

RULES OF COMPETITION

**Registration and Inquiries:
www.LaredosRioFest.com**

CHAPTER I GENERAL RULES

1. Goals

The shared goal of the Laredo Hotel and Motel Association, Laredos Rio Fest Organizational Committee, Los Caminos del Rio, Texas Canoe Racing Association, and the Federacion Mexicana de Canotaje is to promote canoe racing and environmental stewardship of the Rio Grande/Bravo through fair competition between athletes of both nations over a marked course. These rules are proposed in the knowledge that canoe and kayak racing follows different formats in both countries, and that competition on the river that they share represents the best possible venue for exchanging and promoting ideas for using the sport to improve quality of life for all who live on either shore.

2. Race Courses: See accompanying [map\(s\)](#)

The principal event is a down river race of approximately 33-mile length with cash prizes, from the Colombia Bridge to the city park of Laredo, Texas

A secondary 9-mile race will run from the World Trade Bridge to the same finish line.

The race will include two classes:

*One class will be K-1 (Women only) with Cash Prizes

*A second class will be purely recreational and competitors are not eligible for Cash Prizes

3. Awards

Unlimited (Multi-Person Canoe and K4)

\$2,000/1,000/500 First through Third Place Awards

ICF K2*

\$2,000/1,400/750/400/150 First through Fifth Place Awards

**"Women competitors will be eligible for overall cash prizes; additionally \$515 plus all women's entry fees will be awarded to women at a rate of 50%, 30%, and 20% for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place finishers."

ICF K1

\$1,500/1,000/500/250/100 First through Fifth Place Awards

Tandem Unlimited - includes Double Surfski*

\$2,000/1,400/750/400/150 First through Fifth Place Awards

**"Women competitors will be eligible for overall cash prizes; additionally \$515 plus all women's entry fees will be awarded to women at a rate of 50%, 30%, and 20% for 1st,

2nd and 3rd place finishers."

Solo Unlimited - includes Surfski*

\$1,500/1,000/500/250/100 First through Fifth Place Awards

*"Women competitors will be eligible for overall cash prizes; additionally \$260 plus all women's entry fees will be awarded to women at a rate of 50%, 30%, and 20% for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place finishers."

USCA C2 & ICF C2

\$2,000/1,400/750/400/150 First through Fifth Place Awards

USCA C1 & ICF C1

\$1,500/1,000/500/250/100 First through Fifth Place Awards

Standard "Canadian" Canoe includes most Aluminum

\$1,000/500/250/150/100 First through Fifth Place Awards

ICF K1 Women's (Short Course - 9 Miles)

\$260 plus all women's entry fees will be awarded to women at a rate of 50%, 30%, and 20% for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place finishers.

Cash prizes are subject to change: if a cash award class does not have a full field of entries (defined as total cash prize depth plus 2), cash payouts are reduced by the number of entrants less than the seven normally needed for a full field (the one exception is the Unlimited class where five entries would be need for a full field.) Prize reduction starts with the highest payout. For example, K1 Class in a full field of seven or more competitors, first place will win \$1,500; second place \$1,000; third place \$500 and so on, with two competitors "out of the money". If field is only six competitors deep, first place will win \$1,000; second place \$500; third place \$250 etcetera.

All other class winners to be recognized by other appropriate non-cash award memento. Other restrictions may apply.

4. Services

The host organization commits to provide competitors with the following:

- * First aid
- * Motorboat escort/sweep to assist in case of emergency
- * Coordinated security and safety vigilance by appropriate authorities on ground and water over the entirety of the course with special attention at put ins and take outs
- * A map for support teams on either side to locate, re-supply and cheer on competitors along the 33 mile route
- * Shuttle services and vehicle security
- * Commemorative t-shirt, emergency whistle, post-event meal and awards ceremony

5. Competitors

Competition is open to all clubs, associations and individuals who are considered physically fit for competition. It shall be the duty of the participants to ensure they are in appropriate physical condition. All competitors must sign LAREDOS RIO FEST RIVER RACE WAIVER AGREEMENT before start of the race.

CHAPTER II

RESTRICTIONS, RACE CATEGORIES AND CLASSES OF BOATS

1. Restrictions

It is prohibited to add foreign elements which grant competitors an advantage. No electrical or electronic components are allowed on the boats during the competition, except:

- * Heart rate monitors,
- * Cell phones
- * GPS units
- * Electric pumps, which are only allowable in unlimited classes

2. Race categories

Classifications for 33-mile race:

- * Unlimited (Multi-Person Canoe and K4)
- * Unlimited Tandem (inc. double surfski)
- * Unlimited Solo (inc. single surfski)
- * ICF K2
- * ICF K1
- * USCA C2 & ICF C2
- * USCA C1 & ICF C1
- * Standard Canoe ("Canadian Canoe", inc Aluminum)

Classifications for 9-mile Race:

Recreational Class:

- * Minors - (14 years or less) *Must have application and waiver signed by the same parent/guardian
 - * Youth - (15-17) *Must have application and waiver signed by the same parent/guardian
 - * Female - (no age restriction). If 17 or under must have application and waiver signed by the same parent/guardian
 - * Seniors - (35 years or more)
- K-1 Class- Women only

3. Boats

* ICF Kayaks

No minimum weight restrictions

Maximum Length (cm) K1 - 520 K2- 650 K4 - 1100

All kinds of building materials are permitted. Sections of longitudinal lines of the hull shall not be concave (only horizontal and vertically).

Rudders are allowed. The maximum thickness of the rudder blade shall not exceed 10 mm in the case of K1 and K2, or 12 mm in the case of K4. The rudder is not included in measurement of the boat's length.

* ICF Canoes

No minimum weight restrictions.

Maximum Length (cm) C1 - 520 C2- 650 C4 - 1100

All kinds of building materials are permitted. Sections of longitudinal lines of the hull shall not be concave

(only horizontal and vertically). The canoe must be symmetrical in its longitudinal axis.

Any additions or rudders which serve to correct the direction of the canoe are not allowed.

A keel if any shall run the entire length of the canoe and not project more than 30 cm.

* USCA C1 and C2 Specifications -- Competition Cruiser (4X32 Spec):

Maximum length is 18 feet 6 inches (18'6"). Minimum width shall be 14 3/8% of the length (.14375 times the length) at the 4 inch water line, measured within 12 inches fore and aft of the center of the canoe.

The exterior surface of the transverse cross section below the 7-inch water line shall be convex, not concave, except at transitions to built-in keels.

The minimum height at the bow shall be 15 1/2 inches. The minimum depth for the rest of the canoe shall be 11 1/2 inches.

The sheer of the gunwale shall have a minimum radius of 30 inches and shall be an integral part of the boat with a continuous curve.

Water Removal: Any type of person-powered (or passive) bailer, pump or siphon may be used in any USCA boat

Rudders: There shall be no mechanical steering devices in any USCA canoe classes.

Materials: Canoes may be made of any material or combination of materials.

* USCA C2 Specifications - Pro Boat (3x27):

Maximum length of the hull shall be 18'6" (18 ft 6 in.)

Minimum heights, measured from the 0" waterline:

15" Bow

10" Center

10" Stern

The minimum-height gunwale line shall form a continuous, smooth arch-curve.

Minimum Width:

33" on the top, at the gunwale line

27" wide at the 3" waterline or 3" of draft

The points at which the 33" minimum top-width measurement and the 27" minimum waterline-width measurement are taken may be divided up to 14" maximum.

The 33" minimum top-width and the 27" minimum waterline-width, may be measured a maximum of 14" fore or aft of the center of the canoe.

The cross-section(s) of the hull at the location(s) of the 33" minimum top-width and the 27" minimum waterline-width shall have no more than 1/4" (one-quarter inch) concavity between the 3" waterline and the gunwale line of the hull.

No concave curve(s) are allowed under the 3" waterline. The imperfections from repairs will be tolerated but will have to be very minimal to conform to the regulations.

* Solo Unlimited

Any type of water craft propelled by one person. Only human powered propulsion allowed. A boat will not be allowed to race in this class if it qualifies or is designed to race in another class (i.e ICF K1).

* Tandem Unlimited

Any type of water craft propelled by two persons. Only human powered propulsion allowed. A boat will not be allowed to race in this class if it qualifies or is designed to race in another class (i.e ICF K2).

* Unlimited

Any type of water craft that is propelled by three or more persons. Only human powered propulsion allowed. A boat will not be allowed to race in this class if it qualifies or is designed to race in another class (i.e. any ICF class, Solo or Tandem Unlimited). ICF K4s will race in this class. Traditional Belizean 3-man canoes will race in this class.

* Standard or "Canadian" Canoe, includes Aluminum

Refers to a boat with traditional high curved stem and stern - both commercial and home manufactured boats will be allowed - made of all construction material types.

Maximum length of 18 feet and 6 inches and a minimum width of 34 inches measured at the gunwales. Specifications should approximate a traditional Canadian two person canoe, "Beaver" aluminum boats not allowed in this class.

CHAPTER III

ORGANIZATION OF POWERS

1. Officials

The competition will be conducted under the supervision of the following officers duly authorized by the Organizational Committee.

Head Judge and Timekeeper (Head Judge - one each from Mexico and the United States; Timekeeper from USA)

Judge Course/Checkpoint (at least one each from Mexico and the United States)

Goal/Finish Judge (spotters) (at least one each from Mexico and the United States)

Registration officials (at least one each from Mexico and the United States)

All officials must have a badge or equivalent identification, supported and maintained that identifies them. If circumstances permit, a person may occupy more than one function.

The highest authority of a competition will be the Organizational Committee (OC), which consists of:

Owners of the Event (Laredo Hotel and Motel Association, City of Nuevo Laredo Tam., Los Caminos del Rio and Laredos Rio Fest Organizational Committee) 1 Vote

Head Judge from both Countries: Mexico - 1 Vote, USA - 1 Vote

The Organizational Committee:

1. Organizes competition and oversees its development.
2. Reschedules the race in case of bad weather or other unforeseen circumstances that make it impossible to carry out the competition.
3. Hears all objections and resolve all disputes that arise.
4. Decides matters relating to disqualification in case of violations of the rules.
5. Hears the judge's version of any alleged offense, before rendering such judgment.

Decisions by the judges and the Organizational Committee are decisive and final.

2. Duties of Judges and Officials

All Judges and officials are responsible for enforcing the rules of the event including good sportsmanship. When appropriate they will also assist or facilitate in matters of Emergency and Safety.

The Head Judges are additionally responsible for facilitating and coordinating the start & finish of the race(s) and all aspects of keeping official time.

Course and Checkpoint Judges are responsible for monitoring events on the race course, but must do so without hindering or assisting a racers progress and will coordinate all aspects of the race with the Head Judges.

Finish line Judges or "spotters" are responsible for assisting the Head Judge by tracking and recording finishing times and participant numbers and will coordinate all aspects of the race with the Head Judges.

3. Registration

As registration must necessarily occur in one country or the other, and as the Texas Canoe Racing Association has agreed to provide computers and timing equipment. Administration will be based on the U.S. side. Accordingly, all Mexican competitors, if registering in Mexico, must have their completed registration forms submitted to the OC by 9pm the evening prior to the race. Race day registration is only available on the U.S. side from 6 to 8:30am (at both short and long course starting lines.) Boats must be inspected/jigged during registration.

A competitor who arrives late to the start of the race will be considered to have voluntarily withdrawn and will be disqualified under this rule. No fees shall be restored.

4. Changes in the Program

The order of events shall not be altered unless unanimously consented to by the OC at the pre-race Organizational Committee Meeting held at 6:00pm, October 16, 2009.

5. Numbers

Boat numbers will be issued at event registration. Numbers will be adhesive stickers and all kayaks and canoes must either display this sticker on a vertical plate or on the bow of the water craft. The plates must be placed on the centerline of the boat (on the back of kayaks and on the front of canoes). The stickers will be placed on either side of the bow above the waterline.

6. Instructions for Competitors

At least 24 hours before the start of competition, the OC will provide a copy of the race schedule or at the Organizational Committee Meeting held at 6:00pm, October 16, 2009, to both Head Judges and another will be placed in a visible place, containing the following information:

- a) Sequence of the races
- b) Time of departure of the races

7. Protest

A protest arising during a race must be filed no later than 30 minutes after the race in question. All protests must be submitted in writing to the OC and accompanied by a fee of \$1,000.00 (One thousand pesos 00/100 M. N.) or \$70.00 US dollars. The fee will be returned if the objection is ruled valid.

CHAPTER IV RULES OF RACING

1. Disqualification

Any competitor who attempts to win by dishonorable means, or who violates the rules of competition, or who scorns the honorable principles of regulation of competition will be disqualified from the race in question.

It is forbidden to be accompanied by other (non racing) boats along the course, or throwing objects at the course. Any of these events lead to the expulsion of the competitors concerned.

Violation of the rules, disrespect for judges, athletes, coaches, managers and participants in general or the falsification of official documents is grounds for disqualification.

2. Means of propulsion

- * Kayaks can be driven solely by double bladed paddle.
- * Canoes may be driven only by single leaf blades.
- * Unlimited Boats may use either or both single and double bladed paddles.
- * The blades can not be fixed to the boat in any way (i.e. no rowing craft are allowed).

3. Aid

It is forbidden to receive foreign aid in the form of propulsion assistance during the race. Racers may receive any type of non-propulsion assistance from the banks (crew support from a boat is not allowed). Assistance includes items such as, but not limited to, food, water, ice, equipment, and first aid.

If a boat is in need of assistance on the course, other up river racers are obligated to render aid in the event of injury, drowning, or a competitor specifically requests assistance due to health issues.

4. Wake Riding

Wake riding, sometimes called "drafting" is when a following boat surfs the wake put out by a leading boat, thereby giving the "riding" boat a slight push generated by the displacement of water by the leading boat. Despite some claims, this practice has no impact to the potential speed of the leading boat. This practice is allowed in most river racing including the 33 mile and 9 mile races.

Wake riding can be a friendly exchange of relief such as is done in bicycle racing or in the case of adversarial or direct competitor drafting, the boat being drafted is certainly allowed to perform evasive maneuvers to shake the wake riders. No matter the particular wake riding situation care must always be exercised to ensure there is no contact with between boats.

5. Passing

Boats must pass with sufficient space. Passing boats have the right of way. The boat which is being passed can not alter its course to impede (blocking) the overtaking boat under penalty of reprimand.

6. Finish Line

A boat has finished the race when the bow has crossed the finish line with all its crew aboard. If another boat crosses the line at the same time, and it is not possible to distinguish which crossed first, they will share in the place or prize awarded.

7. Safety

* Wearing of an approved Life Saver Vest PFD is optional. However racers are required to have an approved PFD in their boat at all times.

* Racers under 18 will be required to wear Life Saver Vest PFD.

* All competitors will carry an emergency whistle.

* In the event of an emergency pull out, it is mandatory for the racer who exited the race to wait for assistance from a race official or immediately contact them by telephone.

CHAPTER V TECHNICAL ASPECTS

All technical aspects not covered in the preceding paragraphs are subject to decision of the Organizational Committee of the Competition LAREDOS RIOFEST 2009 and its decision is final.

The Organizational Committee is empowered to bring national and international technical benefit to promote the sport and without prejudice to the competitors.

The Organization Committee reserves the right to create new rules as might be needed to ensure safety or fair and equitable running of the race.

BOATING ON BI-NATIONAL WATERS

The Laredos Rio Fest in large part celebrates the little-recognized fact that residents of both countries are free to paddle from bank to bank of the Rio Grande ("Rio Bravo del Norte," in Spanish).

"Navigation of the Gila and of the Bravo shall be free and common to the vessels And citizens of both countries," Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848).

It is worth noting that islands in the river are considered property of both countries; U.S. and Mexican residents can land and rest on them at any time. Competitors must carry proper identification. In the event a U.S. competitor lands on Mexican soil or must exit the race and the only exit point is via Mexico, the competitor then must enter back to

U.S. through an official U.S. entry bridge:

- * Colombia Bridge - Starting Line of the 33-mile Down River Race
- * International Bridge I (FINISH LINE) - in downtown Laredo and adjacent to city park is open to pedestrian traffic
- * International Bridge II - in downtown Laredo is not open to pedestrian traffic
- * Note: The World Trade Bridge - starting Line of the approximate 9-mile recreational race is not open to pedestrian traffic

CHAPTER VI

7. TRANSITORY

All technical aspects not covered in the preceding paragraphs are subject to rule by the Organizational Committee of Laredos RioFest 2009 and their decision is final.

The Laredo Hotel and Motel Association, Laredos RioFest Organizational Committee, Los Caminos del Rio and the Texas Canoe Racing Association, and the Federacion Mexicana de Canotaje or any authority or association that have been part in the organization of this event, will not be responsible for accidents, theft or any other untoward incident before, during or after the event.

Approvals:

The Laredo Hotel and Motel Association, Laredos RioFest Organizational Committee, Los Caminos del Rio, Texas Canoe Racing Association, and Federacion Mexicana de Canotaje hereby approve the Rules of Governance in its entirety and sanction Laredos Rio Fest River (LRF) Race to be held October 16 & 17, 2009.

Bob Zachariah

Chairman, USA - México LRF

President, Laredo Hotel & Motel Association

Executive VP, Los Caminos del Rio

Pete Binion

Fernando Rodríguez

Executive Coordinator USA - México LRF

Director of Conventions and Groups

Nuevo Laredo, Tam.

Ken Kieffer

President, Texas Canoe Racing
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Arturo Martinez Burciaga

Bob Spain

Head Judge, Laredos Rio Fest, Mexico

Executive Head Judge, Laredos
RioFest, USA - Mexico