



Olympic Sports

Canoeing and Kayaking

About Olympic Canoeing and Kayaking

Two types of boats: canoe and kayak

Two types of events: slalom and sprint

Men compete in both canoeing and kayaking. Women compete only in kayaking.

Canoeing and kayaking are Olympic sports where competitors race in boats called canoes or kayaks. These boat may carry one competitor, as in canoe racing, or one, two or four competitors in kayak racing.

Canoeing is considered more difficult, because athletes must be very strong and have excellent balance.

The paddles used to guide and propel the boats are also different in canoeing and kayaking.

There are two types of events. In the sprint, racers paddle their boats across flat water, such as a lake. In the slalom, racers go through a series of gates across rapids in a river.

Canoeing and kayaking officially began as an Olympic sport in the 1936 games in Berlin, Germany. In the 2012 Olympics there will be 16 events in canoeing and kayaking.



US athlete Daniel Schnurrenberger kayaking in the 1984 Olympics



Canoeing in a two man canoe

Secret Code Word

Use the secret code to find a word about canoeing and kayaking events. Write the letter in the blank that matches the number from the code.

W	A	T	E	R
23	1	20	5	18

Secret code

1 = A	7 = G	13 = M	19 = S	25 = Y
2 = B	8 = H	14 = N	20 = T	26 = Z
3 = C	9 = I	15 = O	21 = U	
4 = D	10 = J	16 = P	22 = V	
5 = E	11 = K	17 = Q	23 = W	
6 = F	12 = L	18 = R	24 = X	

Q&A

What is a kayak?

A boat

When did canoeing and kayaking begin at the Olympics?

1936

What kind of water do racers paddle on in a sprint?

flat water

How many competitors can a canoe carry?

1 or 2