



2018 ACA CANOE SLALOM COMPETITION RULES

Authority

ACA Slalom Competition Rules

Effective February 16, 2018

The American Canoe Association National Office, as constituted under Article IX of the ACA Bylaws, hereby promulgates the following rules to govern canoe slalom competitions:

Article 1 - Object

- 1.A.** The object of canoe slalom competition is to negotiate a whitewater course, defined by gates, without penalty, in the shortest possible time.

Article 2 - Competitions

2.A. Championship Competitions

- 2.A.1.** Championship competitions are here defined to be, ACA Regional or National Championships. These must be run in accordance with these ACA Canoe Slalom Competition Rules.
- 2.A.2.** Junior, U23 and Senior Team Trials must be run in accordance with International Canoe Federation (ICF) rules, except where specifically identified in the Team Selection criteria and approved by the Slalom Committee.
- 2.A.3.** In each Summer Olympic year, the US Olympic Team Trials for Canoe Slalom will be held under ICF competition rules and within the guidelines set for the event by USOC and ACA.
The US Olympic Team Trails for Canoe Slalom is owned by the US Olympic Committee and produced by ACA.
- 2.A.4.** International Competitions where other nations are invited to participate must be run in accordance with ICF rules.
- 2.A.5.** In the spirit of competition, a competitor who wishes to gain experience may enter a closed deck whitewater boat that does not meet the requirements of Article 5 into the National Championships, or any ACA competition provided all safety requirements are met as defined in Article 16. However, the competitor will not receive an award on his/her performance in the event.
- 2.A.6.** A non-championship event, for competitors whose boats do not meet Article 5, may be run concurrent with the National Championships, provided the additional entries can be accommodated without jeopardizing the championship event.

2.B. Non-Championship Competitions

- 2.B.1.** Non-championship and local races should be run in general compliance with these rules, though reasonable adaptations to suit local conditions may be made.

Article 3 - Eligibility of Competitors

- 3. A.** All participants must be ACA members in good standing in order to compete in ACA sanctioned Canoe Slalom competitions, except as provided in Article 3.B.



- 3.A.1.** An athlete who has competed internationally at any level in the last 3 years requires authorization from the ICF and the national federation of the original country in order to change sporting nationality.
- 3.A.2.** For an athlete to be eligible for a change of sporting nationality, they must have lived in that country for the last two years.
- 3.A.3.** The request of the change of nationality must be made to the ICF no later than 30 November the year before the competitor wants to compete.
- 3.A.4.** For the Olympic Games, the Olympic Charter rules will be applied for nationality issues. For athletes to be eligible for the Olympic and Paralympic Games, they must hold citizenship/nationality of the country that they participate for at the time of the qualification event.
- 3.A.5.** A competitor may not compete for more than one Federation in any calendar year in canoeing.
- 3.B.** A Race Organizer may, if desired, permit the entry of visiting foreign competitors provided they are members of their National Federation. However, such competitors are not eligible for any championship awards.

Article 4 - Competition Calendar

- 4.A.** Each Local Organizing Committee shall submit to the Slalom Events Committee, the dates of the competitions specified under article 38.A proposed to be held at their venue by deadlines to be set by the Slalom Committee. These deadlines will be established and communicated the year prior to the competition year. By January 1 of the same year previous, the competition calendar for the following year shall be published in one or more widely-circulated publications and on the ACA website. In addition, a written request to the Slalom Officials Committee to approve the choice of Chief Judge for each proposed competition shall be made (see Article 38.C)

Article 5 - Boats

- 5. A.** Canoe Slalom is carried out in the following boat types:
 - 5.A.1** Single kayak (K-1): minimum length 3.50 m, minimum width 60 cm, minimum weight 9 kg
 - 5.A.2.** Single canoe (C-1): minimum length 3.50 m, minimum width 60 cm, minimum weight 9 kg.
 - 5.A.3.** Double canoe (C-2): minimum length 4.10 m, minimum width 75 cm, minimum weight 15 kg.
 - 5.A.4.** During the weighing process, residual water must be removed from the boat.
Note: The spray deck is considered to be an accessory and not part of the boat.
- 5. B.** All kayaks must be propelled by a double-bladed paddle from a sitting position. All canoes must be propelled by a single-bladed paddle from a kneeling position. All boats must have minimum radii at each end of 2 cm horizontally and 1 cm vertically. Rudders are prohibited on all boats. Any object protruding from the hull must be manufactured into the hull mold and be no higher than 20mm and no narrower than 8mm with a minimum radius of 4mm on its outside edge. It is not permissible to make the boats meet the required dimensions by the addition of taped-on extensions or by similar means. The boat should be designed to, and remain within, the required permanent nature except where



applied to repair damage occurring during an event, and must in no case constitute a potential safety hazard. No other dimensional or shape requirements apply.

- 5.B.1.** For Non-Championship and local races, all whitewater boat types may compete without regard to ACA boat specifications, provided the boat meets all applicable safety requirements as defined in Articles 16.A.

Article 6 - Events

6.A. Individual Classifications:

6.A.1. The National Events are K-1 (men), K-1W (women), C-1 (men), C-2 (men), C-1W(women), C-2W(woman) and C-2Mixed (man/woman). These shall be offered at all competitions, at least three starting boats being required to form an event.

6.A.2. Optional or special events may be formed at the discretion of the Organizers for non-championship races at which the demand for them is sufficient. These may include, but are not limited to, events for open canoes, junior-sized boats, and special designations such as C-2 Father/Son, etc.

6.B. Team Events:

6.B.1. When team events are offered, teams of three boats may be formed in any of the events listed in Article 6.A. Teams may only be comprised of competitors who are participating in individual events. Combining events to form teams is at the discretion of the Organizers. It is recommended that the team runs occur after the individual competitions have concluded.

6.C. Age Group events:

6.C.1. Any or all of the events in Article 6.A. may be subdivided according to age groups if the demand for such subdivision is sufficient. The definitions of U12, U14, U16, Junior, U23, Open, and Masters categories are as follows:

- The last year a paddler may compete, as a U12 is the year in which their 12th birthday falls.
- The last year a paddler may compete, as a U14 is the year in which their 14th birthday falls.
- The last year a paddler may compete, as a U16 is the year in which their 16th birthday falls.
- The last year a paddler may compete, as a Junior is the year in which their 18th birthday falls.
- The last year a paddler may compete, as a U23 is the year in which their 23rd birthday falls.
- The first year a competitor can compete in an ICF or international competition is the year in which their 15th birthday falls.
- The first year a Master competitor can compete in a master event is the year in which his/her 35th birthday falls. Age group events will commence from age 35-39 and increase upwards in 5 year age brackets.
- An open event is open to any contestant regardless of age

6.C.2. Competitors in age group events are eligible for awards only in that event. They may not win an award or be given a place ranking in the Open event.

6.D. Ranking Events:

6.D.1. All of the events in Article 6.A.1 and 6.A.2 will be ranked according to the Slalom National Rankings at the discretion of the Organizers.



6.E. Limitations on Entries

6.E.1. A competitor may take part in any individual or team event for which they are qualified. Race organizers, in coordination with the Chief Judge, may place reasonable limits on participants in multiple events should such participation jeopardize the smooth operation of the race.

6.F. Combination Events

6.F.1. In the case that there are fewer than three boats registered and starting in a given event, the competitors in this event may be included in a comparable event of higher difficulty rating. For example, C-2M may be merged with C-2, K-1 Junior with K-1, C-1W with C-1, etc. However, a competitor may not be permitted to compete twice in the same event as a result of such a merger. For example, if C-2W were merged with C-2M, a competitor entered in both of these events would have to withdraw from one of them, or could choose to have her C-2W entry merged with C-2 rather than C-2M. A competitor may withdraw and receive a refund of entry fee if he/she does not wish to compete in such a combined event.

Article 7 - Officials

7.A. According to its nature and importance, a slalom race shall be supervised by the following officials:

Chief Official*	Finish Judge
Registrar	Timekeepers
Course Designer*	Gate Judges
Technical Organizer*	Transmission Judges
Chief Judge*	Video Judges*
Starter	Chief of Scoring*
Pre-Starter	Boat Controller
Controller	Safety Officer

7.B. Those officials indicated by an (*) must be certified International Canoe Slalom Official Level 1 (IJCSL) or ICF Canoe Slalom Official Level 2 (ICF-JCSL) in good standing for Junior and Senior National Team Trials, insofar as possible.

Refer to ICF Canoe Slalom Competition Rules 8.3 and 8.4.

7.B.1. For National Team Trials (Senior, Junior, and U23) and National Championships, the Chief Judge must be certified a minimum of International Canoe Slalom Official Level 1 (IJCSL) (see ICF Slalom Rule 8.3). The Chief Judge must also be compliant with the ACA Conflict of Interest Policy.

7.C. Jury:

7.C.1. The Chief Official will appoint a Jury of three members. The Chief Official may be part of the Jury. The Chief Judge shall not serve as a voting member of the Jury, but will present protests to the jury for consideration and decision. At Olympic Team Trials, National Team Trials, and Nationals, the jury must consist of ICF certified Slalom Officials. At National level events the jury should, to the extent possible, consist of ICF certified Slalom Officials.

7.C.2. The Jury receives protests (see Article 32) concerning non-observance of the rules of competition and makes the final decision in the event of disagreement



concerning any interpretation of the rules. Decisions of the Jury must be in accordance with ACA Slalom Rules.

Those officials indicated by an (*) must be certified International Canoe Slalom Official Level 1 (IJCSL) or ICF Canoe Slalom Official Level 2 (ICF-JCSL) in good standing for Junior and Senior trials, insofar as possible. Refer to ICF Slalom Rules 8.3 and 8.4. The Jury may disqualify a competitor for a single run (DSQ-R) or the entire duration of the competition (DSB). The Jury decides on all questions raised during the competition that are not covered by the rules. In the event of a tie vote, the Chair of the Jury decides.

- 7.C.3.** A member of the Jury must not vote in a decision involving a member of his/her own club, family member or (if he/she is a competitor) a decision involving his/her own category of competition.

Article 8 - Duties of Officials

- 8.A.** The **Chief Official** directs the preparation and execution of the race in accordance with these rules. He/she appoints the Jury and other officials as needed to assure the smooth execution of the race.
- 8.B.** The **Course Designer** is responsible for the course design and the correct hanging of the gates. He/she must be prepared to have necessary adjustments and repairs effected as needed. Routine adjustments of pole height are done under his/her authority. Major course adjustments require the concurrence of the Chief Judge.
- 8.C.** The **Technical Organizer** is responsible for the setup and maintenance of lines of communication between start and finish and between the judges and the scoring office. He/she is responsible for the installation and proper functioning of all technical equipment required for the competition.
- 8.D.** The **Chief Judge** must ensure that the competition is run correctly and in keeping with the competition rules. The Chief Judge applies the competition rules and may disqualify a competitor or grant a rerun. The Chief Judge is the final arbiter on all judging matters. When there is official television or official video of the event, he/she may avail him/herself of the television or video footage to assist in the determination of any relevant matter or protest. After the Chief Judge has ruled on an inquiry concerning penalties, the result becomes a matter of fact and cannot be further enquired/protested. The Chief Judge is a member of the Course Approval Committee. The Chief Judge must use available technology (weather reports, wind meters etc.) in order to be aware of changes to the race conditions and respond accordingly. (eg. He/she must be aware of factors such as wind, lightening, or rising water levels that may affect the fairness of the race.
- 8.E.** The **Start Judge** ensures that competitors start in the correct order.
- 8.E.1.** He/she can refuse to start a competitor if the latter:
- 8.E.1.a.** Fails to respect the safety rules
 - 8.E.1.b.** Fails to present him/herself on time for his/her run after being called,
 - 8.E.1.c.** Appears without his/her correct number bib, or
 - 8.E.1.d.** Fails to follow the Starter's orders.
- 8.E.2.** If a false start occurs, the Starter determines if a second start is to be given, and notifies the Chief Judge.



- 8.F.** The **Pre-Start Controller** is not mandatory, but depending on venue or race requirements, may be responsible for checking in boats at the start, calling competitors, enforcing the safety rules (see Article 16), and checking that the boats have been marked by the Boat Controller. He/she must prevent any competitor from starting if the required safety measures have not been followed.
- 8.G.** The **Finish Judge**, in conjunction with the **Start Judge**, ensures that times are properly taken. He/she must rule on disqualification for capsizing at the finish line, and may disqualify for violation of the safety rules.
- 8.H.** The **Timekeepers** shall assist the Finish Judge in taking times. All stopwatch times must be independently read by two timekeepers.
- 8.I.** The **Transmission Judge**, who may also act as a Primary or Secondary Gate Judge, is responsible for the transmission of the final decision of the Primary Judge/s to the Scoring Office. Normally, the Transmission Judge will collate and transmit the results of a number of gates assigned for a Section.
Transmission Judges must whistle a competitor off the course in the event of overtaking, in accordance with Article 28. Transmission Judges must notify the Chief Judge of necessary adjustments to the gates.
- 8.K.** The **Gate Judges** shall be responsible for observing and recording a competitor's passage through their assigned gates in accordance with Articles 22 and 27. Each judging station should be manned by at least two Gate Judges for individual runs, and by at least three Gate Judges for team runs. No station may be manned solely by members of the same club unless it is the club that is organizing the race, and the judges involved are non-competitors. A single judging station may judge several gates, provided all may be clearly seen. Gate Judges shall take special care to note any disagreement on scoring on their score sheets.
- 8.K.1.** A Gate Judge may be assigned one or more gates within his/her section for which they will bear the responsibility of the final decision of the competitor's passage.
This judge is referred to as the Primary Judge for that gate(s).
- 8.L.** The **Video Judge** carries the same responsibility as a Gate Judge and acts as an additional resource to determine the correct decision for a competitor on any gate. The Video Judge can systemically view all competitors. Video judges may review any competitor on any gate, or sequence of gates. The Video Judge reports any discrepancy to the Chief Judge who may change the decision of a Gate Judge when the video demonstrates clear and conclusive evidence.
- 8.M.** The **Chief of Scoring** is responsible for the calculation and posting of accurate competition results based on data received under the direction of the Chief Judge. He/she shall indicate the time of posting for each category as it is completed.
- 8.N.** The **Equipment Controller** assures that the dimensions and weight of the boats in competition conform to the rules and marks them accordingly. He/she also ensures that life jackets (PFD), and helmets conform and may mark them accordingly.
- 8.O.** The **Water Safety Officer**, assisted by his/her team and according to the circumstances, shall do his/her utmost for the rescue of competitors who have capsized, or anyone else in the competition course, and shall make a reasonable effort to recover a competitor's equipment. He/she shall have overall responsibility for on-the-water safety measures. The



nature of the safety measures employed shall be commensurate with the difficulty of the course and the skill of the competitors.

- 8.P.** Officials are forbidden to give competitors on the course technical advice by calling or in any other way.

Article 9 - Invitations

The invitation and entry form for a slalom event should be distributed at least four weeks prior to the entry deadline. The invitation should include the following information:

- 9.A.** Time and place of the competition.
- 9.B.** Description of the course, including water conditions and degree of difficulty.
- 9.C.** Categories to be run. All those listed in Article 6.A.1-2 must be offered.
- 9.D.** Sequence and approximate starting times of the events.
- 9.E.** Any specific championships to be contested.
- 9.F.** Safety measures.
- 9.G.** Address to which entries should be sent and amount of entry fee to be paid.
- 9.H.** Last date for entries to be received.
- 9.I.** Whether late entries will be accepted and, if so, amount of extra fee.
- 9.J.** Time and place of the draw.
- 9.K.** Limitations on entries, if any.
- 9.L.** Required work assignments for competitors, if any.
- 9.M.** Regulations on training runs.
- 9.N.** Camping, meals, other accommodations for competitors and officials.
- 9.O.** Any other information as deemed necessary by the Organizers.

Article 10 - Entries

- 10.A.** Entries for a slalom race shall be on the official form provided with the invitation or a suitable facsimile, and shall be in accordance with these rules and any additional rules as given on the invitation. An entry shall always include the name and address of the competitor, his/her ACA number, the club he/she represents (if any), the events he/she wishes to enter, the names of partner(s) and team member(s) as applicable, and ranking division for each event. The entry form, including the ACA liability waiver form, must be signed and must be accompanied by the applicable entry fee. A competitor 17 years or younger on Dec. 31 of the current year must also have a parent or guardian sign the liability waiver form.
- 10.B.** Whenever possible, any entry rejections shall be sent by mail or email to affected competitors with a letter of explanation. Withdrawal of an entry for good cause prior to race day, or cancellation of the race by the Organizers should result in at least a partial refund, an amount being held by the Organizers to cover handling costs. Alteration of entries after the deadline may be accepted only at the discretion of the Chief Official.

Article 11 - The Draw

- 11.A.** The starting order within each event shall normally be determined by a draw of all competitors registered by the entry deadline or by a seeding based on the Slalom National rankings, recent race results, and input from the Slalom Committee. In order to make the race run more smoothly when a wide range of ability levels are entered, the competitors may be divided into two or three groups and a draw done for each group. Late entries, if



allowed, shall be placed at the beginning of each event. After the draw, a start list shall be printed and made available to the competitors prior to the start of the race. Changes in the starting order after the draw may be made only for a demonstrable good reason.

Article 12 - Work Assignments

12.A. All competitors may be expected to perform some task necessary to the running of the race. Failure to perform the assigned task, unless excused by the Chief Official, will result in disqualification. The assignment list should be printed and attached to the start list. In making assignments, the Organizers should make every effort to ensure that late entrants do not escape an assignment by virtue of being late.

Article 13 - Race Sanctioning

13.A. Application for race sanctioning shall be made to the ACA office.

13.B. All sanctioned events will comply with all on-the-water safety aspects of the Event Sanctioning Standards. Safety and Risk Management Standards should be strictly followed.

Article 14 - Practice

14.A. For races not required to adhere to ICF rules, a training run may be allowed on the completed course at the organizer's discretion. Training runs are not mandatory. The organizers must ensure that during the training runs:

14.A.1. An official is put in charge and his/her instructions are carried out.

14.A.2. Starting numbers are used.

14.A.3. Safety measures are carried out, and if no rescue service is available, the competitors are so advised and they are required to lend each other assistance as necessary.

14.A.4. All runs are non-stop, with each gate being done only once. Repeated passage of a gate is allowed only when it is one of a sequence of gates that constitutes a single technical maneuver, so recognized by the Course Designer.

14.B. Open or unlimited training may be permitted at the discretion of the Organizers. All of the above rules should be adhered to, including required non-stop runs, in order that the training is carried out smoothly and safely.

14.C. Non-observance of any of these requirements can lead to disqualification. If a paddle breaks during training, outside assistance is permitted. In the event of a capsize, or rendering aid to another who has capsized, the training run can be resumed from the point of capsize or the point of departure from the course to give aid.

14.D. The Organizers are advised to have all personnel at their stations and all systems activated for testing during practice.

Article 15 - Instruction to Competitors

15.A. At a meeting held prior to the start of the race, all competitors shall be given any pertinent information regarding the running of the race such as emergency procedures, start and finish lines, starting times, intervals, and order, Starter's commands (countdown or electronic signal), safety regulations, procedures for inquiries and protests, boat transport, and any other matters of importance. It is particularly important to cover any late changes in the course, hazardous spots, etc. Competitors may ask questions about the



course or the operation of the race. Additional meetings may be held as deemed necessary by the Chief Official. Racers are responsible for the information discussed at this meeting.

- 15.B.** Particularly for National Team Trials, the Organizers are advised to deal with competitors through Team Leaders, thus allowing the competitors to concentrate on race preparation by freeing them from meetings.

Article 16 - Safety Measures

- 16.A.** All boats must be made unsinkable. In doubtful cases, boats will undergo floatation testing, which will require a boat filled with water to float relatively level on the surface of the water. All boats must be equipped at each end with a handle attached no more than 30 cm from the bow and from the stern. The handles must at all times permit easy insertion of an entire hand up to the base of the thumb to grab the boat. The following are considered as handles: loops of rope, rope with handles or a handle that is an integral part of the boat construction. The material to be used must be at least 6 mm in diameter, or a minimum cross-section of 2 x 10 mm. Taping or other temporary means to attach handles will not be permitted.
- 16.B.** Each competitor shall wear a fastened commercially manufactured safety helmet and a commercially manufactured life jacket (PFD). Neither the safety helmet nor the life jacket (PFD) may be modified in any way. The life jacket (PFD) shall conform to USCG Type III or equivalent national standard such as ISO 12402-5 (Level 50) or higher standards. It must have buoyancy sufficient to float a 6.12kg solid lead weight or its equivalent in other metals, and should be designed to keep a conscious person floating in a face-up position in the water. Competitors failing to observe this rule shall be refused the right to start. Organizers are advised to make spot checks of the buoyancy of life jackets at the finish. A child under 90 pounds may wear a life jacket with buoyancy rate approved by the United States Coast Guard for his/her weight in lieu of the above buoyancy requirement.
- 16.C.** Competitors must at all times be in a position to free themselves immediately from their boats.
- 16.D.** In all cases, competitors participate at their own risk. None of the following: ACA, its various Committees, or the Organizers, can be held responsible for accidents to persons or material damage that may occur during a competition.
- 16.E.** In the absence of a rescue squad or professional caregiver, there must be at least one person on hand during the entire event that is currently certified in CPR and basic first aid. A basic first aid kit must be readily available to this person.
- 16.F.** The Safety Officer shall designate stations where throw bags must be available.
- 16.G.** Every Transmission Judge must have a whistle.
- 16.H.** Three boats must remain at the end of the course at all times for safety. This function will always be required of competitors unless specifically relieved, and other measures have been provided by the Organizers. The Organizers should make every effort to provide other safety measures, particularly for the first boats in each event and following breaks (as per Article 16.J).
- 16.I.** According to the difficulty of the course and the experience of the competitors, safety boats and/or other safety measures shall be provided along the course.



- 16.J.** Non-observance of any of these requirements can lead to disqualification. Every official is required to observe that the safety measures are adhered to. The Starter and the Pre-Start Controller must prevent boats or competitors from starting if they fail to meet the requirements of this Article. Any time lost at the start as a result of safety violations goes against the competitor.
- 16.K.** Upon request, the Water Safety Officer shall submit a written report to the Slalom Committee and to the entity sanctioning the event outlining any injuries to competitors. If medical attention was required, a report from the attending physician on nature, extent of injuries, and treatment received should be obtained and submitted.

Article 17 - Minimum Participation

- 17.A.** For an individual or team contest to take place, at least three boats or three teams must take part. It is, however, not necessary for all three boats or teams to complete the course for the contest to remain valid. Less than three may race informally if the Organizers approve, or events may be combined (see Article 6.F).

Article 18 - Starting Numbers

- 18.A.** Starting numbers shall be provided by the Organizers. They shall be fixed to the body of the competitor in such a manner that they can be seen clearly. In C-2, the competitor in the bow must wear the number. Each competitor is responsible for his/her starting number. The number should be unique for each boat and must not be reused by another competitor, or by the same competitor in another event at the same race. The numbers on the bibs must be at least 11cm high, and 1.5cm in thickness displayed on a 15cm white or dark band. Bibs with a white background will display black numbers, while bibs with a dark background will display white numbers.

Article 19 - The Course

- 19.A.** The course may not be less than 200 meters in length, measured from the starting line through the center of the course to the finish line. It is recommended that the maximum length be no more than 400 meters. As a recommendation for the course designers, the course should be navigable for K1M in a time close to 95 seconds. As far as possible the course should contain natural and artificial hazards, such as current, eddies, rapids, rocks, bridge piers, etc. It shall contain at least 18 (non-championship courses may reduce this number) and not more than 25 gates, of which 6 must be upstream gates. The distance between the last gate and the finish line must be no less than 15 meters and no more than 25 meters. The finish line must be clearly marked on both sides and downstream of the final gate.
- 19.B.** The Organizers are advised to design the course in such a manner that smooth, continuous runs may be expected from the better paddlers in all categories at the level of skill for which the competition is intended. Excessive crisscrossing should be avoided, and the gates must not be so close together as to impair negotiation or judging. Reasonable balance between left and right-handed moves must be provided. The course must be navigable throughout, without excessive hazard to life, limb, or equipment. The final approach and negotiation of a gate must not be unduly hindered, such as by an isolated submerged rock or other obstruction. The ideal course should include:



- 19.B.1.** A Minimum of one gate combination which offers the athletes more than one option of negotiation.
- 19.B.2.** Constant direction changes and flowing movements that make use of the technical challenges provided by the water (eddies, waves, and rapids).
- 19.C.** The final course layout must be approved by the Course Design Committee (consisting of the Chief Judge, Technical Organizer, Chief Official and Course Designer(s)), prior to the start of competition runs.
- 19.D.** The boat must be stationary at the start.
- 19.E.** The start must be a minimum of 3 meters upstream of gate #1
- 19.F.** If, during the course of the competition, the Chief Judge finds that a significant change in the water level has occurred that may be corrected, he/she may stop the competition until the original water conditions are restored. If unusual circumstances alter the nature or design of the course during the course of competition, only the Chief Judge may authorize alteration to or change the position of a gate.

Article 20 - Marking and Hanging of Gates

- 20.A.** The gates consist of two (2) suspended poles painted with green and white rings for downstream gates, and red and white rings for upstream gates, with the bottom rings always being white and each ring being 20 cm in length. A black band of a minimum width of 2cm and maximum width of 2.5 cm is placed around the base of each pole. It is recommended that the gate numbers be displayed according to the ICF Canoe Slalom Committee template on the white ring, second from the bottom. Event logos and/or advertising agreed upon with the technical committee may be displayed on any of the rings above the bottom four rings.
 - 20.A.1** Gates flush to the current may be either red or green, whichever seems more appropriate in each instance. The width of the gates is 1.2m minimum, and 4.0m maximum, measured between the outside of the poles. The poles must be round, and 1.6 to 2m long, 3.5 to 5cm in diameter, and of sufficient weight that motion caused by the wind is not excessive. The lower ends of the poles should be approximately 20 cm above the water, and the poles must not be put in motion by the water. Gates must be numbered in the order of negotiation. The gate number panels must measure 30cm x 30cm. The numbers must be painted on both sides of the panels, black on a yellow or white background, and must be at least 20cm high and have a line width of 2cm. On the side of the panel opposite the direction of correct negotiation, a diagonal red line is painted, bottom left to top right.
- 20.B.** The gate supports should not be placed so high as to permit excessive motions due to the wind. If such placement is unavoidable, a second crossbar and/or additional strings should be used to stabilize the gate.
- 20.C.** The course must be the same for both runs as nearly as practicable. Gates and gate poles should not be changed after competition has begun unless to restore the course to its original condition. Such changes may only be made with explicit permission and direction from the Chief Judge.

Article 21 - Negotiation of Gates

- 21.A.** For the purposes of these rules, the following definitions apply:



- 21.A.1** The **Gate Line**, in all circumstances, is a line drawn between the outside edge of the bottom of the two poles. In cases of swinging gates, the gate line is defined as the line between the outside edge of the bottom of the pole projected vertically to the water surface.
- 21.A.2.** The **Body** of a competitor means the complete head. Torso, hands, and arms are not considered to be part of the body in this context unless specifically indicated.
- 21.A.3.** A **Live Gate** is any gate that is still subject to penalties.
- 21.A.4.** A **Dead Gate** is one for which negotiation is completed (Article 21.D). No additional penalties can be charged on a dead gate.
- 21.B.** All gates must be negotiated in numerical order, each in accordance with the direction established by the correct side of the number panels, as defined in Article 20.A. Any boat presentation (forward, reverse, or broadside) in the correct direction is correct.
- 21.C.** Negotiation of a gate begins when:
 - 21.C.1.** The boat or the paddler or paddle touches a pole of the gate; OR
 - 21.C.2.** Any part of the head of the competitor crosses the gate line.
- 21.D.** Negotiation of a gate is completed when the negotiation of any subsequent gate begins or the finish line is crossed.
- 21.E.** Negotiation of a gate is correct when the complete head of the competitor (in C-2 both competitors) and any part of the boat has at the same instant crossed the gate line in the correct direction, and the boat has continued through and left the gate line.
- 21.F.** Negotiation of a gate is faultless when, in addition to being correct, neither pole has been touched by the boat, paddler, or paddle, and negotiation of the next subsequent gate is engaged or the finish line is crossed.

Article 22 - Judging

- 22.A.** Penalties are not cumulative at a single gate. A 50 second penalty is the maximum obtainable by one competitor on any gate. All gates are scored 0, 2, or 50 as follows:
 - 22.A.1.** No penalty (0) – Correct negotiation without touching the pole with the body, paddle, or the boat.
 - 22.A.2.** Two (2) second penalty – Correct negotiation, but touching one or both poles. Repeated touching of the same or both poles is penalized only once.
 - 22.A.3.** Fifty (50) second penalty – Gate touched but not negotiated. Lack of negotiation is judged to have occurred only after negotiation of any subsequent gate begins or the finish line is crossed.
 - 22.A.4.** Fifty (50) second penalty – Intentional pushing of a gate to allow negotiation. The criteria to judge an intentional push;
 - a. The competitor is not in a position to negotiate the gate and/or
 - b. That an unexpected action of the Competitor (stroke or body motion) enables negotiation of the gate.
 - 22.A.5.** Fifty (50) second penalty – The head of the competitor (in C2 one or both competitors) breaks the gate line upside down, unless correctly renegotiated before any subsequent gate negotiation begins. A roll is judged to have occurred if the complete head of the competitor (in C-2 either competitor) is under the surface of the water.



- 22.A.6.** Fifty (50) second penalty – Negotiation of a gate in the direction opposite to that indicated by the number panel. During any gate negotiation, no part of the head is allowed to cross the gate line in the wrong direction.
- 22.A.7.** Fifty (50) second penalty – Gate left out. Gate(s) left out is determined to have occurred when negotiation of any subsequent gate begins OR the finish line is crossed.
- 22.A.8** Fifty (50) second penalty – Any part of the head of the competitor breaks the gate line in the wrong direction during negotiation of the gate, unless the negotiation of the gate begins in the correct direction and finishes in the correct direction before any subsequent gate is negotiated.
- 22.A.9.** Fifty (50) second penalty – Failure of the complete head to pass between the gate line on an attempted negotiation where any part of the competitor's head passes between the gate line in the correct direction, with or without part of the boat, unless correctly renegotiated before any subsequent gate negotiation begins
- 22.A.10.** Fifty (50) second penalty – Failure of all three boats of a team to cross the finish line within 15 seconds.
- 22.B.** Interpretations:
- 22.B.1.** Undercutting of a gate by the Competitor with any part of their body or equipment, except part of their head, without a touch is not penalized.
- 22.B.2.** At all times, the benefit of any doubt must be given to the competitor. In particular, if a Judge is in doubt as to whether movement of a pole was caused by contact or by a water splash, no penalty for a pole touch may be given.
- 22.B.3.** Repeated attempts at a gate without touching the poles is not penalized if part of the head of the competitor(s) has not broken the gate line in the wrong direction.
- 22.B.4.** Repeated touching of the same pole is only penalized once.
- 22.B.5.** In judging whether the body of a competitor has correctly crossed the gate line, it is only necessary for the complete head to have passed between the poles in the correct direction at the same time a piece of the boat passes through the gate line in the correct direction.
- 22.B.6.** Intentional pushing of a gate to allow negotiation. The criteria to judge an intentional push are;
- 22.B.6.a.** The Competitor is not in a position to negotiate the gate or
- 22.B.6.b.** That an unexpected action of the Competitor (stroke or body motion) enables negotiation of the gate
- 22.C.** Placement of Judges – Judging stations, or individual Gate Judges, must be located so that all situations can be clearly observed. It is advised that Judges have two distinct viewpoints for each gate when possible.

Article 23 - Capsize and Upside Down

- 23.A .** The boat is considered upside down when the head of the competitor is completely under water. It is considered a capsize when the boat is upside down and the competitor (or a competitor in C-2) has left the boat completely. The Eskimo roll is not considered to be a capsize. In team runs, members of the team may help each other to Eskimo roll.

Article 24 - Runs



- 24.A.** Unless otherwise approved by the Slalom Officials Committee prior to the race event. A slalom race consists of two runs. The better of two (2) runs will count as the final result. For the team event, this may be reduced to one run. Where a competition is held on uncontrolled water, both runs in a category must be on the same day.

Article 25 - Timing

- 25.A.** The time of a run is taken from the moment of the Start Judge's Signal, with the boat held at a fixed starting point, to the moment the finish line is cut by the competitor's body (in C-2 the first body). If electronic timing is used, the clock may be started when the competitor's body or electronic device (on the body or boat) first breaks the starting line. Crossing the finish line upside down disqualifies for that run. (See Article 23) A competitor's run is complete when the competitor's body or electronic device (on the body or boat) crosses the finish line (in C2, the first body that crosses the finish line). While crossing through the finish line, the competitor(s) must use a normal paddling motion. (This is controlled by the Finish Judge). He/she may not cross the finish line more than once. In team racing, the time is measured from the departure of the first boat until the arrival of the last boat. In the team event, all three boats must cross the finish line within 15 seconds of each other.
- 25.B.** Digital watches should be used and watches should be of the same type to avoid confusion among timers. Photocells will be used for timing at the National Championships and National Team Trials and digital watches will be used for backup timing.
- 25.C.** Photocell generated times must be recorded in seconds truncated to the nearest one-hundredth second. The times generated by digital watches must be converted to seconds and truncated to the nearest one-hundredth second.
- 25.D.** Race organizers are advised to provide backup timing, which should be read and recorded independently of the main timing. This is mandatory for National Championships and National Team Trials.
- 25.E.** As soon as the results of a run for the competitor or team are known, the start number, the penalty-seconds and the time should be announced and should be posted in the designated place until the time for filing protests have elapsed.
- 25.F.** The following notations will be used for reporting the results: DNF – Did not finish; DNS – Did not start; DSQ-R – Disqualified for particular run; DSB – Disqualified Behavior.

Article 26 - Calculation of Results

- 26.A.** For the calculation of the results, the following formula applies:

Time in seconds + Penalties = Result

Example of an individual result:

Time elapsed: 2 minutes, 20.832 seconds = 140.83 seconds

Penalties: 2 + 2 + 50 + 50 = 104 seconds

Total Score = 244.83 seconds

- 26.B.** For a team event, the individual penalties for each of the three boats and the team penalty (if any) are all added to the total elapsed time in seconds to arrive at the team score.

Article 27 - Score keeping and Signaling by Gate Judges



- 27.A.** Gate Judges shall mark the penalties incurred by each boat on penalty sheets provided for this purpose. Unusual or questionable circumstances, or disagreements on scoring, should also be noted. Care should be taken to number these sheets sequentially, and to clearly indicate first and second runs, and reruns, if any. Gate Judges' penalty sheets shall be picked up periodically throughout the race and delivered to Scoring. All penalty sheets shall be delivered to Scoring at the end of the day's events. If approved electronic transmission devices are available, penalties shall be reported to Scoring, as frequently as practicable.
- 27.B.** Gate Judges may be provided with marked disks to communicate with the public. The disks shall be marked as follows: A yellow disk with figures 2 marked on both sides, a red disk with figures 50 marked on both sides.
- 27.B.1.** Clean (negotiation without touching) – No signal is given.
- 27.B.2.** Negotiation with penalty – A yellow disk with figures (2) and a red disk marked with (50) held steady.
- 27.C.** Judges are forbidden to communicate with the competitors on the course concerning their faults or their technique in any manner whatsoever. Competitors are forbidden to interfere with the Judges at any time. (See Article 32.D for appropriate methods of inquiry or protest.) Signals by judges should be given at a time when they will not alter the action of the competitor. (In the case of a 2 or 50 call on a gate where the competitor can recycle, neither the 2, nor the 50 should be signaled until the competitor either goes on to the next gate or recycles back to make sure he/she goes through the gate.

Article 28 - Clearing the Course

28.A. Whistling Over:

28.A.1. The signal to clear the course is repeated short whistle blasts, given by the nearest Transmission Judge. Upon hearing such a signal, a competitor must immediately pull in to shore and await further instructions from the Transmission Judge. Reasons for whistling a competitor over include overtaking, as well as difficulties with the timing of his/her run or a gate out of position further down the course. In the latter cases, the Chief Judge may, at his/her discretion, grant a rerun.

28.B. Overtaking:

28.B.1. When overtaking occurs, the normal procedure is to whistle over the overtaken boat and permit the overtaking boat free passage. The Judge must ensure that the interrupted run is not resumed so soon as to cause immediate re-overtaking. Any time lost goes against the overtaken boat, and he/she will be granted no rerun unless highly extenuating circumstances prevail or at the discretion of the Chief Judge.

28.B.2. On rare occasion, the overtaking boat may be whistled over and held, allowing the overtaken boat to continue. This could occur if the overtaken boat is running the course correctly, while the overtaking boat is doing so by running largely out of control and missing gates (the "Mad Bomber"). Any time lost goes against the boat whistled over, and there will normally be no rerun unless highly extenuating circumstances prevail or at the discretion of the Chief Judge.

28.C. Interference:



28.C.1. If a competitor has been interfered with by another boat, he/she may be granted a rerun with the authority of the Chief Judge. To merit a rerun, interference must be substantial and unavoidable, presenting a material impediment to the course.

28.C.1.a. Contact usually, but not always, is interference.

28.C.1.b. Lack of contact usually, but not always, is not interference.

28.C.1.c. Intentional contact where it could have been avoided, or other unsportsmanlike conduct in attempting to create interference to obtain a rerun will not be tolerated and could result in disqualification.

28.C.2. Normally, a rerun will be granted only to the overtaking boat. Only under highly extenuating circumstances would a rerun be granted to the overtaken boat (for example, see Article 28.B.1.) or to both boats. Extra care must be taken to ensure that no overtaking occurs during a rerun.

28.C.3. If a rerun is taken, the score for the original run is canceled and may not be considered for placement or listed in the results.

Article 29 - Starting Interval

29.A. The Chief Judge and Technical Organizer, in consultation with the Race Organizer, will designate a set starting interval. The minimum start interval must not be less than 45 seconds. A Chief Judge may at his/her discretion designate exceptions to the fixed interval to accommodate variations in athlete abilities, or based upon the request of an athlete or their representative.

Article 30 - Dead Heat

30.A. In the event that two or more competitors obtain the same score in their better run, the score of their other run will resolve the tie. If there is still no difference then the competitors are given the same ranking.

Article 31 - Paddle Loss or Breakage

31.A. If a competitor loses or breaks a paddle, only a spare carried on the boat may be used. In team events, the spare paddle of another member of the team may be used.

Article 32 - Protests

32.A. A protest against an athlete to compete in a race shall be advised to a member of the Jury not later than one hour before the start of a race.

32.B. For judging and timing matters, a Team Manager or Athlete may make an inquiry with no fee. An inquiry is considered only when submitted within 5 minutes of the unofficial results of the event being posted. Following the investigation of the inquiry, the decision of the Chief Judge becomes a matter of fact and cannot be protested further. When an inquiry leads to a changed result, all affected Teams must be informed.

For obvious irregularity in the conduct of the competition such as changing water level, object in the water, gate position change, overtake, or bad weather, a Team Manager or Athlete may protest this obvious irregularity. This protest will be considered when an Intention to Protest is submitted by the Team Manager or Athlete to the Inquiry/Protest Desk within 5 minutes of the unofficial results of the event being posted. No one may make an inquiry on the result of another competitor.



- 32.C.** A Team Manager or Athlete must then submit the protest in writing using the appropriate form. It must be submitted no more than 20 minutes after the unofficial results are posted and signed by the Chief Judge. The Chief Judge or Protest Desk will accept a protest from the Team Manager or Athlete upon the receipt of a fee, set by the Organizers, but not exceeding \$50.00. The deposit is returned if the protest is upheld. If the protest is not upheld, or the Team Manager or Athlete withdraws the protest, the deposit is forfeited to the Organizing Committee of the competition.
- 32.D.** The Chief Judge evaluates the legitimacy of any protest. He/she may consult with the Judges involved and at their discretion, view any official television or video footage. The Chief Judge transmits their decision in writing to all directly affected, including Team Managers, if applicable.

Article 33 - Appeals to the ACA National Office

- 33.A.** A competitor has the right to appeal a decision of the Jury. Such an appeal must be lodged with the ACA National Office within ten days of the event. An appeal fee of \$50.00 USD must be paid to the ACA National Office. (This fee is in addition to any protest fee paid to the Organizers.) The ACA Slalom Committee shall hold a hearing only after fair notice is given to decide the matter. If the appeal is denied, only that portion of the appeal fee not expended in conducting either a mail or email vote of the Committee is refunded. Appeal to higher authority shall be directed first to the ACA National Grievance Committee, and finally to the ACA Board of Directors. If the appeal is upheld the entire \$50.00 is refunded.
- 33.B.** If the appeal involves a matter of scoring, the Slalom Officials Committee must rule on whether, and in what manner, the score is to be changed. The appeal fee is handed to the Chief Judge at the race as notification and assurance that an appeal is to be filed. He/she must forward it within 24 hours, along with his/her report on the matter, to the Slalom Officials Committee. The written appeal is sent by the competitor as prescribed above. If results lists are printed before the outcome of an appeal are known, the fact of the appeal must be noted on the list and the outcome must be published when it is known.
- 33.C.** If a protest involving the course or any aspect of the race organization is denied by the Jury, the protester's only recourse at that time is to withdraw from the race and demand a refund of entry fees. If such demand is not agreed to, it may be appealed to the Slalom Officials Committee.
- 33.D.** If the appeal involves a denied rerun, the Chief Judge, upon notification of the intent to appeal and receipt of the appeal fee, must grant the rerun. It will be timed and scored as usual, but its effect is conditional upon the outcome of the appeal.

Article 34 - Disqualification

The following may result in disqualification (DSB) for the competition at the discretion of the Chief Judge.

- 34.A.** Any competitor attempting to win a competition by irregular means, fails to follow an Official's order, fails to observe the safety rules (Article 16), who conducts themselves in a manner unbecoming of the sport during the competition (including the use of profanity in the presence of spectators or officials), starts in his/her boat or equipment which does not conform to the rules (Article 5) will be disqualified.
- 34.B.** Failure to perform a work assignment unless excused (Article 12) or failure to remain for safety unless relieved (Article 16.l) will entail disqualification for the entire race.



- 34.C.** Deliberate misrepresentations on an entry form or in statements to Officials will result in disqualification from the category involved or from the entire race, depending on their nature.
- 34.D.** The following will result in disqualification (DSQ-R) only for the run in which it occurred.
- 34.D.1.** Capsize on the course (Article 23).
 - 34.D.2.** Being upside down crossing the finish line (Article 25).
 - 34.D.3.** Being unready to start in the published sequence, or appearing without the correct starting number, if negligence on the part of the competitor can be established.
 - 34.D.4.** Acceptance of outside assistance during a run. In the sense of this Article, the following is taken to mean outside assistance:
 - 34.D.4.a.** Any help by a second party given to a competitor or boat, such as:
 - 34.D.4.a.i.** to hold out, slide, or throw a competitor's lost paddle or a replacement paddle.
 - 34.D.4.a.ii.** to guide, slide or set in motion a boat.
 - 34.D.4.a.iii.** however, nothing in this Article shall prevent any team member (of the three boats) from helping each other.
 - 34.D.4.b.** Communication with the competitor by means of an electric loudspeaker or radio.
 - 34.D.5.** Nonobservance of the rules for practice (Article 14) or failure to leave the course after a capsize (Article 23) will result in disqualification (DSQ-R) from the run involved.
- 34.F.** If a competitor is forced to break the rules by the action of another person, the Competition Committee decides if he/she will be disqualified or not for the competition.

Article 35 - Prizes

- 35.A.** Prizes will generally be awarded for the first three places in each event. Medals, if used, should be of gold, silver, and bronze, denoting first, second, and third place. Ribbons, if used, should be of blue, red and white, respectively. Other types of trophies or prizes may be given provided they conform with Article 38. Additional places may be given awards if the depth of the event merits it. In the C-2 events, both members of the crew shall receive the appropriate award.
- 35.B.** For championship events, care must be exercised to assure that awards are presented only to those who are eligible for them in accordance with Article 3.

Article 36 - Results and Reports

- 36.A.** The results list shall include the full name of each competitor; and/or ACA number, if given, club (if any), hometown, times, penalties, and scores for both runs. The results shall be listed in order of finish result within each category. The outcome of any formal protests shall also be given.
- 36.B.** Two copies of all race results must be sent to the ACA offices for use in the rankings and for permanent file. It is recommended they also be submitted to appropriate regional and national publications.
- 36.C.** Organizers should be aware of the importance of all results in computing rankings, and should strive for completeness and accuracy. Full names including Jr., III, etc., where applicable, are essential. ACA numbers are an excellent cross check on identity.



Article 37 - Amendments

37.A. These rules may be amended at any time by a 2/3 vote of the Slalom Committee and approval by the ACA National Office. Any proposed changes to the rules should be sent to the Slalom Committee and the Slalom High Performance Manager for review. Amendments to the rules approved by the Slalom Committee and the ACA National Office will take effect immediately after the approval of the rule changes. A timeline will be posted on the ACA website.

Article 38 – Special Rules for Team Trials, National Championships, and Junior Olympics

38.A. Nationals, Age Group Nationals, Junior, U23 and Senior Trials and Junior Olympics competitions are organized under the authority of ACA. The Slalom Events Committee will solicit bids for these races, and will submit a final recommendation for each event, including date, place, and format, to the Slalom Committee and ACA National Office for approval.

38.A.1. Special rules may be used for Junior Olympics that are submitted by the Junior Olympic Committee to the Slalom Officials Committee, and approved by the Slalom Committee, based upon the recommendation of the Slalom Officials Committee, that are extensions or modifications of these rules.

38.B. The format for Nationals and Age Group Nationals shall be as specified in these racing rules unless otherwise approved by the Slalom Events Committee prior to the competition. The format for Junior, U23 and Senior Trials shall be specifically approved by the Slalom Committee and ACA National Office as part of the Team Selection Criteria. (Article 38.F.)

38.C. The Slalom Committee will approve the Chief Judge and Technical Organizer based upon the recommendation of the Slalom Officials Committee, who will see that the races are run in accordance with these rules and any additional criteria established by the Slalom Committee and ACA National Office.

38.D. Events:

38.D.1. Team Trials will be run in the ICF events, (Article 6.A.1) and according to selection criteria approved by the Slalom Committee and ACA National Office.

38.D.2. National Championships shall be held in all National Slalom events, Article 6.A.1 and 2, 3. Competitors in each event, shall be seeded based on the approved rankings and recent race results, with the lower ranking boats at the beginning of the start list and the higher ranking boats at the end of the start list. At National Championships, the current National Champion, if present, shall always run last in his/her event in compliance with Section 6 of this Article.

38.E. The Course:

38.E.1. The competition course must be designed by a three-member Course Design Commission. The Course Design Commission will be nominated by the Slalom Events Committee in the team selection criteria, and approved by the Slalom Committee. The Commission chair shall be a representative of the hosting group who is highly competent in course design and familiar with the site. The other two members of the Commission shall be highly competent course designers from other geographical areas. The Commission shall meet at the convenience of its members, but sufficiently prior to the race to assure compliance with Section 6 of this Article.



- 38.E.2.** The courses for Team Trials should be challenging to top international competitors, and should, to the extent possible, resemble in nature and difficulty the courses expected to be found at the international races for which the trials are being held.
 - 38.E.3.** The course for National Championships should be designed to encourage participation by a broader range of competitors, and as such should be only moderately challenging to A-ranked competitors in order to give those of B ranking a reasonable opportunity to negotiate all of the gates.
 - 38.E.4.** The course for age-group categories should be a difficulty commensurate with the average skill levels of these groups.
 - 38.E.5.** After the course is erected and all gates are in position, a demonstration run must be made by at least one non-competitor. Demonstration runs should, if possible, include all boat types. To the extent possible, demonstration runs should include all events for US Team Trials (Junior and Senior). The Course Approval Committee must then approve the course. Practice runs are not permitted once the course is erected.
- 38.F. Team Selection Method:**
- 38.F.1.** The Team Selection Criteria for each year will be published by January 31 of that year by the ACA National Office.

It is the duty of that American Canoe Association National Office to ensure that the criteria is published in one or more official publications, including the ACA website.