

ATHLETE SELECTION PROCEDURES

For the
2026 Olympic Hopes Regatta
17-20 September, 2026
Bratislava, Slovakia

DRAFTED BY: Sprint Competition Committee
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DATE APPROVED:

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1. Selection Philosophy

The American Canoe Association (ACA) 2026 Olympic Hopes Team will provide opportunities for 15–17-year-old athletes to participate in international Canoe/Kayak Sprint Racing. The program aims to develop athletes who train diligently and show the potential for success in international competition.

Selection to the team will be based on individual and tandem boat performances.

2. Selection Responsibilities

2.1 Athletes must adhere to the ACA Code of Conduct.

2.2 Team members must travel and stay with the team in Europe.

2.2.1 Exceptions require approval from the OHR Team Leader.

2.3 Athletes are expected to train and compete at their highest level in preparation for the OHR event.

3. Selection Requirements

3.1 All athletes competing on the 2026 OHR team should plan to compete in more than one event.

3.2 Athletes must have a passport valid for six months after the event.

2.1 Athletes must bring their passport to the OHR Selection event.

3.3 Athletes must be able to travel internationally.

3.4 Athletes must be ACA Competition Level Members in good standing.

3.5 OHR registration and deposit must be completed by May 30, 2026.

3.6 Final payments and paperwork are due by August 1st, 2026.

4. Selection Competition

1. Event: OHR Selection

2. Venue: Green Lake, Seattle, WA

3. Dates: June 12th, 2026

4. Only athletes registered for OHR Selection by May 30th are eligible.

Events Used for Selection*			
Men's Kayak	Women's Kayak	Men's Canoe	Women's Canoe
K1 500m, 1000m	K1 500m, 1000m	C1 500m, 1000m	C1 200m, 500m, 1000m
K2 500m	K2 500m	C2 500m	C2 500m

*Age Division: Each singles event will be held per birth year. The Doubles events will be held in the following age categories: 2009 and 2010-2011.

5. Selection Procedure

5.1 Selection Through K1/C1

1. The fastest athlete in K1/C1 200m, 500m, and 1000m events earns the right to compete in that event per birth year (2009, 2010, 2011).
2. In singles events where a second entry is allowed, the next fastest athlete in K1/C1 200m, 500m, and 1000m events earns the right to compete in that event per birth year (2009, 2010, 2011).
2. The winners of the following events (in each birth year) will have the first right of refusal to race in the 5Km races:
 - Men's Kayak 1000m
 - Men's Canoe 1000m
 - Women's Kayak 1000m
 - Women's Canoe 1000m
3. If an athlete declines their nomination, the next ranked athlete in that event is selected, up to the maximum number of entries allowed.

5.2 Selection Through K2/C2

1. The winning boat in the 500m K2/C2 will be nominated to race that event in their birth year.
2. The entries for all other K2/C2 events will be determined by the coaching staff based on K2/C2 performance, K1/C1 performance and the total number of races an individual is entered in.

5.3 Selection for the K4/C4 Team Boats

1. There is only a single age category for K4 and C4 at the OHR event (U17).
2. The top 4 paddlers in the U17 500m trials event will be eligible for the K4 or C4.
3. Should a paddler decline their position, the next ranked 500m singles athlete will be given the opportunity to be in the K4/C4.
4. Should there be insufficient singles paddlers in the U17 500m event, then the top ranked U16 paddlers in order from the 500m singles trials race will be offered the position to fill all 4 positions.
5. In the case that there are less than 4 U17/U16 qualifying and accepting athletes, then only those U17 athletes who qualified in singles and doubles

will qualify for the team.

6. Seat order will be determined by the OHR coaching staff.

5.4 Team Selection and Entry Approval

1. The Sprint Competition Committee, and/or their designees will oversee the selection process.
2. The SCC will approve the final list of qualifying athletes.
3. The OHR staff will determine the entries for the event with the oversight of the SCC.
4. Only those athletes who qualify for the OHR team as described above are eligible to be entered into OHR events.

6. Replacement of Athletes

6.1 Replacements for teamboat seats will be based on the next most eligible athlete from the 500m K1/C1 rankings.

6.2 Replacement for K1/C1 entries will be the next ranked athlete from the respective event.

6.3 No replacements will be made once the team travels to the competition venue.

7. Removal of Athletes

7.1 Athletes may be removed from the team for the following reasons:

- a. Voluntary Withdrawal: Must submit a written resignation.
- b. Injury/Illness: Must provide medical certification.
- c. Code of Conduct Violation: Violations by athlete or parent of athlete may result in removal and self-funded return travel.

8. Provisional Announcement of the Olympic Hopes Regatta Team

8.1 Athletes who qualify for the OHR team will be announced following the selection event.

8.2 Athletes will need to accept or decline their position on the team within 24 hours of the selection event.

8.3 The list of qualifying and accepting athletes will be approved by the Sprint Competition Committee for approval and submitted to the ACA to be

announced.
8.4 OHR athletes will be notified of optional camps that will be available to them.

For more details:

-ACA Code of Conduct: <https://americancanoe.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Member-Code-of-Conduct-final-07252022.pdf>.

-ACA Bylaws & Grievance Procedures:

https://americancanoe.org/community/aboutus/#tab_5.

9. Approval Signatures

Signature: *Mark L Parrish*
Name: Mark Parrish
Title: Sprint Competition Committee Chair
Date: 07May2026

Signature: *Beth Spilman*
Name: Beth Spilman
Title: ACA Executive Director
Date: 5/6/2026

Signature: *Michèle Eray*
Name: Michèle Eray
Title: ACA High Performance Director
Date:

Signature: *Casey Eichfeld*
Name: Casey Eichfeld
Title: ACA Athlete Representative
Date: