

# USA Outrigger Canoe Racing Association

## USA National Abridged Race Rules

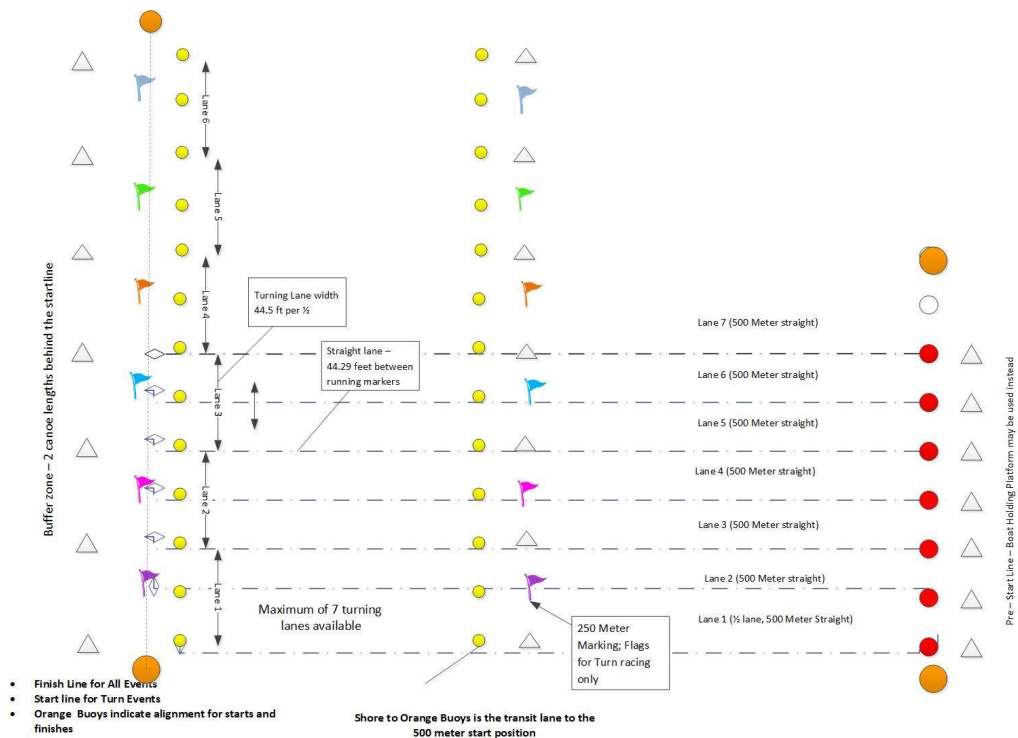
For the first USAORCA National Sprint Championship, the organization is basing racing rules on the International Va'a Federation (IVF) Sprint Rules. In the following pages, there are specific segments of the equipment, course, and rules of racing which will be referenced by the officials for this event. Race Committee members will be on site to answer questions.

Following those sections are **RULE INFRACTIONS** which includes remedies to the paddler or crew. The international rules are very specific in penalties that any infraction results in a disqualification. The process to protest a disqualification and/or pursue appeals are outlined here and include a filing fee of \$100 / \$150 respectively.

### COURSE Detail:

The 500 meter straight course events in V1 and V6 will take place on 6 lanes with an option to utilize lane 7 where it allows for competitive heat racing and fewer heats in a division. For 500 meter (1 turn) and 1000 meter (3 turn) races, the start and finish line are the same with the va'a utilizing the space noted in 5.a. 2) below. We have ability to use 7 lanes as necessary for these events also.

Progression: All events with heats will be progressed to a FINAL by the top 6 finish times across all heats.



## EQUIPMENT and Club Crew Specifics

### 1. Va'a Accessories

All va'a accessories, including floatation tanks, seats, ama, iako, bailers and rigging shall be properly constructed and standardized. Prior to the competition, officials shall oversee the rigging, which shall be standardized with ama on left, and may not be altered except by an official.

No seat accessories may be brought into the canoe by the competitor with the exception of para va'a

Altering the va'a without permission from an official, this includes bringing in seat and footboard accessories (para va'a excluded) is not allowed and may be cause for disqualification.

### 2. Paddles

A paddle shall have one blade and may be of any shape or size. It may be constructed from any material. Para va'a competitors may utilize an adaptive paddle device approved during para athlete evaluation prior to the event. It is possible for such a device to include two blades.

### 3. Uniforms

We ask that you represent your club in the club crew races. No penalties, but any film photo choices will be selected from well uniformed crews for publicity purposes.

### 4. Club Crew FINALS

Club crew teams advancing to finals MUST be the same 6 paddlers from the previous heats, unless there is a medical reason, then an alternate can sit in.

## COURSE

### 5. Lanes and Course Markers

- a. The course will be set up as shown on the course diagram.
  - 1) Straight races are marked by the buoy markings on each side of the lane.
  - 2) Turn races shall turn around the flag marking the center of the lane. The width of the lane is from buoy to buoy. The canoe must remain within the buoy markings throughout the course of the race.
- b. The course shall be surveyed to the course diagram prior to the event for accuracy.
- c. There must be at least six (6) and no more than eight (8) lanes. Half lanes are allowed for 500 meter straight races.
- d. The course shall have lanes that are:
  - (1) 500 meters long;
  - (2) 25 to 35 meters wide for turn races with half that width allowed for straight races;
  - (3) at least 2 meters deep, but exceptions may be allowed by the Board if the course is of uniform depth
  - (4) lane markings on the right and left of the lane shall be placed every 10 - 15 meters (25 meters at a minimum)
  - (5) A pre-start line at 20 meters before the start line shall be set to align the canoes prior to the start sequence (15.f.(1)) This applies to each end of the course as turn racing begins at the start/finish line while 500-meter straight races are at the far end of the course;
- e. All 500-meter races are run on a straight 500-meter course unless noted in the event list. Races 1,000 meters and above shall be run on a 250-meter course. Turn races using a 250-meter course, will start and finish at the same point.

- f. The course shall have flags that measure a minimum 70 cm by 70 cm. at 250 meters for turns and at the pre-start line (behind the start finish line) to direct crews on the course. Markings at the 500-meter start line may be low and have the lane numbers identified but need not have a flag. Flag colors are as prescribed in the course diagram to ensure visibility to the competitors.
- g. Start and finish lines shall be aligned by the buoys for the innermost and outermost lanes.
- h. Markings at the finish line shall be low enough to the water to not block the photo finish camera view but must be distinct enough for the athlete to know they have completed the course.
- i. A course mark shall be placed to identify the area 15 meters from the turn ends of the course so that judges can evaluate infractions on the lane during the race. This must be a different color buoy in the markings that line the right and left of each lane.
- j. A lane or area shall be designated so that the contestants may proceed safely to the starting line without interfering with the race course.
- k. When a race is taking place, competitors who are not racing will not be permitted on or near the course.

## **6. Marshalling Areas**

- a. A check-in location will be designated where the contestants will report, for wristband verification prior to their race, before entering the marshalling area. No one other than the contestants may pass beyond the check-in desk, except for Para competitors, who may have appropriate assistance.
- b. An area, termed the marshalling area, for contestants to go to after they leave the check-in area and before they enter the va'a will be designated near where the va'a are kept between races. Once you are in this area, you cannot leave

## **7. Position in Va'a**

- a. Paddling, including any stationary use of the paddle in the water, is only allowed while the competitor is in a sitting position on a seat in the va'a. Competitors must remain in a seated contact position in the canoe (no standing or kneeling)
- b. Support seats and footrests may be used by Para competitors, but must be quickly and easily attach/detachable.

## **8. Starts**

- a. Contestants must be present on time at the starting line, in the order stated for the day's events.
- b. Starting signals shall be given regardless of absentees.
- c. The position at the start should be such that the bow of each competing va'a is lined up in its assigned lane without movement on the starting line.
- d. Holders may be used, and may be either:
  - (1) by mechanical means, or
  - (2) by people to hold the stern of the canoe by way of a platform or from the water.
- e. The start will be controlled by the aligner, located at the side of the course, and the starter, located in a boat in the middle of the course approximately sixty meters in front of the starting line. Use of a Starter to the side of the course must be reviewed and approved by the Race Committee.
- f. Starting procedures must be as follows:
  - (1) Immediately prior to race start time, the starter will raise a white flag signaling va'a to come to the pre-start line.
  - (2) As soon as the va'a are lined up on the pre-start line, the aligner will communicate to the starter the OK to raise a red flag signaling the va'a to line up evenly on the start line.

- (3) As soon as the va'a are lined up evenly, the aligner must communicate quietly to the starter by radio to start the race.
- (4) Instantaneously upon radio communication, the starter will simultaneously lower the red flag and raise a green flag signaling the start of the race. An air horn or other sound device may simultaneously be set off, but the green flag is the official start.
- (5) If the aligner is unable to line up the va'a evenly and their positioning makes it difficult to do so, they may order the white flag to be raised and begin the process again.
- (6) At the start of a race, no va'a shall have an illegal advantage. All va'a that are lined up illegally will be provided a warning by the raising of the black flag indicating an infraction exists and will be given the opportunity to line up correctly. If, after reasonable time, any va'a persists in lining up so that an illegal advantage is gained, the aligner may start the race. The black flag remaining raised at the start indicates an infraction will be called.
- (7) If the aligner, after communicating to the flag person to start the race, sees an unfair situation not previously noticed, a rerun must be immediately called.
- (8) If the aligner sees any reason to immediately halt the race for a rerun, they will communicate such to the course boats by radio and the waving of a red flag.

## **9. Interruption**

- a. The Race Director, the head course judge or the aligner may authorize the interruption of a race if an unforeseen problem occurs. A red flag and/or a sound signal will be used to halt the race.
- b. In case of an overturn, any outside help will result in a disqualification of the Competitor. The course officials may, at their discretion, authorize or provide outside help.

## **10. Turns**

- a. Turns are to be made counter-clockwise, with the ama nearest to and rounding the flag.
- b. During a turn, the canoe shall not run over the flag in such a way that the flag is between the ama and the hull. If this occurs, the contestant shall be disqualified.

## **18. Finish**

- a. The finish line is crossed when the bow of the va'a passes the finish flags, or as noted in 18.b below.
- b. When finish line systems are used whereby the camera may be blocked by the finish line flags, an imaginary line one meter in front of the finish flags will be the official finish line.
- c. Any va'a finishing without its entire crew will result in the crew being disqualified.
- d. Any va'a outside its assigned lane during the course of the race, including the finish will result in a crew disqualification.
- e. Electronic photo finish system for the recording of finish times and place is the preferred system for a sprint competition. Va'a and lane markings should be identifiable via the pictures captured. A manual backup system for verification of the order of finish must be provided. A secondary video should be provided in the event the main system is not operating properly at any time.
- f. For timing of events, the photo finish system may be equipped with timing options. A secondary manual timing system shall be required.
- g. Va'a should continue through the prestart area before turning off the course.

## RULE INFRACTIONS

### 1. Disqualification and Infractions with Penalties

- a. The following provisions as stated in these rules are cause for automatic disqualification:
  - (1) Competing while not a member of a Member Federation, affiliated or otherwise, of the IVF.
  - (2) Competing for more than one crew in an event will disqualify both crews from the competition.
  - (3) Not meeting the age requirements.
  - (4) Using prohibited drugs.
  - (5) Paddling in a non-seated position.
  - (6) Starting incorrectly.
  - (7) Not rounding the flags in a counter-clockwise direction.
  - (8) When making a turn around a flag resulting in the flag passing between the ama and hull.
  - (9) Finishing without the entire crew in the va'a.
  - (10) Going outside of one's lane.
  - (11) Unsportsmanlike conduct.
  - (12) Para competitors will be disqualified if they do not meet all the requirements contained in the separate "Adaptive (Para Va'a) Competitor Rules and Classification System" document.
  - (13) Altering the va'a without permission of an official, this includes bringing in seat and footboard accessories (para va'a excluded)
  - (14) Competitor being assisted by outside help in the event of the va'a overturning.
- b. Besides the reasons set out for disqualification in other parts of these rules, any competitor who attempts to win an event by means other than those which are honest, does not respect the race rules, or who displays unsportsmanlike conduct, shall be disqualified for the entire duration of the championships.
- c. All disqualifications are to be pronounced by the (acting) Race Director and shall be immediately confirmed in writing with reasons given.

### 2. Protests

- a. Protests must be filed by a crew coach or designee. Prior to filing a protest, area coordinators may seek information through the infractions' director. Any Coach who is considering a protest dependent on information from the infractions' director must inform the infractions' director, who shall then have the Coach sign a disqualification inquiry form showing both the start and finish time of the inquiry with the infractions' director.
- b. A protest to any result or disqualification may be lodged by filling out the protest form and handing it in at the information and protest booth not later than 30 minutes after: 1) the announcement and publication of the results of the race in question when there is no disqualification, 2) the Coach or assistant Coach signs a receipt of the disqualification form, or 3) Discussion with racing committee/officials to occur within 30min protest lodgment timeframe of 1) or 2) above.
- c. Once a protest has been received, the Protest Committee must notify immediately all parties involved in the race, allowing time for other or counter protests to be received. After 20 minutes, the Protest Committee closes the case and starts deliberating.
- d. The decision of the Protest Committee, on each protest, must be confirmed in writing, giving reasons for the decision. The decision must be handed to the affected Coaches, who must acknowledge receipt of it by signing the Protest Committee's copy and recording the

time in case of any further appeal. Counter protest by others affected by this result have 15 minutes to submit their protest after time recorded

- e. All protests shall be made in writing and accompanied by a fee of \$100 cash. The fee cannot be paid by cheque. The fee will be refunded if the protest is upheld
- f. If a protest or an official decision results in a rerun, no change in the competitors is allowed.

### **3. Appeals**

- a. An appeal against a decision of the Protest Committee must be addressed to the chairman of the appeals jury in writing on the appeals form and be accompanied by a fee of US\$150.00 cash. The fee cannot be paid by cheque. The fee will be refunded if the protest is upheld. The appeal must be handed in at the information and protest booth not later than 20 minutes after the Coach has been informed with a written communication of the decision against the competitor or team and has signed the receipt given. The fee will be refunded if the appeal is upheld.
- b. The decision of the jury may not be appealed.

## FLAG SEQUENCE AND PURPOSE

To clarify the Sequence of Flags for all starts, this section is being included:

A start sequence in a race often involves a series of flag motions to communicate important information to the crews. Here's an illustration of the start sequence using flags as they will be used in these Sprints:

### 1. **Preparation Phase:**

- Flag: **White Flag**
- Motion: Wave the white flag in the air.

Explanation: The white flag signals to the crews to start preparing and heading to the designated line for the race.

### 2. **Crews to Line:**

- Flag: **Red Flag**
- Motion: Wave the red flag in the air.

Explanation: The red flag signals to the crews to stop and position themselves near the starting line.

### 3. **Check for Overline:**

- Flag: **Black Flag**
- Motion: Hold the black flag down/out of sight. Raised when a penalty situation exists and crew/paddler should adjust until the black flag is lowered.

Explanation: The black flag indicates that a racer has crossed the line prematurely, and a penalty may be assessed. If not raised, there is no penalty.

### 4. **Race Start:**

- Flag: **Red Flag Drop, Green Flag Up**
- Motion: Drop the red flag and simultaneously raise the green flag.

Explanation: Dropping the red flag and raising the green flag signifies the start of the race.

### 5. **Penalty for Overline:**

- Flag: **Black Flag**
- Motion: Black flag is raised before and remains up after the Race Start

Explanation: If the black flag is still up at the start of the race, a penalty is assessed on the racer who crossed the line prematurely.

This sequence helps ensure a fair and organized start to the race while penalizing any violations of the starting rules.