

Kayak and Canoe Sprint Racing information 2025

Introduction to Sprint Racing

As soon as you have picked up the basics of paddling in a racing kayak or canoe you are ready to race. A coach or a fellow paddler in your canoe club will be able to suggest a suitable race for you to start with. This may well be one of the sprint regattas which are listed on the Paddle Scotland website [JustGo](#). At a regatta you can choose to do all of the races in your category or just a selection.

You don't have to be part of a canoe club to race as anyone can enter the races, but there are lots of benefits to being in a canoe club - coaching, support at events, sharing transport etc. At some of the events competing gains you and your club points towards various Scottish trophies and medals. You will have to either join Paddle Scotland or pay for day membership to be able to compete in any of the events.

The main UK Canoe and Kayak Sprint racing season runs from April to October, with events ranging from individual races to regattas. During the summer there are some weekday evening events and your club may have their own races in addition to their regular training nights. The race distances for sprint range from 100m to 10km. Most events are held on small lochs within the central belt, with a couple of events on the regatta course at Strathclyde Country Park.

You can find out more by talking to people in your club or looking at the Paddle Scotland website (www.paddlecotland.org.uk). Look under the 'Discipline' tab for Sprint or the 'Events' tab. Entries for most events are taken online.

Across the page are some FAQs about Sprint Racing in Scotland. Ask at your club or get in touch with the Paddle Scotland Sprint Development Group – details and email addresses can be found on the Paddle Scotland website [Sprint Racing Info | Paddle Scotland | Scotland](#)

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Sprint Racing in Scotland FAQs

How does it work for children? Children in the Under 8 and Under 10 age groups (as of 1st of January) normally practice and race in a particular design of smaller and more stable racing kayaks. These Lightning kayaks allow young paddlers to develop their skills on an equal footing, typically racing from 100m up to 1km in a sprint event. Those in the Under 12 age groups will normally be introduced to racing in Lightnings but progress more quickly to racing in full sized K1's.

And what about adults? Adults and young people who are Under 14 and older (as well as some younger paddlers) use longer boats of varying designs. In a regatta the races tend to range between 200m and 1km with a few events racing up to 5km or 10km depending on ability. At regattas you race against paddlers in the same age group as you.

What is involved in a regatta? There are generally 5 Sprint regattas throughout the year. 3 are club organised regattas and the other 2 are much more formal, held on the laned regatta course at Strathclyde Park. At these events competitors compete in several races in the same day. For example, 200m, 500m and 1km. The times and positions across all races will normally be combined to work out overall positions and prizes for the day. The Scottish Sprint Championships are held at Strathclyde Park and take a similar format to the club run regattas.

Do I have to complete every race in a regatta? The more races you do, the more points you will gain towards prizes, but you don't have to do every race. For example, a beginner might choose to ease themselves in by only doing some of the shorter races in their first event.

Can I win a prize at each event? Most organisers award small prizes after the regatta depending on the event and the number of competitors. Competing in races that are part of the Sprint League gains the competitor and their club points towards Scottish trophies presented at the end of the season.

Is each regatta or race an individual event? Yes, but some races are also part of a Series. For example the results of 3 regattas and the Scottish Sprint Championships are combined to make the Scottish Sprint League. The details of how prizes are awarded at the end of the season can be found on the SCA website.

How do I find out more information? For more information on everything related to sprint racing go to [Sprint Racing Info | Paddle Scotland | Scotland](#)