



**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 FRA Committee and run in accordance with the rules agreed by the representatives of the associated clubs. The series is being run as a Group A race according to Marathon Racing Committee rules.

Each event is run by a club which nominates a **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 using the Winter Series spreadsheet.

Competitors usually race as part of a team with a **Team Leader** appointed by their club. Team Leaders should identify themselves through the online entry system or at the booking-in desk on the day.

Dates & venues will be publicised on the FRA website (www.flatwaterracing.org.uk).

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 arrangements on the day but must work with the club at the new venue to agree all matters of safety.

2. Booking in & Entry Fees

Entries should be made through the MRC online booking system. Online entries will close just before midnight on the Friday before the race. Entries can be made on the day but **MUST** be accompanied by evidence of Paddle UK membership.

Paddlers must race for the club to which they are registered with the MRC rankings officer.

The entry fee per race for the series is £5 Juniors and £10 Seniors per seat. There is no late booking penalty and no pre-payment is required.

Entries can be paid as cash/cheque on the day, either individually or through the club's Team Leader. Clubs making bulk entries may pay by internet banking up to Friday by special arrangement with the FRA Treasurer (please request details in advance).

3. Public Liability Insurance / Licences

All participants must be covered by Public Liability insurance held through Paddle UK (PUK). Therefore, competitors must have current PUK membership, either On-Water or Club Associate, or purchase Single Event Membership (SEM). All boats must be licenced for the water on which the race is taking place (CRT licence included in English PUK memberships and SEM).

4. Classes

7-9 miles		approx 5 miles		3-4 miles	
Class No	Class	Class No	Class	Class No	Class
01	K2 16+ M	20	K1 SuperVet M	30	Touring C2
02	K2 16+ Mixed	21	K1 SuperVet F	31	K1 u14 M
03	K2 16+ F	22	K2 u16	32	K1 u14 F
04	Marathon C2	23	K1 u16 M	33	C1/SUP Novice
05	K1 Sen M	24	K1 u16 F	34	GP/Slalom 16+ M
06	K1 Sen F	25	C1/SUP Advanced	35	GP/Slalom 16+ F
07	K1 Vet M			36	GP/Slalom u16 M
08	K1 Vet F			37	GP/Slalom u16 F
09	K1 u18 M			38	K1 u12 M
10	K1 u18 F			39	K1 u12 F
				40	K1 Open

The K1 Vet race is open to all K1 paddlers aged 35+

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

Age: 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.

“Vet”=35yrs+. “SuperVet”=50yrs+. “UltraVet”=60yrs+. “HyperVet”=70yrs+.

All paddlers must compete in their age groups with the following exceptions: K1 Vets may enter K1 Senior classes, and all paddlers aged 35 or over may enter the K1 Vets races.

K1 Open: This class on the shortest course is open to any paddler who is aged 14+ and of Div 8 standard or below. Medals and points will be given, but there will be no series awards or perpetual trophy.

Exceptions:

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:

- General Purpose (GP) craft may be up to 4.1m (~13ft 6in) in length, and must be constructed of rota moulded plastic (not fibreglass), with no modifications.
- Slalom boats up to 4.1m (~13ft 6in) in length may compete against GPs, but no White Water Racing craft, regardless of length, may compete in the GP/Slalom classes
- Touring C2 boats are defined as up to 5.5m (~18ft) in length. Longer canoes are Marathon C2. The Marathon C2 race is open to boats of either length.
- 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.

5. Competitor Numbers

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 should be used 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/Clubs will be responsible for ensuring that boards have been returned and that fines for missing boards are paid before leaving the venue.

6. Starts

Race Organisers will decide the start order taking into consideration the likely speed of the entries received. Race Organisers can decide to split starts when numbers are high, or combine starts when numbers are low. The order and groupings will be made clear at the briefing.

Starts will be done in accordance with 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.

7. Safety

This series takes place in winter on a variety of waters and can be demanding. The race will be run according to the **safety rules of the PUK 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 age 16 or entering an u16 race 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.

As usual in marathon canoeing, all paddlers are required to **render assistance** to other paddlers in distress.

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 at least one on-water 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 Paddle UK 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 PUK's Event Safety Management training and Risk Assessment training must be submitted to their Regional Hasler Advisor at least two weeks before the race and published as part of the race details.

A **Briefing** for paddlers should be held approx 30min before the race start.

8. 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. For Doubles, points are awarded to the crew, not to the paddlers separately. Crews score 20 points for 1st, down to 4 points for 9th, all other finishers receive 2 points.

9. 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.

Other additional awards are only given where recipients are not already in receipt of a medal:

- In C1/SUP/C2/K1 Open classes – first lady / all-female crew
- In K2 – first Vet, SuperVet (50+), UltraVet (60+) & HyperVet (70+) – both paddlers must qualify
- In K1 SuperVet – first UltraVet (60+) & HyperVet (70+)
- In u12 K1/u16 K2 – first u10 (in doubles both paddlers must qualify)
- In all classes – first registered Paddle-Ability paddler (notified by team leader in advance)

10. Protests

Any protests must be made in writing by the Team Leader-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-of all paddlers concerned wherever practicable. The protest panel will comprise the Race Organiser and two others drawn from (in order of preference), members of the FRA Committee or Team Leaders of clubs not involved in the incident.

11. Series Trophies for Competitors

Paddlers (singles or doubles crews) in each class (except Open K1) will be eligible for series awards if they compete in the same class in at least three races.

Series positions are determined by the total of the paddler/crew's best points scores across all races, less one (e.g. best 4 results from a 5-race series) where there have been more than three events. Series trophies will be presented to the top three competitors/crews in each class in the series (except K1 Open). 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 each class (except K1 Open) there is a perpetual trophy. Winners must provide contact details before taking the trophy home. Perpetual trophies are to be returned, at the first race of the following season. Engraving is at the expense of the trophy winner.

12. League Trophy for Club/Teams

At each event, the relative position of each club team will be determined by the sum of the ten highest scores achieved by their members. 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. A second place trophy and a third place trophy will also be presented to the clubs coming 2nd and 3rd, to be held for one year.

The Dick Grieve trophy will be awarded to the club with the best performing under 18s classified as Div 9 or below. 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, and then Dick Grieve League Points applied using the same system as the main Winter Series League.

The Bob Porter Trophy will be awarded to the club/team with the most entries in the u12 K1 classes throughout the series.

13. Results

Preliminary results will be displayed as soon as possible and any suspected error must be raised within 15min as medals cannot be re-issued once prize-giving has commenced.

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).

As a Group A race, results will be submitted to the MRC Rankings Officer who will make promotions as they see fit. Any paddler who wishes to query a promotion should raise it with their club's Team Leader who may refer it to their Regional Marathon Adviser.

If errors come to light after publication, the FRA committee may still make retrospective changes to the results, especially if these are likely to affect series results.

14. 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.