

BCKC Regatta Info for New Paddlers and Families

What is a regatta?

A regatta is a racing event that usually lasts one or two full days. You will probably do several different races each day, and more if you advance to a final (not all races have finals). Athletes stay at the venue for the full day.

If the regatta runs Saturday and Sunday, avoid planning events for Saturday night. You will be tired, and you will need to get organized for Sunday morning.

Your first regattas will be just for fun, and to get a sense of racing. There will be other new paddlers there too, so don't worry too much about your results. Just cheer for your team, do your best, and enjoy it!

What should I bring?

You will be at the regatta ALL DAY so preparation is key. Check the weather forecast and remember that even sunny days can be cold in the morning. Bring:

- Your green Burnaby shirt
- Several changes of paddling clothes (in case of rain and/or boat tipping)
- Several towels
- Some warm clothes for between races. Avoid cotton as it gets damp and cold. Synthetic fabrics are better for racing days. Bring a rain jacket, just in case.
- A blanket
- A folding chair
- A bag for wet clothes
- A water bottle
- Sunscreen (even on cloudy days)
- Food and snacks for the day (we usually try to set up a bit of a potluck too)
- A book or some homework for between races
- Your lifejacket (if it's not in the trailer)

What should I do when I arrive at the venue?

Your coach will probably ask you to arrive an hour before the first race of the day. Find your coach and the green/white BCKC tent, put your stuff under the tent, and help to unload the trailer. Depending on the venue and schedule, your coach may want some boats left on the trailer at first, so check before you unload. Once everything is unloaded, it's time to get ready to race.

How do I know when I'm racing?

You will receive a copy of the regatta *schedule* and the *draw* (the list of who is in each race) the day before the regatta, or you can check it on the CKBC website [here](#). It's a good idea to look over the schedule beforehand and check for anything like back-to-back races.

The schedule will tell you your race number, the approximate start time, the type of boat, the distance, and your team-mates for C2/K2/C4/K4. The regatta information page will tell you

how advancements will happen. For some races the officials just use the time in the heats to determine placings. For others, the top paddlers from each race will advance to a final. If you make a final be sure to add it to your schedule for the day.

Some paddlers like to write their race info on their arms. Others just keep track on paper, or download the info onto their phones. Don't count on internet access at the venues - it's not always available. We will have extra copies of the schedule in the team tent.

Sometimes regattas don't run quite on time, so listen for race numbers and try to keep track of what's going on. Also, sometimes schedules change on the day. It can seem a bit chaotic at first. Ask an experienced paddler if you're not sure.

Your coach will probably want you to get out on the water about 20 minutes before your race. *Make sure you*

- Know which boat you're paddling. You will be sharing with other paddlers so it's really important that you don't take a boat without checking with a coach, in case someone else needs it first.
- Know who your teammates are (if it's a team boat)
- Know your race number. You will need to listen for this when you're out at the start line.
- Have (and know) your boat number. If it's not on your boat you will be disqualified.
- Are wearing your green Burnaby shirt and your lifejacket
- Don't forget your paddle (it will make you go faster)

What do I do at the start line?

You'll want to get to the start line in plenty of time for your race, but not so early that you get cold. *Make sure you stay well out of the racing course!* **Listen to the officials** who will be calling racers to line up, and follow their instructions. Listen for your race number. Look around too - if you are in a C1 and find yourself lining up with a group of K2s, you are probably in the wrong race! You will line up in order of boats. The officials may ask you to move back if you are over the start line - listen for your number.

It can be a little tricky staying in your lane at first. Find a spot on the finish line and aim for it! When the race starts, paddle fast :)

What do I do after my race?

Say a quick "good race" to other paddlers nearby, then *get back to shore as quickly as possible*. Someone else may need your boat right away.

You can also check in with your coach about your race, but don't be offended if they didn't see the whole thing - regattas can be very busy!

Hopefully you will have lots of great races and finish feeling really good about your performance. But everyone has bad races too. Ask any of the older paddlers - they will tell you about times when they missed races, or forgot their numbers, or tipped out just before

the finish line (or even just before the start line!) It's part of the sport, and it can be frustrating, but try to let it go and focus on the next race.

What do I do between races?

Most of the time paddlers hang out in the team tent to rest between races. If you want to go and visit friends from another team, or go to the beach or playground, *ask your coach first so they know where to find you*. Sometimes they have to make last-minute substitutions. Don't tire yourself out swimming or anything like that - wait till your races are done!

Make sure you eat some healthy snacks and stay hydrated. If it's cold, stay warm. If it's rainy, stay dry. If it's hot, be very careful of sunstroke. Stay in the shade, drink water, and wear sunscreen.

Cheer for your teammates and be encouraging.

If the regatta also includes events for older paddlers you may see them taking some time alone to focus on their races - just let them be.

What do I do when I have finished all my races?

Do not leave without checking with your coach! You may need to help load boats onto the trailer, take down the tent, and clean up the site.

Your coach will also decide when the trailer will be unloaded back in Burnaby. It may be the next day at practice, or it may be that evening after the regatta. We need everyone to help make it go quickly.

Finally, some regattas have ribbons or medals to hand out at the end of the day. So you might want to stick around for those!