



ICF Canoe Ocean Racing WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

OFFICIAL BULLETIN APRIL 2025



DURBAN SOUTH AFRICA

17 - 19 OCTOBER 2025



KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE
SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Welcome to **DURBAN** SOUTH AFRICA

An exhilarating destination where outdoor adventure meets the beauty of nature. Located along South Africa's east coast, Durban is a vibrant seaside city known for its warm subtropical climate, golden beaches, and breathtaking natural beauty. As one of Africa's top coastal destinations, Durban offers a stunning backdrop for outdoor enthusiasts and adventure seekers alike.

This jewel of the Indian Ocean is an irresistible destination for nature lovers, boasting a blend of lush coastal forests, and the endless blue horizon of the ocean. With warm waters year-round and a coastline teeming with marine life, it provides the perfect setting for water sports and outdoor exploration.

For ocean racing enthusiasts, Durban is a paradise. Its dynamic coastline offers a variety of conditions, from calm, tranquil days to exhilarating downwinds. The Indian Ocean waters are home to an incredible variety of marine species, including whales, sea turtles, and vibrant fish, making every excursion an unforgettable adventure.

Durban is the home of ocean racing. The first long distance surfski race took place in Durban when lifesavers from the Pirates club paddled a race from their club to the Umhlanga rocks and back. The race is still in existence today. Durban also hosted the very first ICF ocean racing world cup.





Beyond its coastline, Durban is a gateway to some of South Africa's most remarkable landscapes. The region is known for its scenic hiking trails, such as those in the Valley of a Thousand Hills, and its rich cultural heritage. Just a short drive inland, visitors can explore lush forests, rolling hills, and game reserves teeming with wildlife, offering a perfect balance between ocean adventures and land-based exploration.

After an exhilarating day on the water, indulge in Durban's world-renowned culinary scene, influenced by a fusion of Indian, African, and European flavors. From fresh seafood to the famous Bunny Chow, Durban's food culture is as rich and diverse as its landscapes. Explore Durban, where the rhythm of the ocean meets the thrill of adventure. Whether you're paddling through warm coastal waters, discovering hidden marine treasures, or immersing yourself in the vibrant local culture, Durban offers a truly unforgettable experience on South Africa's shores.

WEATHER

Spring (September to November): The average daytime temperatures rise from 23°C in September to 25°C in November (73°F to 77°F), with nighttime temperatures ranging from 15°C to 18°C (59°F to 64°F). Rainfall begins to increase during this period, particularly in November, which averages about 108 mm (4.3 inches) of precipitation. The warming sea temperatures and blooming landscapes make spring a pleasant time to visit. Overall, Durban's climate offers favorable conditions year-round, with each season providing unique experiences for visitors and residents alike.



WELCOME MESSAGE

Kim Pople President - PADDLESPORT SA



Dear Paddling Family

We look forward to welcoming you to South Africa.

Our federation is absolutely delighted to host you, your family and friends in Durban for the ICF Ocean Racing World Championships.

Our host organising committee are committed and are hard at work to give you, the paddler, an exceptional event. Our country has a long history with Ocean Racing and it is an integral part of our paddling culture.

As South Africans, we have a love for the sport, and it is our wish to share this with you.

So gear up, train hard and we will see you in Durban soon!

Regards

Kim Pople
President
Paddlesport South Africa



WELCOME MESSAGE

Colin Simpkins Race Director

It is with intense excitement that South Africa, and especially the people of Durban, look forward to welcoming paddlers and supporters, from around the world, to the 9th ICF Ocean Racing World Championships.

Durban holds a special place in the history of the discipline, as it was in this seaside city that a group of intrepid lifeguards from the Pirates lifesaving club, paddled the first ever long-distance open ocean race. The year was 1957. The race course was from the Pirates club to the Umhlanga rocks and back.

The diverse, immense and beautiful coastline of South Africa has created some of the most ideal downwind racing conditions, resulting in the country becoming one of the leading ocean racing nations in the world.

Stunning weather, warm water, and an ultra friendly and hospitable paddling community makes Durban the ideal venue for an international event of this stature.

We welcome you all with open arms and hope that you take some extra time to experience what this beautiful part of the world has to offer you.
See you in October.

Regards



Colin Simpkins
Race Director





RACE HUB

The race hub for the World Championships will be the Durban Undersea Club (DUC as it is more commonly known), situated at the very southern end of the famous Durban promenade, flanking the entrance to the Durban harbour.

DUC is a world class facility, consisting of restaurants, bars, and entertainment areas.

The point facility offers secure covered parking for over 300 vehicles and surfski storage for over 500 boats. The boat set up area is undercover, with a secure area to leave belongings during training sessions and beach activities. The beach is ideal for families with children.

The launch area is protected by the harbour breakwater, and comprises a beach of over 500 metres.



SCHEMATIC OVERHEAD OF DUC



COURSES

The World Championships will be run over a 3 day window period (17 – 19 October), with the SS1 being given preference for the best conditions.

The two predominant winds in the area are South West and North East:

Course A

In the event of a strong enough South West wind, the race will start at DUC and finish at Westbrook beach (34kms).



COURSES



Course B

In the event of a strong enough North East wind, the race will be held from DUC to Amanzimtoti (28kms)



Course C

In the event of benign conditions, with no significant downwind assistance, the course will be an "out and back" course to Umhlanga Rocks and back, from DUC (25km)



COURSES



In the event of dangerous conditions, the course will be an inshore triangular one from DUC.

If the predicted conditions over the 3 days are all similar, the SS1 will be held on the 17th (Friday), the SS2 on the Saturday (18th) and a lifesaving “knock out race” on the Sunday (19th)

If the predicted best day is the 2nd or 3rd day, the SS1 will be held on that day.

In the event of the SS2 race needing to be held on a day before the SS1 race, the SS2 race will be shortened.



DATES & SCHEDULES

14 April

Opening of online registrations

3 September

Closing of numerical entries

7 OCTOBER

Closing of nominal entries

12 OCTOBER

Pirates Umhlanga Race

13 October

Unofficial training day

14 October

Midweek short race (10kms)

15 October

Official training day

16 October

Unofficial training day. Opening Ceremony.

17 October

SS1 race day (weather dependent)

18 October

SS2 race day (weather dependent)

19 October

Short course around the buoys. Medal Ceremony.
Closing Ceremony. After party.

25 - 26 October

Peter Marlin race in East London





CLASSES/CATEGORIES

As per the ICF rules, the official World Championships classes are as follows:

SS1

- Open (men and women)
- U23 (men and women)
- Junior (men and women)

Please note that, as per the new ICF rules, this will be the first year that there is no senior category, only an overall category. The open category can be won by any age group (senior, U23, junior, or master).

SS2 (Mixed Doubles)

- Overall
- U23
- Junior

All entrants, irrespective of age, who wish to be considered for world championship medals need to be entered, by their federation, through the ICF SDP system, as well as through the normal entry portal.



MASTERS

SS1

Masters (men and women) will race in categories of 5 years, starting from age 35 until age 80, as per normal ICF protocol.

Masters who wish to be considered for the overall category medals need to be entered, by their federation, through the ICF SDP system. Masters who only wish to be considered for masters medals can enter normally.

Those who have no aspirations of medals or results are welcome to paddle a SS2 on the day of the SS1 race. We will include a small prize for this.

SS2

As per the new ICF Ocean Racing rules (6.3.2), the age groups for masters in the SS2 category, will be determined by the cumulative age of the 2 athletes. This will be calculated in 10 year increments, starting from the 70 – 80, 90 – 100, etc.

The oldest possible category being the 160 + . For example, if a 67yr old paddles with a 35yr old, they will paddle in the 100 – 110 yr age group. This rule was introduced to encourage master competitors to paddle with athletes from their own country, even though they are not in the same age category.

This will apply to the MD masters as well.

Those who have no aspirations of medals or results are welcome to paddle a SS2 on the day of the SS1 race. We will include a small prize for this.

Entries to the SS2 races will be accepted until 20H00 the night before the race.



ENTRIES

Entries will open on the 14th of April.

The first step in the entry process is to register your details on the portal. South African paddlers will already be registered, non South African paddlers need to register as international paddlers.

Entries and payments will be done through the national federation website:

www.paddlesportsa.co.za

Once you have registered, you will be able to enter the World Championships, or any of the other races that will be happening over that period (Pirates/Umhlanga, short course race, lifesaving race, Pete Marlin) All paddlers will need to enter, and pay, in this manner.

In addition, all paddlers who wish to be considered for World Championship medals (Overall, U23 and Juniors) will need to request from their federations that they also be entered through the ICF Sports Data Platform (SDP) system as well.

The entry fee for the World Championships SS1 race will be as follows:

- €100 from the 1st of April to 30th June
- €120 from the 1st of July to 31st August
- €150 from the 1st of September until the closing date.

Those wishing to enter the SS2 race will be required to pay an additional €30 per athlete.

Those wishing to only enter the SS2 race (and not the SS1 race) will need to enter and pay the same as the SS1 race (each).



ACCOMMODATION

The proposed accommodation hub will be Umhlanga, with the “Capital Pearls Hotel” being the hotel of choice. We have negotiated a favourable rate with them.

The booking link is:

https://booking.thecapital.co.za/convert/site/The%20Capital%20Pearls/index.html?av=promo&promotionCode=ICFCANOE&fw_submitted=1

Use the promo code ICFCANOE.

SPORTSHOTELS.COM

Full range of discounted accommodation options will be available on our website: paddlesportsa.co.za.

With the ICF Canoe Ocean Racing World Championships fast approaching this October in Durban, now is the time to start planning your stay! As the Official Accommodation Partner of PaddleSport South Africa, SportsHotels.com is working to secure the best exclusive, discounted hotel rates for all participants and teams—ensuring convenience, affordability, and comfort, so you can focus on the competition.

A curated selection of top hotels near the event venue is being finalised, offering a range of options to suit different budgets and preferences. Whether you're looking for premium amenities or a cost-effective stay, SportsHotels.com will have the perfect accommodation for you.



HOME HOSTING

As an innovative initiative to attract athletes with limited travel budgets, we will be offering a limited number of “home hosting” opportunities. South Africans are known for their friendliness and hospitality, and Durban is no exception. Several local paddlers have generously offered to open their homes to visiting athletes at no cost. A list of available home hosting opportunities will be published in the second bulletin at the end of May. We will then work to match applicants with hosts and allow them to establish their own arrangements.

SAFETY

All safety protocols reflected in the ICF Ocean Racing rules (3.4) will be applied. *The three most important ones are the following:-*

- A personal flotation device (PFD), which conforms to the minimum requirements of ISO 12402-5 (level 50) will need to be worn. It will need to be a bright colour. If they are not a bright colour, you will be required to wear a “visibility vest” over the PFD. All PFD’s will be inspected and marked at registration.
- A leash provided by a reputable manufacturer. The organisers are at liberty to reject a leash if it is deemed to be inappropriate.
- Tracking. South African Ocean Racing paddlers make use of a tracking app called Safetrx. It is linked to our local Sea Rescue Institute, the NSRI (National Sea Rescue Institute). This app will be used as the tracking app for the world championships and all training events. It will be compulsory for all paddlers to have a smart phone, and to have this app loaded. The phone will need to be in a waterproof pouch (we will have these for sale). We are in the process of negotiating with a local esim provider for data (details will be provided in the 2nd bulletin).

South African ocean races have a reputation for large surf and extreme conditions. Please note that for the world championships, the start will take place on a protected beach in the lee of a breakwater which usually has no waves at all.



SAFETY

The beaches at the finish may have some surf. On most days, this is easily manageable. In the event of slightly larger surf conditions, a deep water finish may be considered.

In any conditions, there will be a large number of lifeguards and rescue craft in the water at the finish to help athletes who may request assistance.

Please do not be discouraged from attending the event due to fears of dangerous surf conditions.

On the contrary, arrive a few days early and take advantage of the open coaching opportunities that we will provide to teach you to paddle in the surf. We will even provide craft, at no charge, for you to practice on, so that you do not have to risk your race boat.



BOAT RENTAL

The following manufacturers have committed to provide craft for hire:

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| Fenn | • info@fennkayaks.com |
| Carbonology | • info@carbonologysport.com |
| Nelo | • http://nelorental.com |
| Epic | • davey.brand@epickayaks.com |
| Point | • http://www.pointfibreglass.co.za |



PRIVATE HIRING INITIATIVE

Another innovation for this year will be a private ski hire initiative. Many local paddlers have more than one surfski.

A list will be published in the next bulletin with the names of those with spare ski's, together with the ski's that they wish to hire out, as well as the price.

Interested parties would then negotiate directly with the individual who has made their ski available.

BOAT TRANSPORT FROM EUROPE

The link below provides information on boat transportation from Europe.

<https://boattransportationdurban.tiiny.site>.



MEALS

Included in your race entry will be lunch on the day(s) on which you race. Meals will be served at the restaurants at DUC. Each entrant will receive a membership card to the club, with an amount loaded that will cover a lunch. Paddlers are then at liberty to claim this meal whenever they wish to. The card can be used to purchase anything at the club, including drinks, and can be “topped up” with a credit card.

TRANSPORT

Due to the very flexible nature of the race window period, and the unpredictability of training sessions (always waiting for the best wind), the scheduling of shuttles to all hotels will not be available.

Entrants and their supporters are advised to either hire a car (we are busy negotiating a preferred rate), or to make use of the safe, reliable and very inexpensive Uber facilities.

For the official training day, and both race days, busses will be provided for paddlers, as well as trailers for the ski's.

For non official training days, private shuttle services (with a trailer) will be available at a small fee. This will need to be negotiated privately.



AIRPORT

King Shaka International Airport (KSIA), located approximately 35 kilometers north of Durban, is named after the influential Zulu King Shaka, KSIA offers direct international flights connecting Durban to several global destinations. Airlines operating these routes include: Emirates, Qatar Airways, Turkish Airlines, Air Mauritius and Proflight Zambia.

International Flights to Johannesburg (O.R. Tambo International Airport) serves as the primary entry point for most flights from across the globe.

TRANSFERS

Travel time from the King Shaka airport to Umhlanga is approximately 10 minutes. Airport transfer services will be available. The link to book this service, together with the fee, will be available in the next bulletin.



OUT OF COMPETITION ACTIVITIES

A host of “off the water” activities will be available for competitors and supporters during the week of the competition. **These activities include:**

- Wine tasting (at DUC)
- Beer tasting (Robson's Brewery (800 metres from DUC)
- Tour of Durban (bus pick up at DUC)
- Ushaka Marine world (The largest aquarium in the Southern Hemisphere. It's a 40-acre marine theme park with a 17.5 million litre aquarium). 300 metres from DUC
- Moses Madhiba stadium
- Safari's
- Helicopter flips (have a look at the race course from the air, or head inland towards the mountains)
- Downwind trips
- Drakensberg



VISAS

The citizens of many countries do not require a visa to visit South Africa. For those that do, once your entry has been confirmed, and proof of accommodation provided, you will need to request a confirmation letter from Paddlesport South Africa (we will provide a template). We will provide the letter and copy our local government sports department who will then forward it to the relevant SA embassy/ high commission.

You are encouraged to apply for visas well in advance.

Our Immigration Act indicates a minimum of 15 WORKING days to process. This can take even longer if the embassy / high commission is inundated with visa applications.

Our advice would be to bring the family and make a trip of this opportunity. Paddle the oldest surfski race in the world, the world championships (with the largest SS2 race that will ever have been), as well as the iconic Peter Marlin downwind race, with trips to game reserves (less than 3 hours from Durban), as well as the mountains, or a visit to Cape Town to take in the world famous Miller's run.



SCHEDULE OF BULLETINS

The HOC has scheduled 3 bulletins for the world championships.

- The 2nd bulletin will be available on the 15th May
- The 3rd bulletin will be available on the 31st of July

PRIZE MONEY

Prize money will be announced in the 3rd bulletin.

COMMUNICATION

All formal communication with the HOC can be done through the email address sg@paddlesportsa.co.za.

In addition to this, two WhatsApp groups will be formed. One as an information only group, and the other as a chat group. Details of these groups will be announced in the 2nd bulletin.



ICF PARTNERS

