



<https://www.canoeicf.com/discipline/wildwater-canoeing>

ITO Webinar 2026



WILDWATER CANOEING

Wildwater Canoeing ITO Webinar 2026

Introduction

The Wildwater canoeing education programme aims to raise the level of international technical officials (ITOs).

This webinar focuses on the role of ITO's in wildwater canoeing competition.

Resources:

The latest Rules

https://www.canoeicf.com/sites/default/files/2025_wildwater_canoeing_competition_rules_-_final.pdf

ICF Statutes

https://www.canoeicf.com/sites/default/files/icf_statutes_2024-final.pdf

The Wildwater Revision Quiz

<https://www.proprofs.com/quiz-school/ugc/story.php?title=wildwater-rules-revision-quizwj>



How to become WWC ITO

Online Webinars can be arranged at the request of National Federations.

1. **Online Assessment** **Date March/April TBC:**

The ICF Wildwater Canoeing Rules and Statutes revision self-assessment tests have been developed to enable candidates to practice before the exam.

The Exam uses the same ProProfs Software and Quiz format, with a separate set of questions covering the Rules and a separate set of questions covering the ICF Statutes.

How to become WWC ITO

2. Practical Assessment

On successful completion of the ITO assessments then the assessment is completed by practising a minimum of four different duties at international races.

ITO exams for 2026 will be held at

- Worlds in Banja Luka (BIH) 21.-24. May 2026
- Worldcup in Dunaremente (HUN) 05.-07. June 2026
- Worldcup in Bratislava (SVK) 12.-14. June 2026 and
- Europeans in Grandtully (GBR) 12.-15. August 2026

How to become WWC ITO - Application

Rule 1.15.2

- Only National Federations are entitled to nominate candidates for examination at least 30 days before the examination
- The applications must be sent to the ICF headquarters on the form designed by the ICF and published on the ICF website
- For every candidate applying for the examination, the National Federation will be charged 20 euros
- National Federations are financially responsible for their Officials
- The officials' cards expire after four (4) years
- If an official's card has been expired for more than two years, the ITO must complete the examination again.

Positive Advantages of Wildwater Canoeing

- Wildwater Canoeing is an attractive white water discipline with clear understanding of the results
- WWC competitions are not expensive to organise.



- WWC Sprint competitions take advantage of exciting local venues and can be run in conjunction with Slalom, Freestyle and Rafting
- WWC Classic competitions can be organised at any river or open water, particularly in areas of outstanding natural beauty because of the minimal impact on the environment required

ICF Competition

The international competition is organised in four (4) levels:

	Type of competition	Competition
Level 1	ICF competition	ICF World Championships / Continental Championships
Level 2		ICF World Cups
Level 3		ICF World Ranking competitions
Level 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• International competitions (i.e. ECA Cup)• open competitions• Invitational competitions	

Only National Federations are entitled to nominate ITOs for ICF competitions level 1 and level 2

ICF Competitions

Competition	Minimum Number of ITO required	Application	Travel costs refund	Accommodation
Level 1	6	via NF to ICF/ECA	Athletes via ICF/ECA	HOC
Level 2	6	via NF to ICF	NF	HOC
Level 3	1	HOC	NO	NO
Level 4	1	HOC	NO	NO

Deadline for ITO Application level 1+ 2 via ICF Form filled by your national federation is 30.11. the year before the competition

Principles of Officiating

Our athletes are professional, our only goal is to provide very best service we can. Our sport is developing all the time, our officials should develop themselves too.

Officiating is team work, which means the ability to communicate and co-operate with different kinds of people. Respect yourself, respect all the others. You are as good official as you were last time

Please remember: Any athlete who attempts to win a competition by irregular means, wilfully breaks the rules, or who contests their validity, as deemed by you as officials, may be disqualified from the competition.

Responsibilities of ITO's

- To know our canoeing sport
 - ICF statutes & objectives
 - The nature of canoeing competition
 - The equipment, accessories and devices for athletes
- To be able to use the equipment, devices, tools and methods for officiating
- To understand the processes of different kind of international canoeing events
- To understand the meaning of the ICF Wildwater Canoeing Rules

International Technical Officials

7.2.2 - International competitions should be supervised by:

1. Chief Official / Technical Delegate (ICF)
2. Technical Organiser (HOC)
3. Chief Judge (ITO)
4. Start Judge / Starter (ITO)
5. Pre-Start Controller (ITO)
6. Finish Judge (ITO)
7. Boat Controller (ITO)
8. Safety Officer (only for World Championships HOC)
9. Medical Officer (only for World Championships HOC)

At least the Chief Official and the Chief Judge must be qualified ITOs

Duties of Officials

- The Chief Official directs the competition according to the rules.
- The Technical Organiser is responsible for the conduct of the entire competition
- The Chief Judge must assure that the competition is run correctly in keeping with the Competition Rules.
- The Starter gives permission to start.
- The Pre Start Controller confirms that athlete's boat (airbags included), helmet, buoyancy jacket and shoes meet the safety rules.
- The Finish Judge determines when an athlete has finished the course.
- The Timekeepers record the exact times.
- The Boat Controller assures that boats and equipment conform to the rules.
- The Safety Officer ensures athletes who have capsized are rescued.

International Technical Officials (ITO's)

- **Chief Official** must make her/himself available to anyone and everyone at all time
 - He coordinates the schedule with the HOC
 - 48 hours before the start of the competition the Chief Official should meet the Technical Organiser to check the installations are correct
 - Organising Committee will have 24 hours to fix inadequate arrangements before rehearsals
 - Rehearsals should cover all the duties and communication connections at afternoon before first racing day
 - He leads the team leaders meeting

International Technical Officials (ITO's)

- **Chief Judge**

- He must assure that the competition is run correctly in keeping with the Competition Rules. He interprets the competition rules and may disqualify an athlete or grant a rerun.
- He has the duty to interrupt the competition due to unforeseen events or due to extremely harsh weather or water
- He checks the startlists, the results, records them and notes the protest time.
- He must submit a report to the ICF Secretary General and to the Wildwater Canoeing committee concerning the running of the competition

Boat and Equipment Control

There are 3 different kind of Boat and Equipment Control:

1. Prior to the start of the competition (**Boat Control #1**)
 2. Before Race start (rules & safety) (**Pre-Start Control #2**)
 3. On completion of the race (rules & safety) (**Boat Control #3**)
- Pre competition HOC (Host Organising Committee) staff must manage equipment control and may give advice in the use of the equipment. The Pre competition boat and equipment control is not mandatory for athletes
 - During the competition the ICF Technical Officials, supported by HOC staff, will carry out random checking of equipment in accordance to the chief judge announcement.

Boat and Equipment Control - Requirements

- measuring station (6m by 4m) that must include:
- Calibrated scales to check the minimum weight.
 - These scales will be levelled and then tested using a buoyancy jacket cage approved by the ICF.
- Frame to measure the length adjustable for each type of boat (K1/C1, C2)
- A facility to check the uplift of the buoyancy jackets with a tube of water large enough to completely submerge the jacket. An ICF approved buoyancy jacket cage and weight must be used to do the checks.
- The station must be set up at least one (1) full day prior to the competition period to allow for self-check by the Athletes.
- Tables, seats water & refreshments for officials & athletes

Process of Boat and Equipment Control

- Agree the boat control policy with the Chief Judge
- Establish and check the Boat Control venue 15 minutes before the time advised at the team leaders meeting
- Assign an official to ensure all athletes go to boat control as required
- When athletes arrive at boat control check bib number
 - Safety
 - Boat & Equipment Regulations (including post-race for additional loose weights or extra water)
- Record results in writing for any compliance failures – refer to the Chief Judge for guidance if required

Boat Types

Boat Specifications

- Boats Dimensions: Maximum length 4.3m Canoe Singles, 4.5m Kayaks, 5m Canoe Doubles. There are no minimum width limits. Minimum Boat weights: C-1: 11 kilos, K-1: 10 kilos, C-2: 17 kilos. All Boats must have Airbags. Rudders are prohibited on all boats.
- The deck of the boat must not have any dangerous or sharp edges
- Kayaks are boats which must be propelled by double bladed paddles, competitors must sit inside.
- Canadian canoes are decked boats which must be propelled by single bladed paddles and the athletes must kneel inside.
- Open canoes can be part of all events open to Canadian canoes.

SAFETY EQUIPMENT 3.5

- **handles**
- **airbags – minimum volume**
- **buoyancy jacket - EN ISO 12402-5 (Level 50)**
- **helmets - EN 1385 – date of manufacture**
- **shoes**

Prestart Control Judge

- The prestart controller confirms that both the athlete's boat and personal attire meet the safety rules (safety helmet, buoyancy jacket, shoes and airbags).
- The prestart controller checks the boat carries marks approved by the Boat Controller if any.
- The prestart controller prohibits the departure of athletes and of boats that do not meet safety requirements.

Boat Control Judge

- The boat controller assures that the dimensions and the weights of the boats in the competition conform to the rules.
- The boat controller ensure that the boats and safety equipment conform to to the rules.
- The Boat Controller may refer concerning the safety of equipment (including the boat) to the Chief Judge.

Start Judge

- Start judge is alone responsible for decisions on false starts: the decision is final
- Athletes will test a (new) starter immediately like children to find their limits (also new athletes there!)
- The starter may lose the confidence of athletes only once (!)
- Other starters should co-ordinate their work: to help and improve their own working method with others by discussion and reflection
- TV Production may be disturbed if any false starts take place => the rest of the run won't be shown on TV

Requirements of Start Judge

- Accurate view, quick reactions
- Good command, clear speaking voice
- Self-confidence, determination
- Patience; calm and methodical approach
- Ability to make neutral judgments
- Ability to adjust own working process to ensure consistency with other starters
- Clear communication with the Chief Judge
- Clear communication with Pre-start and people from timing at the start
- Experience as an athlete is an advantage

Start Judge – race procedure

- Classic Competition can be either individual, mass start, pursuit for the team or individual events.
- Individual sprint team competitions can use the following formats:- One run, Two runs. The fastest run will be counted. One heat and a final. Two heats and a final
- The sprint team competition can be with either one or two runs. If there are two runs, the fastest run will be counted.
- In Mass start events the starts are separated by at least 5 minutes

Starter's equipment

- Competition Start List
- A link (radio or phone) between chief judge and pre-start
- Tables, seats water & refreshments for officials & athletes
- Volunteer to catch and hold boat at Start by rear end-loop in designated eddy / still water if required (*Three volunteers minimum for team events – more may be required for sprint team events as back-up*)
- Marshals to call forward competitors and monitor the waiting area
- Loudspeakers at the start
- Automated start system & beams installed correctly
- Large clock showing the correct time

Process of Starting

- Marshal to send competitors in waiting area “Come Forward to Start (two minutes - one minute – or thirty seconds as required) ”
- Marshals to signal when competitors are securely held
- “Ten Seconds”
- At 5 Seconds start Count Down “Five – Four – Three – Two – One – Go”
- volunteers may release end loops at “Go” (not mandatory to hold boats)
- In the event of non-beam controlled starts for any reason ensure competitors don’t start early
- Ensure the competitor starts the run according to the rules. Record results in writing for any compliance failures and any competitors that Did Not Start (DNS) – refer to the Chief Judge for guidance if required

Starting Command

- “Ten Seconds” and at 5 Seconds the count down “Five – Four – Three – Two – One – Go” is spoken calmly and clearly
- Ensure that the boats is stationary
 - that the competitor is clearly ready to start
 - that they are motionless - not paddling
- “Go” or starting signal must be loud and sharp

False Start

- Only the Start judge is qualified to determine that a false start has occurred and to recall the athlete by means of an appropriate signal.
- The Start judge determines if a second start is given and notifies the Chief Judge.

Please remember:

- Any athlete who is not ready to start as scheduled can be disqualified for the run if there is negligence on their part (i.e. missing BIB number)
- If a team doesn't pass the start within 10 seconds they will be disqualified for the run.

Finish Judge - Organisation

The finish line must be marked clearly on both sides.

The position of the finish judge must be in line of the finish line to have a clear view.

The Finish Judge determines when an athlete has finished the course and coordinates with the Chief Judge.

- Record the boat numbers in the order of finishing
- Manual timekeeping to backup the electronic systems
- There may be video-recording and separate light-beam systems (particularly to check for capsizes)
- Record results in writing for any compliance failures and any competitors that Did Not Finish (DNF) – refer to the Chief Judge for guidance if required
- Ensure competitors do not leave the field of play unless authorised by the Finish Judge

Finish Judge

Please remember:

- the independent timing team is supervised by the Finish Judge
- Crossing the finish line upside down disqualifies the run. The boat is considered upside down when the athlete is not sitting or kneeling inside the boat or the head of the athlete is entirely under water.
- In the team event, failure of all three (3) boats to cross the finish line within 10 second results in disqualification for the run.

Challenges of the Finishing Line

- Vision of judges must be excellent
- Ability to concentrate in noisy conditions
- Light conditions varies from the morning to evening: challenges to eyes and systems
- Air temperature or weather overall may badly disturb the concentration of judges when sitting inside or outside
- Competition situation may cause mistakes or extra pressure in the team
- Judges should not disturb other judges by "thinking out loud"
- The availability of TV broadcast or live streaming may be useful

On Venue Result Room (OVR) – location of the chief judge

The OVR handles the functions of timing.

The OVR requires:

- An area of 9 m² minimum (in one room or two adjacent and linked spaces)
- Tables and chairs
- Located near Finish

The OVR must have power backup procedures and facilities, for example fuel-driven power generators.

Experience is important

- Weather may cause major problems
 - How to shelter walkie-talkie, papers and pens?
 - How to keep dry, healthy and looking smart?
- Equipment may not work properly for many reasons – ensure backup plans are in place
- Communication is critical
 - To clarify unclear visual or written reports
 - To report any sudden accidents or challenges
 - To understand intentions of competitors
 - To ensure no outside assistance or unexpected obstacles on the field of play
 - Remember that communications dependent on Mobile technologies may work fine during practice but be swamped during major events

After competitions

- Keep a log, writing down and take photos of any significant fact including rule interpretations you may have learned every day
- Discuss any incidents with other and especially more experienced officials and ask questions
- Analyse and evaluate the way you conducted your duties
- Ask feedback if not offered by more experienced officials
- All Officials should report their notes to the Chief Official in written form as soon as possible

Wildwater Canoeing ITO Education 2026

Forms

- helpful forms for officials can be downloaded on [ICF webpage](#):

Form	PDF version
Name changes / withdrawal	Link
Pre-start control report	Link
Start / finish report	Link
Equipment control log	Link
Equipment control failure report	Link
Disqualification report	Link
Inquiry	Link
Protest	Link
Appeal to the Jury	Link
Cash receipt	Link

Wildwater Canoeing ITO Education 2026

Jury

- Every international Wildwater Canoeing competition must have a Jury consisting of 3 members
- A participating federation may not have more than 1 Jury representative
- Jury members will be named by ICF Board for level 1 & 2 competitions, for level 3 & 4 competition named by HOC on basis of from participated federation received nominations

The Jury:

- receives protests concerning non- observance of the rules
- makes final decision in case of disagreement concerning interpretation of the rules
- decides on all questions raised during competition that are not covered by the rules

Protest

A protest is considered only when:

- The Team Leader submits it in writing
- For Classic events it is submitted no more than 20 minutes after the official posting of the results for the last athlete in the event.
- For Sprint events it is submitted no more than 5 minutes after the official posting of the results for the last athlete in the event
- It is submitted personally to the Chief Judge and is accompanied by a deposit of 75 Euros or equivalent. The deposit is returned if the protest is upheld.
- A protest can be lodged against a decision of a Judge for a decision that is probably or manifestly erroneous or for obvious irregularity in the conduct of the competition

The Chief Judge evaluates the legitimacy of a protest. And transmits his decision in writing.

Appeal to the Jury (Summary)

- Any appeal must be made in writing by the Team Leader with a deposit of 75 Euros or equivalent. The deposit is returned if the appeal to the Jury is upheld.
- An appeal to the Jury against a decision of the Chief Judge can be made when it appears that there is a contradiction with the rules of competition. Items of fact cannot be contested. Appeals can be submitted at the latest, 20 minutes after the verdict is announced.
- An appeal can be made to the Jury protesting the right of an athlete to participate in a competition with any counter-appeals being made until the beginning of the competition.
- The Chair of the Jury must immediately reconvene the Jury if a legitimate appeal needs to be dealt with and make its own decision known in writing within 60 minutes of commencing the meeting.
- The Jury should consult the Chief Judge, the Judges and other officials to obtain the necessary information to make a decision.
- The decision of the Jury is final.

Event Principles

At least 24 hours before the beginning of the competition, a final competition schedule and start list must be available to each participating National Federation, giving the name of the participants with their National Federation.

In organising the competition schedule, the following principles should be followed:

- The runs of an individual event must be completed during a single day.
- The order of the events announced in the invitation, and the intervals between events announced in the programme of competition are binding on the HOC.
- Modifications may not be made unless the majority of the Team Leaders give their approval.
- Sprint events may be held on one (1) or two (2) days. For those held over two (2) days, it is preferable that events run their two (2) heats of the event the first day, and the finals the next day.
- It is recommended that individual events are run before the team events.

Event Principles

For Level 1 and level 2 events the ICF WW Committee is the authority to define the competition schedule.

To enable athletes to get the maximum experience in different categories and start in more than one category has been defined as follows:

1. Women's Kajak
2. Men's Canoe
3. Men's Kajak
4. Women's Canoe
break
5. Men's Canoe double
6. Women's Canoe double

This enables athletes to get back to the start and share boats where required to help with the number of double or triple starts in a competition.

Event Connections of Technical Organiser

- Technical experts
- Walkie-Talkies
- Other communication (phone lines, mobiles)
- Starting system (+ video system)
- Timing systems (intermediate, video, photo-finish)
- Rescue team
- Weather stations (spot forecasts)
- Accreditation, transportation, accommodation
- Other: electricity, copy machines, spare equipment

Education Acknowledgements

- Any comments gratefully received
- Material based on ICF WWC Rules 2025 (no changes for 2026)
- Some ideas are picked from ICF Sprint Racing and Slalom with thanks to many contributors
- The goal is to offer latest practical information to existing officials and new candidates of Wildwater Canoeing moving from national to international level competitions
 - This material is public and free to use without modifications
 - Please contact the ICF wildwater canoeing committee if
 - any corrections are needed
 - other information should be added
 - Important practical tips are missing

<https://www.canoeicf.com/icf-structure#wildwater>

THANK YOU



international
canoe
federation