

PADDLETM **GAMES**

BEYOND THE LANE

2026 FORMAT AND RULES

IN COLLABORATION WITH





INTRODUCTION

The Paddle Games is a pioneering new format in canoe sprint racing, designed to bring the sport closer to people through simple, efficient, and sustainable logistics. By staging competitions in vibrant urban centres and striking natural venues, it reimagines how and where the sport can be experienced, making it more visible, accessible, and relevant to contemporary audiences.

With a focus on dynamic media coverage and a strong social media presence, The Paddle Games seeks to showcase athletes as world-class competitors, attract new investment, and deliver an exciting, modern spectacle for both live and digital audiences. More than a competition, it is a platform for innovation—enhancing the viewing experience, inspiring future generations, and securing canoe sprint's place as a sustainable and internationally recognised discipline.



KAYAK ELITE PADDLE GAMES: RACE FORMAT



KAYAK ELITE PADDLE GAMES: COURSE

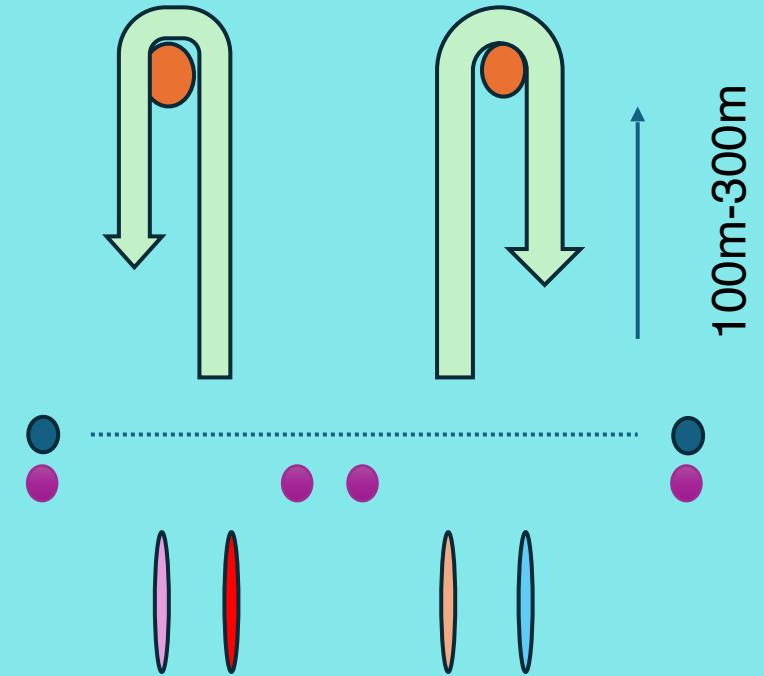
Course design requirements

Two buoys will mark the starting line, and two other buoys placed away from the start will be used for turning. Paddlers can choose any of the two buoys to turn from the inside to the outside.

Starts are given automatically using a timer that should be visible from the paddlers' positions.

Once the countdown reaches 00:00 the timer will make a horn-like sound.

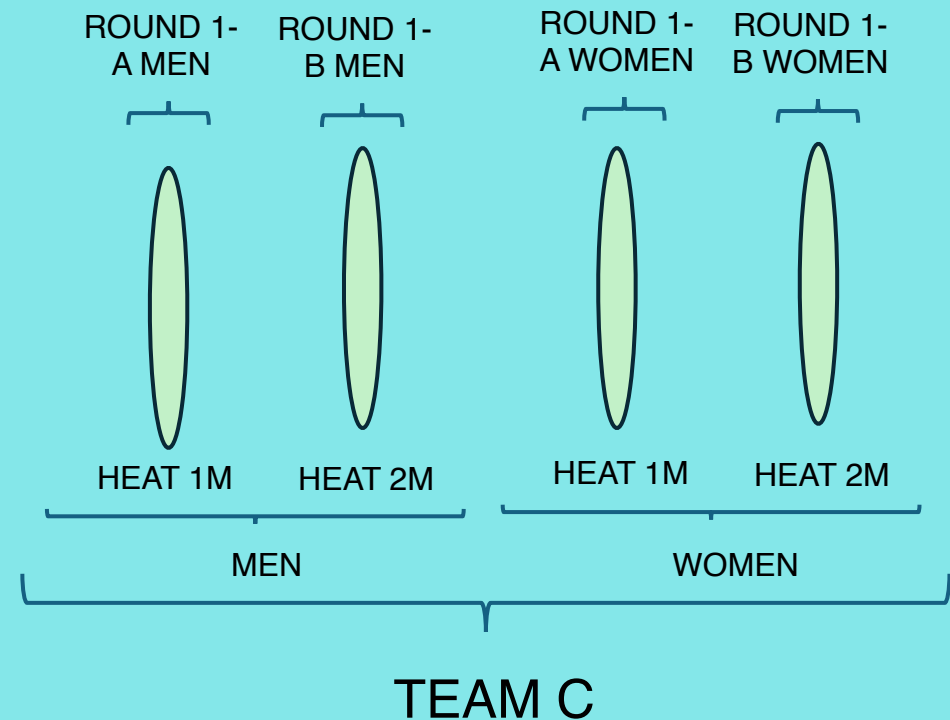
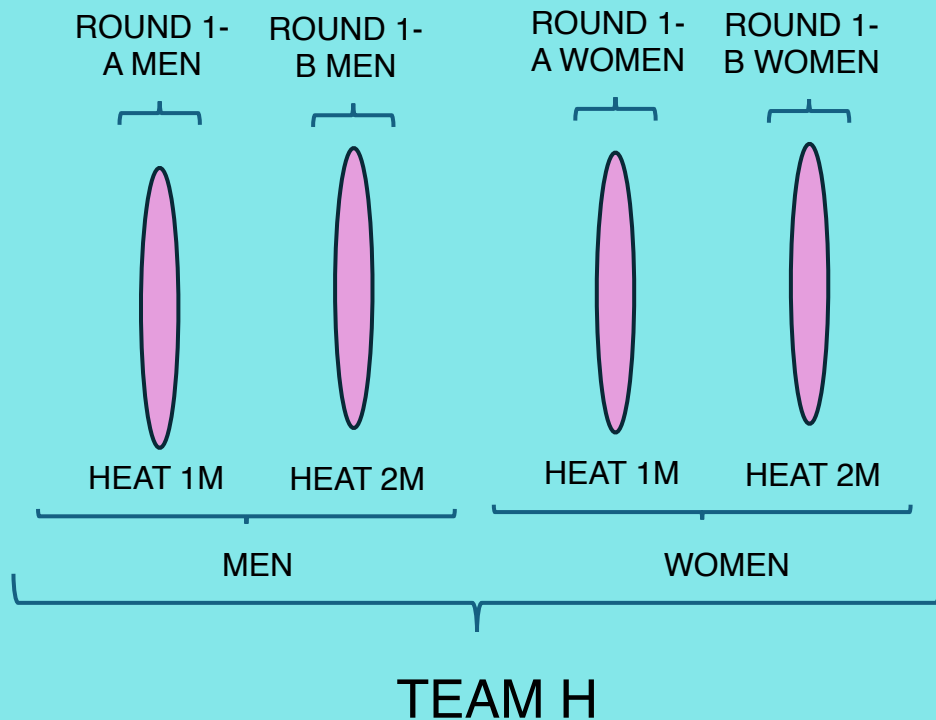
Paddlers are free to place themselves wherever they want within that period without crossing the line. If they do, they will be given a 10 second penalty. If their bow goes over the starting line, they will be disqualified.



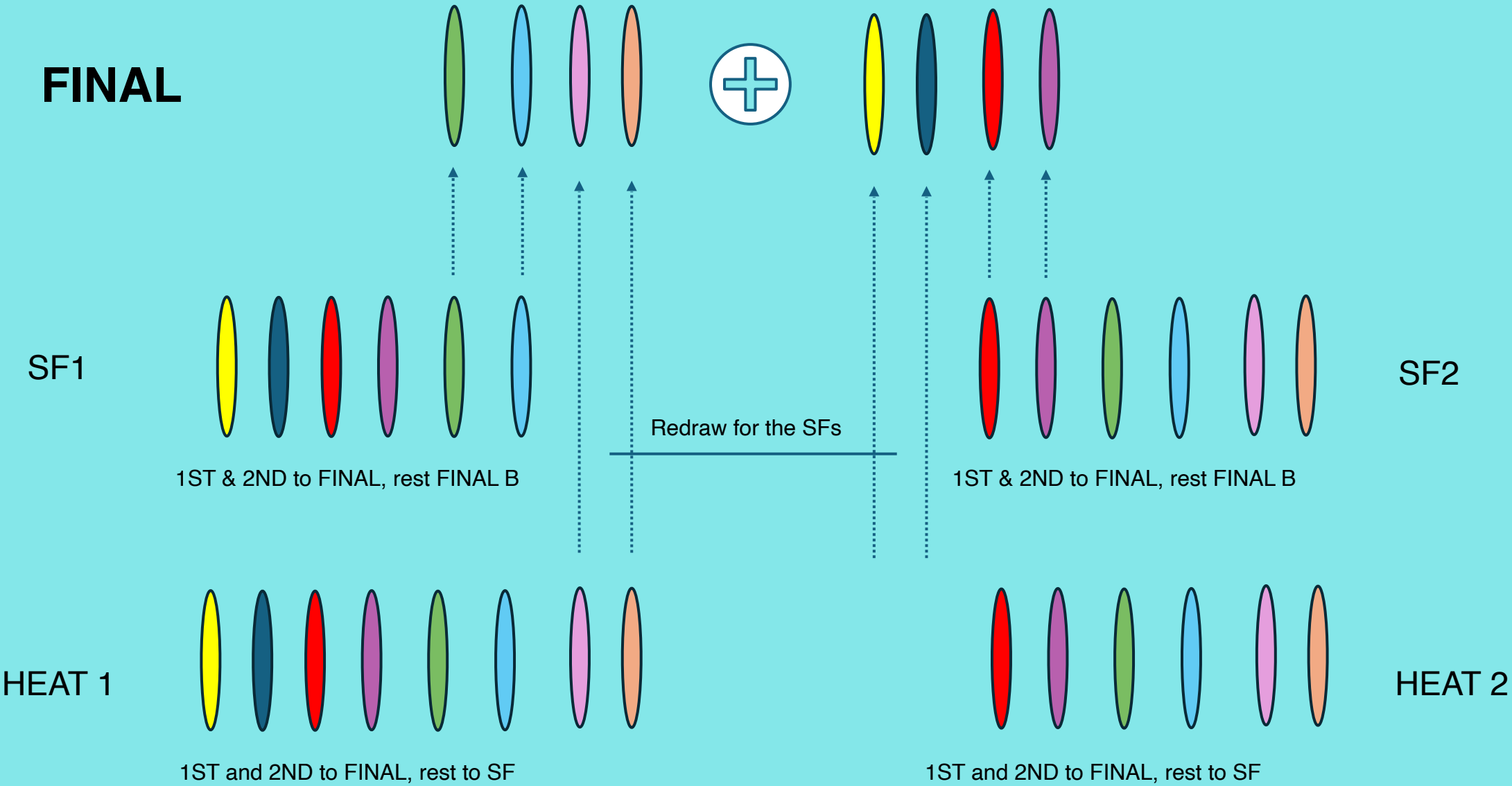
8 TEAMS

- Each team will be comprised of 2 men and 2 women
- They will be split in 2 groups

Examples:



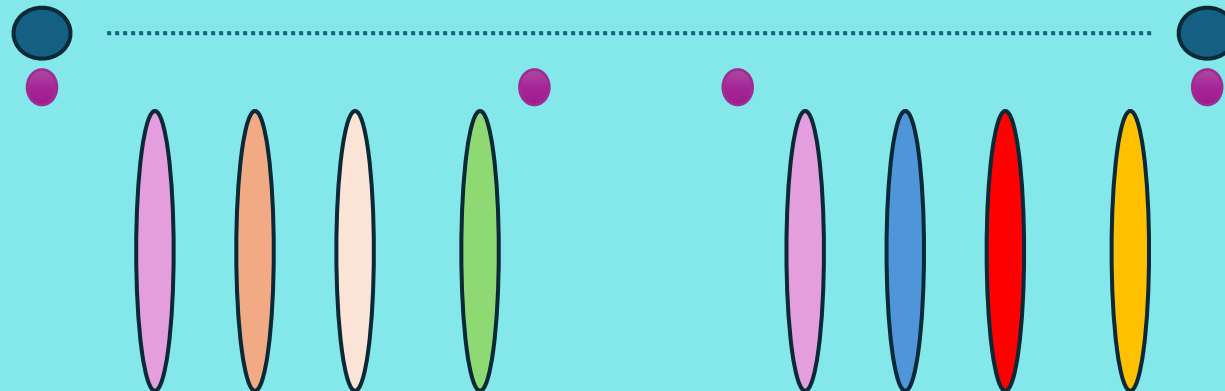
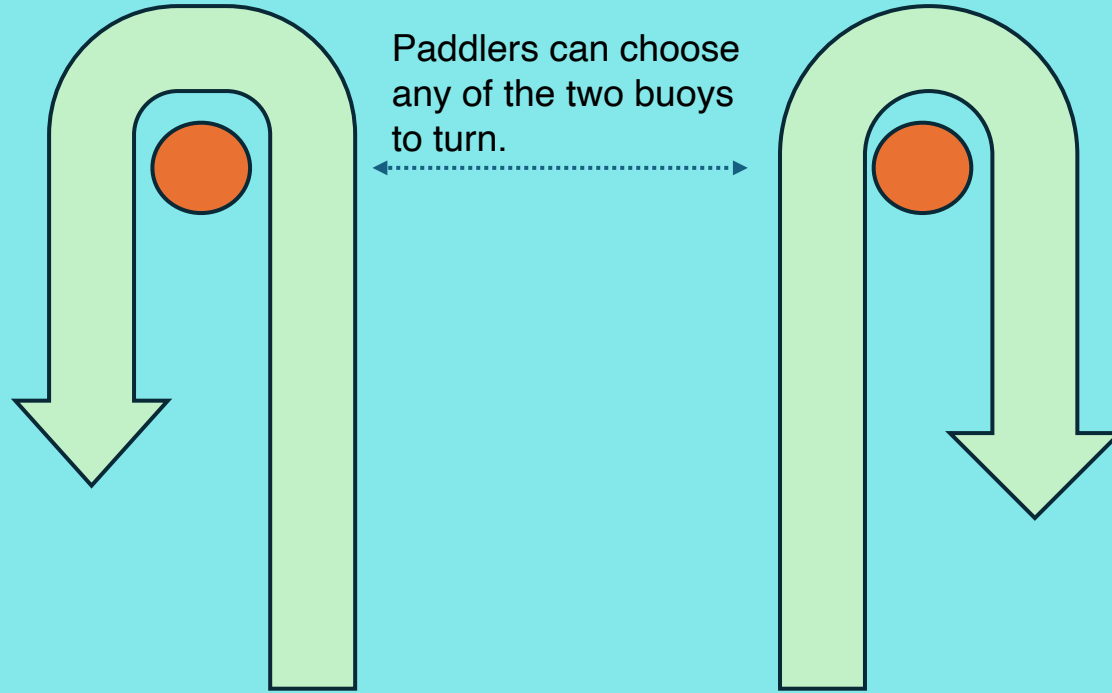
**PROGRESSION
SYSTEM**



THE CIRCUIT FINAL

Starts are given automatically using a timer that should be visible from the paddlers' positions. Once the countdown reaches 00:00 the timer will make a horn-like sound. Paddlers are free to place themselves wherever they want within that period without crossing the line. If they do, they will be given a 10 second penalty.

00:47



FINAL
8 PADDLERS
Some could be from the same TEAM depending on who qualifies for the Final.

ELITE PADDLE GAMES: RULES

- **Turn negotiation**
 - The following conditions must be satisfied for a turn to be considered correctly negotiated:
 - The whole boat must cross one of the two turns.
 - The turns must be done from the inside to the outside.
 - Athletes are permitted to touch the turning buoys with any part of their body or equipment.
 - Athletes are not permitted to move the turning buoys with any part of their body or equipment for an unfair purpose (leading to disadvantages to another athlete).



ELITE PADDLE GAMES: RULES

- **Safety measures**
- Kayak to kayak contact is permitted.
- Athletes are permitted to reach across another athlete with their arm or paddle, making brief contact with the athlete's body.
- Athletes are not permitted to deliberately reach across and / or hold back another Athlete with their hand, arm, or paddle.
- Purposeful paddle strokes off another athlete's body are not permitted.
- Dangerous contact with another athlete's head or body that may result in a personal injury is not permitted.
- An athlete with a broken paddle must drop back and/or complete the course alone.
- The broken end of the paddle is considered dangerous. They may drop the paddle and use their hands to finish the course.
- In all cases the situation is assessed by the judges.



ELITE PADDLE GAMES: RULES

- **Penalties**
- Athletes will receive a disqualification (DSQ) for the following actions:
 - If an athlete crosses the line when the horn goes off, they will be given a 10 second penalty.
 - If an athlete's boat bow crosses the starting line at the sound of the horn, they will be disqualified.
 - Non-negotiated turn unless renegotiated.
 - Negotiating the turn in the wrong direction.
- Athletes will receive a did not finish (DNF) for the following actions:
 - Capsize and not getting back on the boat to finish the race.
 - No enquiry is permitted at any phase during the races. All races will be video judged.



TEAMS POINT SYSTEM

RANKING	POINTS PER PADDLER
1	8
2	7
3	6
4	5
5	4
6	3
7	2
8	1
9 (FINAL B)	0,9
10 (FINAL B)	0,8
...	...

TEAM	POSITIONS	POINTS PER TEAM
A	1,2,2,4	$8+7+7+5 = 27$
B	3,1,4,5	$6+8+5+4 = 23$
C	...	...
D	...	...
E	...	...
F	...	...
G	...	...
H	...	...

CANOE ELITE PADDLE GAMES: RACE FORMAT



Introduction

In the ELITE CANOE Category, 8 men and 8 women race individually in an elimination format.

The last athlete in each round is eliminated, until only four athletes remain to contest the final.

The athletes will be pre-assigned to a team, and their points will contribute to that team's overall score.

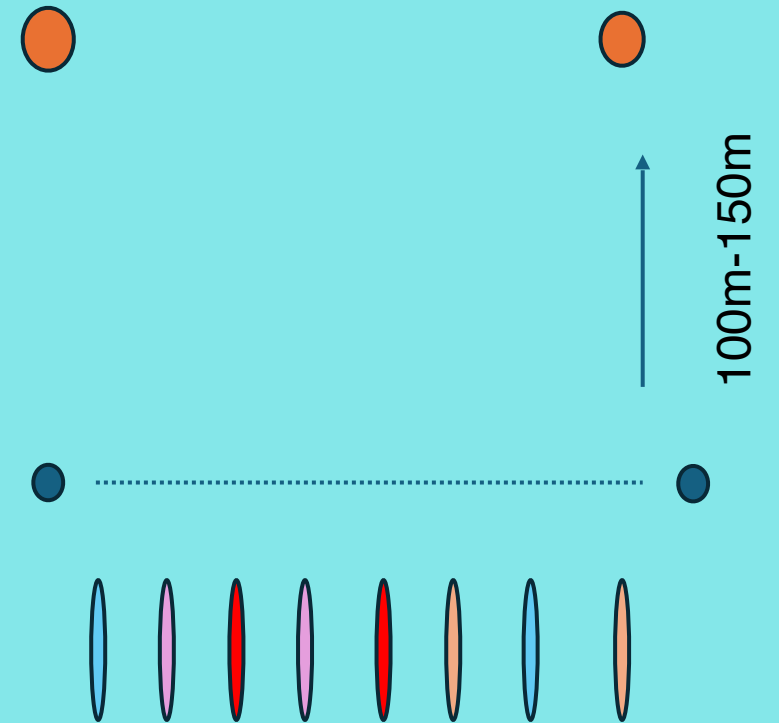
CANOE ELITE PADDLE GAMES: COURSE

Course design requirements

Two buoys mark the start line.
Two additional buoys mark the finish line.
It is a straight race with no lanes.

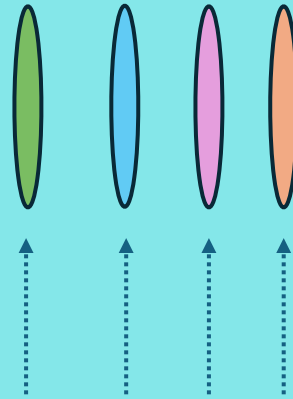
Start Rules

Starts are given by an official approximately every 6–7 minutes.
The start command will be: “Start within ten seconds... Go!”
False start rules:
The first athlete to start early receives a false start.
Any athlete who starts early following the initial false start will be disqualified (DSQ).



PROGRESSION SYSTEM

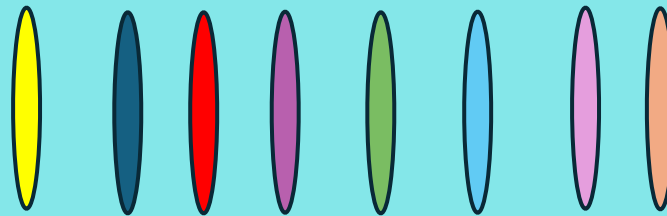
8 men and 8 women race individually in an elimination format.
The last athlete in each round is eliminated, until only four
athletes remain to contest the final.



FINAL

Remaining four contest the final

1st Round: 8th → Eliminated
2nd Round: 7th → Eliminated
3rd Round: 6th → Eliminated
4th Round: 5th → Eliminated



**ELIMINATION
SYSTEM**

TEAMS POINT SYSTEM

RANKING	POINTS PER PADDLER
1	8
2	6
3	4.5
4	3.5
5	2.5
6	1.5
7	0.5
8	0.25

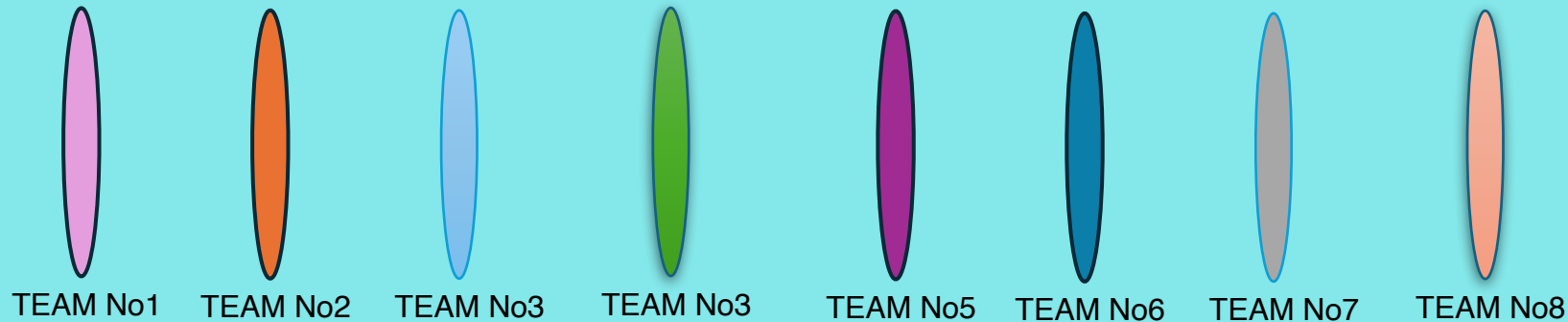
TEAM	POSITIONS	POINTS PER TEAM
A	1,2,2,4 + 1(C),2(C)	$8+7+7+5 +8+ 6 = 41$
B	3,1,4,5 + 3(C)+4(C)	$6+8+5+4+4.5.3.5 = 31$
C	...	...
D	...	...
E	...	...
F	...	...
G	...	...

MIXED K2



8 TEAMS - One Mixed K2 per Team

- After the individual race points have been totalled for each team, each team will select a K2 crew to compete in the Mixed K2 Final. The format and the rules are the same as for the ELITE KAYAK races. The results of these finals will contribute additional points to the overall Team Score.



TEAMS POINT SYSTEM

RANKING	POINTS PER MIXED K2
1	8
2	7
3	6
4	5
5	4
6	3
7	2
8	1

TEAM	POSITIONS	POINTS PER TEAM
A	1,2,2,4 + 1(C),2(C)+3(K2)	8+7+7+5 +8+6+6= 47
B	3,1,4,5 + 3(C)+4(C)+1(K2)	6+8+5+4+4.5.3.5+8 = 39
C	...	...
D	...	...
E	...	...
F	...	...
G	...	...
H	...	...

PRIZES

- Prizes will be given to the Top-3 TEAMS as well as to the Top-3 male and female paddlers in their finals.

