6.6.3 **The term "personal sponsorship arrangements negotiated by beneficiaries" shall include:**

6.6.3.1 Payments made to athletes selected through the UK Sport Performance Matrix and administered by PUK Performance Director.

6.6.3.2 Sponsorship provided by individuals (not family), commercial, industrial, and public authorities, National and Regional Sports Aid Foundations, Local Authorities, Trust Funds, Educational Institutions and agencies, Clubs and other miscellaneous supportive groups.

## 7 **CLASSIFICATION OF PADDLERS**

7.1 **Junior:** A Junior is a competitor under 18 years of age at the beginning of the current calendar year. A Junior will have junior ability racing status unless promoted to senior ability racing status. Each Junior ability status competitor will be nominated to compete in one of the Junior ability classes as laid down from time to time by the SRC. Juniors who have Senior ability status may race in their appropriate Junior age group in age group designated events, for international selections or National Championship.

7.2 **Senior:** A Senior is a competitor who is over 18 years of age at the beginning of the calendar year. Each Senior status competitor will be nominated to compete in one of the Senior ability classes as laid down from time to time by the SRC.

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- 7.3 **Master (Veteran):** The first year a paddler may compete in a Masters age group event is the year that their thirty-fifth (35<sup>th</sup>) birthday falls.
- 7.4 **Promotions:** Entry into and promotion between classes will be at the discretion of the SRC which will be based on results gained in competition at National regattas and venues nominated by the SRC. An athlete may, on application by his Team Leader with the SRC's agreement, revert to a lower class.
- 7.5 **Mixed Events:** Mixed events where male and female competitors take part in the same boat are permitted.
- 7.6 **Status:** Status in Kayaks has no bearing on status in Canoes and the converse. Similarly, the status in the Paddle-Ability class and/or the Paracanoe classes has no bearing on the status in the ability Kayak and/or Canoe classes, e.g., a Senior A class competitor in Canoe may be in a different Senior class in Kayak.

## 8 BRITISH NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP TITLE AND TROPHIES

- 8.1 In order to be eligible to win a British National Championship title a competitor must:
  - 8.1.1 Be a British Citizen and be a current full PS, PC, PNI or a Paddle UK 'On the Water' member, (Juniors registered as a 'Club Associate Member', may not need full individual Paddle UK membership) and not currently representing or in the selection process to represent another country; or
  - 8.1.2 Have been resident in the United Kingdom and a PS, PC, PNI or a Paddle UK 'On the Water' member, (Juniors registered as a 'Club Associate Member', may not need full individual Paddle UK membership) for at least 2 (two) calendar years. For clarification, the residency shall be calculated as being the 2 years immediately preceding January 1<sup>st</sup> in the year of the relevant competition; or
  - 8.1.3 Be a Refugee athlete who gained UN Refugee status in the UK.
- 8.2 When entering a National Championship, competitors agree to abide by PUK Eligibility Policy and comply with the requirements and procedures of the National Championships organisers.
- 8.3 If a competitor is not a British Citizen and has not been Resident in the United Kingdom and a member of Paddle UK, including, PS, PC & PNI for the necessary 2 (two) years (in accordance with 8 1.1. above) and there are exceptional circumstances then they may apply to the Head of Governance and Compliance requesting discretion to be exercised. Any applications should be submitted at least four weeks prior to any National Championships event in which they wish to compete.
- 8.4 Decisions are final and in the absolute discretion of the Paddle UK Chief Executive who shall consider each case on its own merit. Decisions do not create a precedent for any future cases.

N.B. see also Part V - Special Rules for British National Championship Events

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## Part II - CLASSES AND BUILDING REGULATIONS

### 9 WEIGHT AND DIMENSION LIMITS

Competitors are to ensure their boats conform to the technical requirements stated below. Penalties as described in Part IV; Regulation 31 will be imposed when rules are not complied with.

	Paracanoes		K1	K2	K4	C1	C2	C4
	Kayak	Va'a						
Max length	520	730	520	650	1100	520	650	900
Min weight	12	13**	12	18	30	14	20	30
Min width	50*							
<b>Measurements in cm, weights in kg.</b>								
<p><b>Note:</b> The length of a kayak or a canoe shall be measured between the extremes of the stem and the stern. Stem-bands or other projections of the stem or stern, if any, are to be included. Any rudder forming a continuation of the length of a kayak is not to be included in the measurement.</p> <p>The weight of a boat shall not include any loose fittings, any fixed absorbent material must be dry.</p> <p>Paracanoes adaptation equipment is not regulated but is included as part of the weight of the boat if it is securely attached.</p> <p>* Measured 10cm from bottom of hull.      ** Including hull, ama &amp; iako (crossbeams).</p>								

### 10 ATHLETE IDENTIFICATION AND TRADEMARKS

- 10.1 Boats, accessories and clothing may carry trademarks, advertising symbols and written text.
  - 10.1.1 Advertising materials should be placed in such a way that they do not interfere with athletes' identification and do not affect the outcome of the race.
  - 10.1.2 If an athlete's name is displayed, it shall be placed on each side of the boat under the cockpit.
  - 10.1.3 Athletes should wear clothing in compliance with the club uniform colours registered with the SRC, or those of the national federation they represent if competing as an invited international athlete.
  - 10.1.4 The advertising of tobacco, smoking and strong spirit drinks is not permitted.
  - 10.1.5 Political messages, images, symbols and written text unrelated to sport funding are not permitted.
  - 10.1.6 No part of the athlete's body should be attached to the boat in anyway. Such attachments must be removed.
    - 10.1.6.1 Any strapping used to connect a paracanoes athlete with the boat must be of a "quick release" type which must be demonstrated by the athlete prior to the competition.

### 11 CONSTRUCTION

- 11.1 The boats (kayaks and canoes) must have only one hull (monohull construction) and only a single keel line. Multihull and Catamaran style boats are not allowed.
- 11.2 The boat must be constructed so that it remains buoyant, supports the crew and floats in a horizontal position when filled with water. Boats inherent buoyancy must be supplemented by additional, visible fixed flotation material or by the provision of sealed bulk heads.

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- 11.3 All boats must be built symmetrically along their longitudinal axis.
- 11.4 The hull section and longitudinal lines of the hull of the kayak and canoe must not be concave. Section and longitudinal lines of the hull of a Va'a may be concave or convex.
- 11.5 The deck construction may not be higher on any horizontal point than the highest point of the front edge of the first cockpit.
- 11.6 No foreign substance may be added to the surface of the boat which gives the athlete an unfair advantage. The use of hull lubricant is not permitted.
- 11.7 No part of the boat except the seat (and the footrest or paracanoe adaptive equipment) may have moving parts which can be used to help propel the boat in a way which would give athletes an unfair advantage.
- 11.8 Any data recording devices must be placed in a position in or on a boat or paddle so that they are not visible to athletes during a race. No devices will be permitted that are capable of emitting sound or vibration signals and must not be on a boat during post-race boat control.

## **Kayaks**

- 11.9 Kayaks shall have one rudder. The rudder must be placed under the hull of the boat.
- 11.9.1 The boat must be designed for athletes to sit-in (Kayak type) except Paracanoe, where sit-on (Surf Ski type) kayaks are permitted.
- 11.9.2 Weed deflectors can be a maximum 20cm long and cannot be deeper than the rudder.

## **Canoes**

- 11.9.1 Steering rudders or any guiding apparatus directing the course of the canoe are prohibited.
- 11.9.2 C1 and C2 boats may be entirely open. The minimum length of the opening shall be 280cm and the top edge of the hull (gunwale) can extend maximum 5cm into the craft along the whole opening. The boat can have a maximum of 3 strengthening bars with a width of maximum 7cm each.
- 11.9.3 C4 canoes may be entirely open. The minimum length of the opening shall be 390cm and the top edge of the hull (gunwale) can extend maximum 6cm into the craft along the opening. The boat can have maximum 4 strengthening bars with a width of maximum 7cm each.

## **Va'a**

- 11.10 The Va'a must be a single hull Va'a, rigged with a single ama (outrigger pontoon) and double iako (crossbeams), separated by at least one seat.
- 11.10.1 Either sit-in or sit-on-top Va'a may be used.
- 11.10.2 Rudders, skegs and projecting keels are not permitted.

## **11.11 Innovations**

- 11.11.1 Significant innovations in equipment including, but not limited to, boats, related equipment and clothing, must comply with items 3.2.8 and 3.2.9 of the ICF Canoe Sprint Racing Rules.

## **11.12 Paracanoe**

- 11.12.1 Modifications are permitted for stability if the boat is made slower. (i.e. stabilizing pontoons).
- 11.12.2 Adaptation equipment is not regulated but is included as part of the weight of the boat if it is securely attached.
- 11.12.3 Any strapping used to connect an athlete to their boat and the athlete with their paddle must be of a "quick release" type.
- 11.12.4 Athletes are required to wear a Personal Floatation Device (PFD) that meets minimum requirements of BS EN ISO 12402-5. Athletes may not wear a PFD if they sign a waiver indicating they have excellent swimming ability, and not wearing a PFD presents no risk of personal injury or harm.



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## 12. Boat Control

- 12.1 The length of a kayak or a canoe shall be measured between the extremes of the stem and the stern. Stem-bands or other projections of the stem or stern, if any, are to be included. Any rudder forming a continuation of the length of a kayak is not to be included in the measurement

### **Before Weighing the Boat:**

- 12.2 Unless attachments consisting of water absorbent material are absolutely dry, they will be removed, along with all loose items, before the boat is weighed.

## Part III - ORGANISATION OF COMPETITIONS

## 13 Officials

### **Duties of the Organising Committee**

- 13.1 An Organising Committee is responsible for the preparation and running of the competition. The Organising Committee shall, in particular:

- 1) Fix the date and the programme of the regatta in agreement with the SRC.
- 2) Draw up and distribute the advance programme including the date and time of the team leaders' meeting.
- 3) Make available a stretch of water and technical equipment conforming to the present Sprint Racing Competition Rules.

### **13.2 Competition Committee**

The competition will be managed by a Competition Committee consisting of:

- 1) Chief Official
- 2) Chief Judge
- 3) Deputy Chief Judge

For National status competitions two members of the competition committee must be registered Regatta Officials of the Paddle UK Sprint Racing Section.

International regattas must be supervised or managed by at least two accredited officials in possession of valid ICF Canoe Sprint Official cards.

### **13.3 Duties of the Competition Committee:**

- a) Direct and supervise the competition.
- b) Postpone the competition and decide, if possible, when the competition can resume in the event of inclement weather or other unforeseen circumstances.
- c) Decide on matters concerning disqualification in cases where the rules have been broken during the competition.
- d) Hear any protests that may be made and settle any disputes that may arise.
- e) Hear the opinion of the Course Umpire who controlled the race in which the infraction was said to have occurred, before any decision is made regarding an alleged infraction of the rules.
- f) Make decisions based on the PUK Sprint Racing Competition Rules and the Terms / Conditions of Participation, if necessary, impose penalties as described in Part IV, Regulation 31.
- g) Penalties in accordance with PUK Rules or the SRC Disciplinary Regulations may also be imposed: i.e. disqualification for a longer period than the duration of the competition in question.
- h) Should a competitor be injured during a heat, the Committee may allow them to participate in another heat.
- i) A member of the Competition Committee may not participate in a judgment connected with an incident directly involving or a disqualification of a competitor from their own club.

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13.4 If the nature and extent demand, a competition should be held under the supervision of the following officials:

Chief Official	Aligner(s)
Chief Judge	Starter(s)
Deputy Chief Judge	Course Umpire(s)
Competition Manager	Turning Point Umpire(s)
Boat Controllers	Finish Line Judge(s)
Announcer	Media Officer
	Event Secretary

If circumstances permit, one person may function in two of the above positions.

13.5 The Chief Official, Chief Judge, Deputy Chief Judge, Competition Manager, Starter, Umpires, should, if possible, be registered Paddle UK Regatta Officials.

13.6 **Unauthorised persons must not enter any official's area unless invited by the Competition Committee or Jury.**

13.7 **The National Championship Competition Jury:**

- a) A protest made during the competition must be submitted in writing (hard copy or electronic) by the Club's Team Leader to the Competition Committee not later than 20 minutes after publication of the results.
- b) An appeal against a decision of the Competition Committee must be addressed to the Chairman of the Jury in writing (hard copy or electronic) not later than 20 minutes after the Team Leader has been informed, in writing (hard copy or electronic) by the Chair of the Competition Committee, of the decision against the competitor or crew.
- c) Final authority for National Championship Competitions shall rest with a Jury composed of a Chairman and four members.
- d) The members of the Jury shall be appointed by a quorum of the SRC prior to the commencement of the competition. (In the event of a quorum not being present, the Chairman, Vice Chairman, or another official of the SRC and two Committee members may appoint the Jury).
- e) The Chairman of the Jury will be the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the SRC or an elected SRC member.
- f) The decision of the Jury is final.

13.8 **Duties of Officials**

13.8.1 **The Chief Official**, who is also the Chair of the Competition Committee, will decide on all matters arising during the competition that are outside of these rules.

*With the confirmation of the Competition Committee, may disqualify any competitor who behaves improperly or who, by their conduct or speech, shows contempt towards the competition officials, other competitors, or onlookers (see Rule 31.6).*

All officials are responsible to the Chief Official.

13.8.2 **The Chief Judge** will:

- a) Cooperate with the Chief Official and substitute for the Chief Official where necessary.
- b) Collect the forms necessary for the administration of the competition.
- c) Formulate and record the decisions of the Competition Committee relating to any protests.

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## 13.8.3 **The Deputy Chief Judge** will:

- a) Cooperate closely with the Chief Official and the Competition Manager and will handle the administrative tasks of the competition.
- b) Check the personal identification documents of the competitors and their age if necessary.
- c) Liaise with computer room operatives and supervise the processing of data and results.
- d) Check the results, race by race during the competition and prepare the list of the boats qualified to the next phase of the competition.

## 13.8.4 **The Competition Manager** will

- a) Keep in constant contact with the officials and technical support staff.
- b) Supervise the races and ensures that the competition schedule is followed without unnecessary delay.
- c) Complete the competition administration (competition schedule, draws, results, technical documents, boat control, press, protest etc.).
- d) Ensure that the announcer gives all the necessary information about the races such as the start order, the name of any athletes failing to start and the results.

## 13.8.5 **The Boat Controller(s)**

- a) The ID Controller(s) (International competitions only) must only allow athletes to compete in the race whose identification has been checked and whose body number conforms to the rules. They will also check for any performance enhancing foreign substance on the boat and any forbidden devices as mentioned in Part II. The Official in charge must inform the Competition Committee in the case of a missing boat or infringement of the competition rules.
- b) Post-race Boat Controller(s) will check boats after races. One or more competitors may be selected at random to bring their boats to Boat Control after each race, except in the case of a National Championship finals where the first 4 boats to finish will be selected.

## 13.8.6 **The Starter(s)** will:

- a) Decide all matters concerning the start of the races,
- b) Be solely responsible for resolving false start issues.
- c) Ensure that the start equipment is in working order.
- d) Communicate with the Competition Committee before each race. After having received a signal from them that all is ready, order the boats to their places.
- e) Utilise English in all communications with the athletes, plus other languages if possible and deemed appropriate in the circumstances (International competitions only)
- f) Carry out the start according to the Racing Rules.
- g) Ensure that the circumstances at the start are free from any hindrance.

**All decisions of the Starter are final.**

## 13.8.7 **The Aligner** the duty of the aligner is to bring the boats to the starting line with the least possible delay. Their duties will be to check the competitors team colours and lane numbers. If an automatic start system is in use, the Aligners duties may be performed by Course Umpires who will be positioned behind the starting line. They will have an unobstructed view inside the start system's boots.

When all boats are aligned and in the boots the aligner will raise a white flag signifying to the starter that they are in position to start. When the boats are not in the boots, the aligner shall raise a red flag. If there is no automatic starting system, the aligners may be repositioned.

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## 13.8.8 **The Course Umpire(s)** will:

- a) Ensure that during a race the Racing Rules are complied with, particularly those described at 26 to 29 in Part IV of these regulations.
- b) Show a white flag after the race has completed if there is no infraction of the rules to report.
- c) Show a red flag after the race has completed if there is an infraction of the rules.
- d) Report verbally (by radio) immediately any infraction to the Competition Committee if the rules are broken.
- e) When requested, present a written report (hard copy or electronic) to the Competition Committee within 10 minutes in such a case.
- f) Follow the 1,000m races in a motorboat: Ideally, races should be accompanied by two (2) Course Umpires in two (2) separate catamaran type boats.
- g) Do not follow the 200m races: Up to two (2) Course Umpires in two (2) separate motorboats may be positioned before the start line. Up to two (2) Course Umpires in two (2) separate motorboats may be positioned behind the finish line.
- h) In 500m races either system as used for 1,000, or 200m races may be adopted for the Course Umpires to do their task. The Chief Official will decide on the most appropriate system to be used, based on their opinion of the course features.
- i) If necessary, judge the race from the Finish Tower: as instructed by the Chief Official.
- j) Be completely unhampered during the race: No one except the Course Umpire and the driver shall be admitted to the boat reserved for them.
- k) In the case of external hindrance or obstruction, stop the race by passing all boats in the race and waving a red flag and/or using a sound signal until all boats have stopped paddling. Immediately report the occurrence to the Competition Committee. After this all boats shall return to the start.
- l) In long distance races with many athletes, multiple Course Umpire will be nominated.

## 13.8.9 **The Turning Point Umpires**, when a race is run along a course with one or more turning point, one Umpire, who may be accompanied by a Recorder must be stationed at every turning point, positioned where they gain the best view of the turn.

- a) The Turning Point Umpire shall ensure that the Racing Rules are complied with, particularly those described at 28 in Part IV of these regulations. The Umpire/Recorder shall make a list of all who pass the turning point.
- b) Immediately after the race, the Turning Point Umpire shall report to the Competition Committee as to who has turned and if any infraction of the rules has taken place.

## 13.8.10 **The Finishing Line Judges** will:

- a) Be placed in a position where all lanes at the finish line can be clearly seen.
- b) When required, time each race with at least two (2) stopwatches. When stopwatches have not recorded the same time, the slowest time will be taken as correct. The stopwatches are to be started when the electronic or optical signal from the start is received.
- c) Decide the order in which the boats have crossed the finishing line when there is no Photo Finish system.
- d) Use a simple majority to decide a dispute in the absence of a Photo Finish system and where the Finish Line Judges differ, regarding determining the places of two (2) or more boats. In the case of equal voting the Chief Finish Line Judge has the casting vote.
- e) Determine the results and compare them with the photo finish results. When there is a Photo Finish system, the photo finish will be decisive.
- f) Record the position of the athletes in the boat (with a video camera if one is available) at the time of arriving at the finish line. The Chief Finish Line Judge will decide whether the athlete is in their boat at the finish line and report to the Competition Committee if necessary.
- g) One (1) of the Finish Line Judges will; be appointed as Chief Finish Line Judge who will:
  - i) Ensure that the timing equipment is working correctly. They may divide the work amongst the Finish Line Judges.
  - ii) Compare the official times/positions with the other Finish Line Judges at the end of each race and immediately inform the Deputy Chief Judge.

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- 13.8.11 **The Announcer** shall, on the instructions of the Competition Manager, announce the start of each race, the order of the starting and the position of the competitors during the race. After the race is finished, they will announce the results.
- 13.8.12 **The Media Officer** must supply all the necessary information to the representatives of the press, radio and television about the race and its progress. The Media Officer may ask for information from other officials.
- 13.8.13 **The Event Secretary** will:
- Liaise closely with, and provide administrative support to, the Competition Jury, the Competition Committee, and the Competition Manager for the duration of any competition.
  - Liaise and provide administrative support to Team Leaders regarding late crew change or withdrawal (scratch) requests, comments and other related matters.
  - As required, facilitate communication between the Competition Jury, the Competition Committee, the Competition Manager and Team Leaders for the duration of any competition.

## **It is the Officials' obligation to perform their tasks in conformity with the Paddle UK Sprint Racing Competition Rules.**

Every official has an obligation to check the equipment necessary to perform their tasks is in working order. If a shortcoming is found, it must be reported to the Chief Official or Competition Manager.

**Unauthorised persons must not enter any Officials' area unless they are called for by either the Competition Committee or the Jury.**

## 14. **Invitations**

An invitation to an Open Regatta shall contain the following information:

- Date and place of the competition.
- Situation and plan of the course.
- Proposed events.
- Competition Programme.
- Whether the races are to be held on still or running water, up or down stream and minimum depth of water.
- Amount of entry fee.
- Address (electronic) to which entries should be sent and the last date for receiving entries. This date shall not be earlier than 14 days prior to the first day of the competition.
- Conditions/terms of participation.

## 15. **Entries**

15.1 Entries for Open National Regattas can only be made in accordance with the regulations given in the invitation. An entry shall, however, always contain the following information:

- Name of club or federation to which competitors belong.
- Classes and distances in which the competitors propose to compete.
- Name, sex, age, citizenship, national federation/PUK membership number of competitors.
- Similar details of reserves if any (international competitions only).
- All entries should be submitted through the Online Entry System by the given deadline (10pm on the due date).
- Late Regatta Event Tickets requests are not normally accepted. The acceptance of a late entry will only be considered during the Team Leaders Meeting, in exceptional circumstances and shall be at the discretion of the Competition Committee. When accepted, the full Regatta Event Ticket cost plus an additional surcharge of 50% will be charged.
- Racing Colours**

When making the entries, Clubs/squads must have given the colours of the uniform to be worn by the competitors, these colours must not be changed during the competition. **N.B.** Every sprint racing club must register their racing colours with the RC (and any planned changes). Competitors must wear correct club/squad colours visibly at all times while racing.

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- 15.2 The Regatta Committee will accept entries which conform with these racing rules and conditions/terms of participation up to the entry deadline. The Regatta Committee can reject or delete from the competition, entries of participants if it is found they have failed to observe the racing rules and/or the national regatta conditions/terms of participation.
16. **Regatta Programme**
- 16.1 Not later than 48 hours before the first race of the regatta, the programme shall be available, giving the names and citizenship/clubs of the competitors and the results of any draws.
17. **Heats and Finals**
- 17.1 At least three boats should be entered before a race can be held. If the number of entries in races up to and including 1,000 metres is so great that heats are necessary, the number of kayaks or canoes in each heat and in the final must not exceed nine.
- 17.2 The division of competitors into heats shall be determined by drawing lots or by national rankings.
- 17.3 For National regattas the procedure for selecting competitors to race in finals will be based on one of two criteria: either by time or by positions as obtained in heats. The criterion used for each event will be decided by the RC and published in the programme.
- 17.4 Where the width of the course permits, eight or nine kayaks or canoes shall participate in the final if more than this number has been entered in the entire event, as follows:
- |                  |                                               |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| 3 to 9 entries   | Direct final.                                 |
| 10 to 18 entries | Two heats, one Final.                         |
| 19 to 36 entries | Required number of heats (3-4), two Finals.   |
| 37 to 54 entries | Required number of heats (5-6), three Finals. |
| 55 to 72 entries | Required number of heats (7-8), four Finals   |
| 73 to 90 entries | Required number of heats (9-10), five Finals  |
- 17.5 When making the draw, the difference between the number of competitors in the heats of the race shall not exceed one. If the number of competitors in the heats varies, the earlier heats shall have the largest numbers.
- 17.6 Any boat which has not taken part in a heat as instructed is not allowed to compete in the final. Nor may the composition of a crew be changed between heats, semi-finals or final. Any boat which has qualified for a semi-final or final must compete as instructed in the semi-final or final. Unless the competitor is unable to continue and withdrawing from the whole competition due to illness or injury.
- 17.7 Heats and finals must be run on the same stretch of water.
- 17.8 For races of more than 1,000 metres, heats shall not be held, and all boats taking part shall start simultaneously.
- 17.9 Should the width of water not permit a simultaneous start, starts at regular intervals shall be permitted.
18. **Team Leaders' Meeting**
- At least 1 hour before the first race of the competition, a team leaders' meeting will have been held. This meeting may be held online. The Regatta Committee reserves the right to hold this meeting online on the Tuesday the week preceding the competition. The Chief Official will describe the regatta course and all other arrangements, which should be adhered to for the duration of the competition. The Chief Judge will describe the competition programme and ask for any changes to the entries. At this meeting the names of team leaders should be confirmed.
19. **Alterations to Entries and Withdrawals**
- 19.1 Notification of any alterations in the crews before the Team Leaders' meeting to be submitted in written (electronic form) to the Chief Official. After the Team Leaders' meeting, any alterations to crews must be submitted in writing (electronic form) at least **one hour before the race**.
- 19.2 The withdrawal from a race is considered final and no renewed entry of the same crew is allowed.

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- 19.3 Every competitor whose entry has been confirmed, at the time of the team leaders meeting or subsequently not deleted (at least one hour before the event) via the electronic withdrawal form is obliged to take part in their event.
20. **Alterations in the sequence of events**  
The sequence of races given in the programme and the intervals between races as given in the racing programme are binding on the organisers. Alterations cannot be made unless the respective Team Leaders at the competition give their consent.
21. **Course (1000m – 500m – 200m), Markings and Layout**  
The standard sprint course for National Competitions, (nine (9) lanes) must provide fair and equal racing conditions for all crews racing in separate, parallel lanes over the distances
- 21.1 Before the start of the races the racing course shall be measured and marked by means of clearly visible buoys no more than 25 meters apart
- 21.2 Both the start and the finishing lines shall be marked with 2 red flags and 2 red buoys, at the points where these lines intersect the outer limits of the course
- 21.3 The standard course consists of up to nine (9) lanes. Each lane must be at least nine (9) m wide, straight and without any obstacles.
- 21.4 The red flags of the finish line shall be placed as much to the outside as possible in order to get the widest feasible finish line.
- 21.5 The last buoys must be marked from No one (1) to nine (9) and zero (0). The numbering goes from the left to the right with the number placed on the buoy in such a way as to be clearly visible from the finish tower. *When there is television coverage of an event, the lane numbering may be in the opposite direction – from right to left, so that the list of competitors and their lanes shown on the television screen match the appearance of the races to be televised*
- 21.6 The numbered cube-shaped should be fixed no closer than one (1) metre and no further than two (2) metres behind the finish line.
- 21.7 The numbered buoys must be clearly visible to the athletes and to be on the corresponding athlete's right-hand side as they pass it.
- 21.8 Heats and the final must be run on the same stretch of water.
- 21.9 The course settings for National competitions can be variable with the approval of the Sprint Racing Committee

## **Course Markings and Layout Longer than 1000m: see the Standard Operating Procedure**

22. **Boat Numbers**  
All kayaks and canoes shall carry a vertical number plate made of non-transparent material marked with black numbers on white background indicating the lane. The numbers on the plate must measure 15 cm in height and 25 mm in thickness. The plates shall be placed on the centre line of the afterdeck or thwart. The size of the number plate shall be 18 x 20 cm. Any personal numbers provided by the organisers shall be placed on the competitor as required by the organisers.
23. **Instructions for Competitors**  
Written instructions shall be available for competitors at least 2 hours before the start of the competition, containing the following information:
- a) Detailed information on the courses and their markings
  - b) Starting time
  - c) Starting line
  - d) Finishing line
  - e) Competitors racing number (if used)
  - f) Type of boat control
  - g) Position of any award ceremony

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## Part IV – COMPETITION REGULATIONS

### 24. Means of Propulsion

- 24.1 Kayaks shall be propelled solely by means of double-bladed paddles.
- 24.2 Canoes and Va'a shall be propelled solely by means of single-bladed paddles. Paddling in Va'a is only allowed while the paddler is in a sitting position, with their bottom in contact with the seat during the race.
- 24.3 The paddles may not be fixed to the boat in any way.

### 25. Start

- 25.1 Competitors shall be on the water at the start area, not less than three (3) minutes prior to the specified time of their race. The start area is defined as being the area of water within 100 metres before the starting line.  
Two minutes before the defined starting time the competing boats must take the lane allocated.
- 25.2 Competitors shall be at the start area in time to allow satisfactory preparation for the start.
- 25.3 The start must commence without reference to any absentees.
- 25.4 If a competitor fails to start a final having taken part in the heat without a valid reason approved by the Competition Committee, will be penalised. A competitor, who arrives too late at the start, be considered to have voluntarily withdrawn and will be penalised under this rule.
- 25.5 When signalled by the Starter, the competitor will take the start position designated so that the bow of the boat is on the start line. When an automatic starting system is employed, the bow of the boat must be completely in the start machine. When all boats are properly aligned, the aligner, if used, will then raise a white flag.
- 25.6 If the Starter is not satisfied with the line-up they will call "STOP", and hand over to the Aligner for repositioning.
- 25.7 The starting command will be "Ready – Set – Go" ("Go" can be a shot or strong signal). At the "Ready" command the competitors begin their preparation to paddle. At the "Set" command the competitors place their paddle in the catch position. The competitor must not paddle forward or this action will be deemed to be a false Start. The boat must not move forward at this point in the starting procedure. The Starter when satisfied with the competitors positioning and attention will say "Go" (or shot or powerful sound). The competitors must only react to the start command/signal "Go" and are not permitted to anticipate it. The competitors can paddle only upon hearing the starting signal/command "Go".
- 25.8 In the event of a false start, the Starter must immediately give a powerful sound signal. On hearing this signal all competitors must stop paddling and follow the Starter's instructions for a new start. Before the new start, the Starter must identify the offending crew/s and give them a warning. In the event of a second false start by the same crew the boat will be disqualified from the race and must leave the starting area and the course immediately.
- 25.9 The Starter may also recall competitors for a new start in the event of any unforeseen circumstance – a malfunction of the starting equipment for example. In such a case the same powerful sound signal must be given. If a malfunction of the starting equipment was caused through a boat making a false start, the crew must be given a warning, even though that boat may not have crossed the start line. If the malfunction was not the cause of any competitor making a false start, no penalty shall be imposed.
- 25.10 The Starter will start the race when they are satisfied that everything meets with their approval. The Starter will report any disqualification to the Chief Official.

### 26. Paddling on the Course

#### 26.1 In races up to 1,000 metres:

- a) A competitors must keep the whole of their boat within the five (5)-metre wide central area



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of their lane from the start to the finish of the course. Upon any deviation, the boat must go back immediately to this central area of the lane.

- b) If a boat fails to actively return and/or gains an advantage in the race the boat may be disqualified from the event.
- c) A boat which leaves its allocated lane should be disqualified from the event.
- d) When receiving a written report from the Course Umpire, the Competition Committee must decide whether any of the athletes concerned may be disqualified or not, before the result of the race is announced.
- e) If a race is declared null and void, no change of the composition of a crew is permitted at the new start.
- f) If there is a capsize the competitor or crew is eliminated (DNF) from the race.
- g) The Course Umpires may use red flags and sound signals to interrupt a correctly started race. Competitors must immediately stop paddling and await further instructions.
- h) If a paddle is broken a competitor cannot be provided with a new one.

26.2 Paracanoe races only: Spray decks must not be used unless permitted by the Chief Official due to severe water conditions.

## 27. **Pacing**

27.1 Taking pace or receiving assistance from boats not in the race or by any other means is not permitted.

27.2 When a race is in progress crews not taking part in the race are strictly forbidden to proceed over the whole or part of the course, even outside the marking buoys.

## 28 **Competitions for Long Distance**

### 28.1 **Races of more than 1,000 metres;**

- a) A competitors may deviate from their lane providing they do not impede other competitors.
- b) When a race is run on a course with turning points these shall be passed to port (i.e. in an anti-clockwise direction) unless instructions for clockwise turns are given prior to the competition.
- c) A competitor will not be disqualified for touching a turning point buoy. In making a turn, the boat shall follow as closely as possible the course as marked by the buoys at the turning points.
- d) If there is a capsize the athlete or the crew is eliminated (DNF) from the race if they are not able to get in the boat without assistance;.
- e) Any competitor who unnecessarily deviates from their course may be subject to a penalty or disqualified. If the Course Umpire believes the competitor has gained no positional advantage on other competitors, a time penalty of 10 secs will be imposed. If the athlete has gained a major advantage and gained positional places in the race by not following the course, they will be disqualified.
- f) If equipment is broken during the race (e.g. paddle, boat, rudder, etc) athletes can receive help safely to fix the equipment or to get a replacement.

### 28.7 **Group Racing and Overtaking**

- a) When a boat is overtaking another boat, it is the duty of the overtaking craft to keep clear of other competitors at all times.
- b) When athletes are racing in a group of boats it is the duty of all the athletes in the group to keep clear of other boats at all times. This rule applies to any manoeuvring within the group.

28.8 **Collision or damage.** A collision will be an event where a competitor or any part of their boat or paddle touches another athlete's boat or paddle in a way that disadvantages that athlete. Any competitor who is considered by the course umpire or race official, to have been responsible for a collision, or who damages the boat or paddle of another athlete may be disqualified and can be required to pay damages.

28.8.1 Any athlete who is considered by a Course Umpire or Chief Official to have been responsible for a collision, or who damages the boat or paddle of another athlete or unnecessarily deviates

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from the direct racing line or deliberately blocks or impedes the path of an athlete may be penalised or disqualified.

- 28.8.2 If it is considered that other paddlers have only had some minor disadvantages compared to other athletes as a result of the incident, the responsible athlete will get a time penalty of 10 seconds.
- 28.8.3 If it is considered that the incident has caused other paddlers a major disadvantage the penalty will be disqualification (DSQ) of the offending athlete.
- 28.8.4 Time penalties, as decided by the Chief Official, are not subject to a protest or an appeal.
- 28.8.5 If a boat fails to follow the correct course, by passes inside a turning point buoy, that boat will be disqualified.
- 28.8.6 It is the responsibility of a trailing boat to avoid being forced inside a turning point buoy by a leading boat.
- 28.9 **Lapped boats** Lapped boats must not interrupt or block boats that overtake them. They are not allowed to wash ride on the boats that overtake them.
- 28.10 **Portages** Competitors may only portage at points designated by the race organisers. They must disembark in the defined area, carry their boat through the portage and embark in the defined area. No assistance is allowed during the portages. The rules of collision and damage are in effect during all phases of the portages as well.

## 29. **Finish**

- 29.1 The boat has finished the race when its bow crosses the finish line with all crew members in it. The Finish Line Judges will determine the result of the competition based on the order of the boats arriving at the finish line.
- 29.2 If two or more boats reach the finish line at the same time, they are awarded the same classification in the final. In the case of a dead heat finish for any position, which determines the advance to the next level of the competition the following rules will apply:
  - a) Wherever there are sufficient number of lanes available in the next level of the competitions, drawing of lots will determine to which race each boat will advance. If necessary, lane number 10 will be used.
  - b) Where there are not enough lanes available the Competition Committee may order a re-race between the boats involved after the last race of the day, or half-day programme or draw lots. This decision will be made by the Chief Official.
  - c) In the case of a dead heat in the re-race, drawing of lots will determine the outcome
- 29.3 National event: One (1) or more competitors may be selected at random to bring their boats to Boat Control after each race, except in the case of a National Championship finals where the first 4 boats to finish will be selected.

## 30. **Tasks of Competitors after the Race**

- 30.1 The competitor must leave the course after the finish of the race without disturbing the next race.
- 30.2 The crews selected by the Competition Committee for boat control must proceed immediately to post race boat control, failure to do so will be penalised.
- 30.3 If selected for doping control, the competitor must comply with the obligations stipulated by the Paddle UK Anti-Doping policy.
- 30.4 Before the award ceremony the top three crews of the final must be present at the location and time indicated.
- 30.5 At National Championships, competitors must wear club, team/squad Racing Colours or Tracksuit at the award ceremony.

- 31. **Penalties.** Any infringement of the Sprint Racing Competition Rules or the Terms/Conditions of Participation will result in the imposition of a penalty. At the discretion of the Competition Committee this penalty may be either Disqualification, or a Warning delivered to a competitor via their Team Leader. At National Sprint Regattas a further option is the award of Penalty Points in accordance with National Sprint Regattas Disciplinary Procedures as described in Section B. In determining the specific form, a penalty will take, the Competition Committee will

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consider factors including, but not limited to, the nature of the race, the experience level of the competitor(s) involved and any further impact the decision may have.

- 31.1 Any competitor who attempts to win a race by any other than honourable means, who breaks the Racing Rules, or who disregards the honourable nature of the Racing Rules, will be penalised.
- 31.2 Should a competitor have completed a race in a kayak or canoe which is shown upon inspection not to conform with the classifications (see rules 9 to 12) and building regulations, they will be penalised.
- 31.3 A competitor who is deemed to have received external assistance during a race, including but not limited to objects thrown into the course, will be penalised.
- 31.4 A crew that has been accompanied along and adjacent to the racecourse by other boats while the race is in progress will be penalised.
- 31.5 Disqualifications by the Competition Committee may be confirmed in writing (delivered either as a hardcopy or electronically) with the reasons. The Team Leader acknowledges receipt, which is the start of the protest time.  
Failure to deliver the copy confirmation of the disqualification to the team leader does not invalidate the disqualification.
- 31.6 The Competition Committee may penalise any competitor or Official whose behaviour is detrimental to the good order and conduct of the competition. The Competition Committee may disqualify them for that competition.

## 32 **Protests**

- 32.1 A protest against the right of an athlete/crew to compete in a race must be addressed to the Chief Official and handed to the Competition Committee, not later than one (1) hour before the start of the first race of the competition.
- 32.2 A protest, made by a Team Leader during the competition must be in written form (hard copy or electronic), addressed to the Chief Official and passed to the Competition Committee. not later than 20 minutes after the decision against which the protest relates, has been published (via notice boards or electronically) or Team Leader has been informed of the decision against their athlete or team.
- 32.3 All protests must be accompanied by a fee of £15.00. The fee will be refunded if the protest is upheld.
- 32.4 When a protest or a report is made against an athlete or a team, the Team Leader of the athlete/team in question shall be presented with the protest or report to read.

## 33 **Appeals**

National Championship Competitions, an appeal can be made by a Team Leader to the National Championship Jury in accordance with Rule 13.7. A fee of £70.00 shall accompany the appeal. The fee will be refunded if the appeal is upheld. The Jury decision is final.

Competitors have the right to appeal to the SRC through their club or team management against a decision of the Competition Committee, within 30 days of the competition end if after the end of the competition, new facts become known that would substantially affect a decision made at the competition. Matters of fact during a competition cannot be contested in an appeal.

A fee of £70.00 shall accompany the appeal. The fee will be refunded if the appeal is upheld. The Sprint Racing Committee decision is final

## **Part V - SPECIAL RULES FOR BRITISH NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENTS**

- 34. **National & Open Championship Medals, National Champions and Trophies:**  
Only members of Paddle UK who qualify under Rule 8 can become a National Champion or be awarded a National Championship trophy.
- 34.1 National Championship Trophies winners & the National Champion will be the best placed British paddler including those with UN Refugee status obtained in the UK.

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34.2 Open & National Championship medals will be awarded to the first three boats.

**The Paddle UK – Sprint Racing Section Disciplinary Regulation & Code of Ethics**, are available on the SRC website link <https://www.paddleuk.org.uk/about/governance/policies-procedures>