



Flatwater Racing Association

Winter Series Rules and Information for Competitors, Team Leaders and Race Organisers

1. Race organisation

The Winter Series exists to encourage racing in a club context. The series of events run by the associated clubs is coordinated by the **Series Coordinator** (coordinator@flatwaterracing.org.uk) and run in accordance with the rules agreed by the representatives of the associated clubs.

Each event is run by a club which nominates one **Race Organiser**. The Race Organiser is accountable for race organisation including safety, marshalling and recording competitive performance, sorting out queries, declaring results and providing basic refreshments, all within the framework of the rules. Race administration including booking in competitors, the recording and processing of results, and preparing preliminary results for challenge, will be undertaken by the FRA using the Winter Series spreadsheet.

Competitors usually race as part of a team with a nominated **Team Leader**. Each Team Leader must register themselves at or ideally before the first race attended using the form provided. Team Leaders must ensure that their clubs have the necessary internal processes in place to give them authority to pass their members' details to the FRA. If Team Leaders are not present with their team at a particular race, their representative should identify themselves at the booking-in desk on the day. In the case of Independent paddlers, the paddler themselves can register as Team Leader (if under 18 their parent/guardian should register).

Dates & venues will be publicised on the FRA website (www.flatwaterracing.org.uk). All races will start at 12:00 unless otherwise stated.

No matter what the water or weather every effort will be made to run the event on the set day, if necessary amending the course to suit the prevailing conditions. Organisers reserve the right to cancel the race at any time. If for any reason the event is moved to another club's water, the named Race Organiser will still be responsible for all race administration but must work with the club at the new venue to agree all matters of safety; and the new Risk Assessments and Safety Plans must be endorsed by both clubs.

2. Booking in & Entry Fees

In order to compete, competitors must be entered for the series by their registered Team Leader, who is endorsing their suitability and fitness to participate. Team Leaders will be provided with a form to submit their team entry details in advance. They are strongly recommended to do this by the Friday before the each race, especially in the case of new team members joining the series.

The entry fee per race for the series is £5.00 per seat for all classes. There is no late booking penalty and no pre-payment is required.

3. Groups and Classes

Group 1 (7-9 miles)			Group 2 (approx 5 miles)			Group 3 (3-4 miles)		
Class No	Craft	Age	Class No	Craft	Age	Class No	Craft	Age
9	K2/MC2	16+	5	K1	M u16	1	TC2	Open
8	K1	Open	4	K1 C1	F 16+ Advanced*	Blue	K1	M u14
7	K1	M Vet	3	K2 MC2	u16 Open	Red	K1 C1	F u14 Novice*
6	K1	M u18	2	K1	F u16	GP	GP	Open
						Yellow	K1	u12

*C1 paddlers of Div 6 standard or higher must enter the Class 4 Advanced C1 race.

Age: All paddlers must compete in their age groups. The official age of a competitor is that on the 1st November for the year in which the series begins and remains fixed for the series. Team leaders must ensure that their paddlers are entered in the correct class. “Vet”=35yrs+. “SuperVet”=50yrs+. “UltraVet”=60yrs+ Juniors competing in the K1 Open class must be Div6+.

Exception:

Team Leaders may apply in advance to the Series Coordinator for permission to enter a paddler in a different class due to special circumstances (e.g. disability). A decision will be made in discussion with the Flatwater Racing Committee.

Boats/Blades:

- GP craft may be up to 4.1m (~13ft 6in) in length, and must be constructed of roto moulded plastic, with no modifications (not fibreglass)
- No white water racing craft, regardless of length, may compete in GP classes
- Touring C2 boats are defined as up to 5.5m (~18ft) in length. Longer canoes are Marathon C2.
- C1 and C2 classes to be paddled with single blades and no functioning rudder.
- No change may be made to the craft’s original shape to give the paddler unfair advantage.

4. Competitor Numbers

Race numbers are assigned to each competitor/crew, and these stay the same for the duration of the series. Pre-printed number boards will be issued at each race and collected in again on the day. Where boats are not equipped with board holders, sticky labels can be requested instead. All craft must display their issued boards/labels throughout the race – failure to do so may lead to disqualification. There is a £5 fee for every board not returned at the end of the race.

Team Leaders will be responsible for ensuring that boards have been returned and that fines for missing boards are paid before leaving the venue. Those not competing for an FRA-member club will be required to leave a returnable deposit against the possible loss of their board(s), which will be held for the duration of their participation in the series.

5. Starts

Classes will be started in the order shown in the table above. Race Organisers can decide to split starts when numbers are high. They are especially invited to consider this for the U12s class – ideally into boys and girls.

Starts will be done in accordance with BC Marathon Racing Committee rules. The method of starting each race will be the choice of the organiser and should be explained at the Briefing. Any competitor failing to obey starter’s instructions is liable to severe time penalty or disqualification.

6. Safety

This series takes place in winter on a variety of waters and can be demanding. The Team Leader is responsible for endorsing the entry of their paddlers for the class, class distance, and prevailing conditions on the race day. Team leaders should ensure that their paddlers understand race behaviour and safety procedures. The race will be run according to the **safety rules of the British Canoeing Marathon Racing Committee** (see Canoe Sprint & Marathon Handbook). In particular all competitors ranked in Hasler Divisions 7, 8 & 9 are required to wear **buoyancy** (EN393 or 395 or ISO 12402). Team Leaders will be responsible for assessing the standard of those who have not competed in Hasler competitions. Additionally, all paddlers under 16 must wear buoyancy, regardless of their division; other paddlers may be instructed to wear buoyancy by their Team Leaders or at the Race Organiser's discretion.

Turn points and marshals should be obvious. Organisers must make every effort to place fixed buoys at turns. Marshals should be present to record the numbers of craft correctly passing them, but are not responsible for paddlers' actions or giving directions. It is the responsibility of each paddler to follow the correct course and make sure the Marshal has seen or heard their race number. Marshals will attempt to give warning if a paddler is seen to turn early. Race Organisers must deploy a safety marshal to follow the last paddler on the short course.

Assistance at portages may be received ONLY by those who need it and must not be for competitive advantage. Helpers must walk only, and where possible should carry the rear end of the craft. If un-assisted paddlers overtake, assisted craft must give way. Additional rules regarding assistance may be set by each Race Organiser for their venue. Validated protests will result in time penalties or disqualification. Where the race **portages across a road**, Race Organisers will try to arrange marshals to control traffic and canoeists. Competitors will still be responsible for their own safety and conduct.

Race Organisers are responsible for obtaining any permissions necessary to run the event, and ensuring that the event complies with British Canoeing event safety guidance. A Risk Assessment and Safety Plan for each event endorsed on behalf of the host club by a named person who has attended BC's Event Safety Management training must be made available on the FRA website prior to the race. A **Briefing** for paddlers should be held approx 30min before the race start.

7. Competitor Points

At each race, competitor points are gained by the first nine craft in each class according to position. Singles craft score 10 points for 1st, down to 2 points for 9th, all other finishers receive 1 point. Doubles crews have a unique number, points are awarded to this number not to the two individuals separately. Doubles craft score 20 points for 1st, down to 4 points for 9th, all other finishers receive 2 points.

7. Race Awards

Awards are presented in recognition of personal achievement and are to be collected by the competitor in person at the prize giving on the day of the race. They are awarded to the first three finishers in each class. In u12 Mixed, a first second and third place medal will be given to the first three boys and also to the first three girls.

Other additional awards are possible if booking in staff are notified of eligibility before racing:

- In mixed sex classes – first lady / all-female crew
- In mixed Canoe/Kayak classes – first Canoe/Kayak
- In all classes – first registered Paddle-Ability paddler
- In Classes 7 & 9 – first Vet, SuperVet (50+) and UltraVet (60+) – all crew in doubles must qualify
- In Class 4 – first u18 K1, first Vet K1, first SuperVet K1 and first UltraVet K1

9. Protests

Any protests must be made in writing by the Team Leader (or declared representative on the day) to the Race Organiser within 30 min of the paddler concerned getting off the water. A decision will be made by a panel of three after consultation with the Team Leaders (or representatives) of all paddlers concerned wherever practicable. The protest panel will comprise the Race Organiser and two others drawn from (in order of preference) the Series Coordinator, members of the FRA Committee or Team Leaders of clubs not involved in the incident.

Preliminary results will be displayed as soon as possible and any suspected error must be raised within 15min.

10. Series Trophies for Competitors

Paddlers (singles or doubles crews) will be eligible for series awards if they compete in the same class in at least three races.

Series trophies will be presented to top performers in each class in the series. Series positions are determined by the total of the paddler/crew's best points scores across all races, less one (e.g. best 5 results from a 6-race series). In the event of a tie in points, series positions will be determined by the number of wins or (if still tied) the competitors' relative positions at the last event of the series.

For most classes there is one perpetual trophy. In K2 16+ there is also a perpetual trophy will for the best all-female crew. In the Ladies K1 class, there are separate perpetual trophies for u18 K1, Senior K1 and Vet K1. The Robin Dromard C1 Trophy will be awarded to the C1 paddler with most points in the middle-distance race over the series. There are separate perpetual trophies for u16 K2 and MC2 in Class 3. In the GP class there are separate perpetual trophies for u15 Boys, u15 Girls, 15+ Men and 15+ Women. In u12 K1 there will be separate Girls and Boys perpetual trophies.

Perpetual trophies are to be returned before Christmas in the next winter, unless requested sooner. Engraving is at the expense of the trophy winner.

11. League Trophy for Club/Teams

At each event, the competitor points of paddlers will be totalled by club/team to determine the club position. Where the crew members of a doubles boat are from different teams, their points will not count towards either club's total. Clubs are awarded Club League points as follows: the first nine clubs gain on the basis of 10 points for first, down to 2 points for ninth, all other competing clubs receive one point.

A Team Trophy for the series will be awarded to the three teams finishing at the top of the League. In the event of a tie in Club League points, the winner will be the club with the greatest number of Competitor points throughout the series. The Team Trophy is to be held for one year by the top club; the top three clubs will be presented with a permanent award to mark their achievement.

The Dick Grieve trophy will be awarded to the club with the best performing unranked under 18s. At each event, each eligible paddler will receive DG points based on their race position respective only to other eligible paddlers in their class (scored on the same basis as the main Competitor points). The DG points will be totalled by club/team to give overall team positions for each event. A Dick Grieves League will operate using the same system as the main Winter Series League. "Ranked" usually means Marathon Div 8 and above, but any paddler may be classified as ranked for the purposes of the Winter Series at the Series Coordinator's discretion.

The Bob Porter Trophy will be awarded to the club/team with the most entries in the most junior K1 class throughout the series.

12. Results

After presentation, administration of the day's races are to be passed on that day to the Secretary who will later calculate the series totals and produce the formal results.

Results will be available on the Flatwater Racing Association website (www.flatwaterracing.org.uk).

13. Series Finance

Prizes are provided by the FRA. To cover the cost of trophies, medals and other running expenses, each organising club will donate a percentage of their race entry fees to the FRA Treasurer accompanied by an account sheet detailing income. The percentage will be agreed at the previous FRA AGM. Refreshments, road marshalling and first aid charges are not deductible expenses.

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