



PARACANOE

PARACANOE made its debut at the 2016 Paralympics in Rio de Janeiro where kayak races were contested. The VL3 and VL2 men's and VL2 women's events have been added to the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic program.

BASIC RULES

Paracanoe is the canoeing discipline for athletes with a physical impairment and is very similar to the Olympic canoe sprint sport. Races are contested on calm water in buoyed lanes over 200 meters in single kayaks and va`a, a type of canoe. Kayak and va`a have three different classes for men and women, which are designated KL1, KL2, and KL3 for kayak and VL1, VL2, and VL3 for va`a. The dividing line in kayak and va`a is different, so there are six different disability divisions. For example, a KL2 kayak paddler may be a VL3 va`a paddler. Athletes may compete in both disciplines.

EQUIPMENT

The kayak is propelled with a double-blade paddle. A maximum length and minimum width and weight are specified for the kayak. A single moveable or fixed rudder is allowed. The va`a is propelled with a single-blade paddle. A maximum length and minimum weight are required for the va`a. The va`a has an ama, or outrigger float, which aids in stability. No rudder or keel is allowed.

GETTING STARTED

We encourage you to get started by reaching out to the ACA office at (540) 907-4460 x108 or visit <https://americancanoe.org>.

START COMPETING

Paracanoe events are offered at regional canoe sprint regattas, primarily held in or near Seattle, San Diego, Oklahoma City, Gainesville and Washington DC. The National Team Trials to qualify athletes for the world championships, world cup and Pan American Championships are typically held along with the Canoe Sprint Trials. The location of competitions changes from year to year. Advancement to the U.S. Paralympic Team is achieved through the ICF qualifications.

CLASSIFICATION

Each athlete must have a minimum level of an eligible impairment caused by an eligible underlying health condition. Conditions that do not lead to an eligible impairment include pain, fatigue, joint hypermobility, hypotonia or psychological conditions. Cerebral palsy (CP), multiple sclerosis (MS), and congenital or acquired brain injury are not eligible health conditions for paracanoe. For more information, visit <https://canoeicf.com/disciplines/paracanoe>.

PARALYMPIC ELIGIBLE IMPAIRMENTS

- Impaired Muscle Power
- Impaired Passive Range of Movement
- Limb Deficiency
(upper limbs are excluded)

PARALYMPIC BOAT TYPES

- **Kayak (K)** with a rudder or fixed fin, propelled with a double-bladed paddle
- **Va'a (V)** or canoe with an ama or outrigger float, no rudder or fin, propelled by a single-bladed paddle

PARALYMPIC SPORT CLASSES

- **VL1** - no leg or lower trunk function and very little upper trunk function
- **KL1** - no or very limited leg function and only upper trunk function
- **KL2** - retain some leg and trunk function
- **VL2** - very little leg function, minimal hip control, has lower trunk function
- **VL3** - significant loss of function in one leg or combined between two legs with fully functional trunk (below knee amputee is not eligible)
- **KL3** - loss of a minimum amount of leg function and has strong hip and trunk function (loss of function below the knee is eligible)