

NEW START LINE PROCESS – 2017 MID-AM

Think in terms of a triathlon or Tour de France time trial

Individualized starting is coming to the 2017 Mid-Am. Rather than launch boats in heats of 10 every 4 minutes, we will be starting boats individually at approximately 15-second intervals.

This comes to us timekeeper-recommended and approved.



WHAT TO KNOW

- For organizational purposes, boats will still be grouped in heats of 10 and move systematically from the shoreline staging area to the starting chutes (same procedure, basically)
- From there, staff in the water will communicate with boaters, readying them to launch solo. We'll plan to set the pace at 15 seconds, but the time gap does not have to be exact. The idea is to keep them launching consistently, but not rushing.
- Timing staff will announce each boat number from shore (megaphone) as they set to launch while in-water staff (the guys in waders) will keep boats organized and ready for rapid-fire departure. Shoreline staff will shepherd the boats into water so the rope area (St. Charles) or chute area (Batavia) is always full.

CHANGES TO NOTE

- For heat assignments, all paddlers will be grouped according to their division, rather than haphazardly. So, for example, all the registrants in Men's Long Kayak will launch between 9:24 and 9:36 (hypothetical based on 30 entrants).
- The fastest divisions will go early, with the floaters in recreation and open class toward the end
- Friend requests are not being accepted during pre-registration, however... this new format provides great flexibility, so we will be able to accommodate groups wanting to paddle together on race day. They'll just have to "cut in line," so some paddlers will step out of their assigned heat time in order to launch together. Again, this shouldn't cause any issues since every boat essentially has its own assigned time, rather than a specific heat time.
- This will also alleviate many of the snafus that occurred with paddlers missing their assigned start time – now we can just launch 'em when they get there.
- No day-of registration. This will free more staff on race day to assist with other responsibilities. Pre-registration ends on May 31.

(See reverse side for FAQs)

RESPONDING TO FAQs

Q: The whole reason I entered this event was to paddle with friends and family. But now you're telling me no friend requests? What's up with that?

A: Actually, we *are* still honoring friend requests; it just comes later in the process. Have everybody plan to arrive on race day for their assigned heat times. Then – once you're all there – get the group together and let a race staff member know you'd like to launch as a group. They will slip you into the flow to assure you all launch within 15-20 seconds of each other.

Q: We brought our extended family together for this event – even my mother-in-law! But we're entered in 5 different divisions between all of us. Is there a way we can still all paddle together?

A: You bet. Once everybody has arrived and assembled at your starting area, notify a race staff member that you'd like to go off as a group. They will slip you into the line as space permits, and you'll all be able to launch within 15-20 seconds of each other.

Q: What if I miss my start time?

A: No problem. Whereas this caused issues in previous years, missed start times won't create chaos and confusion anymore. Just slip into the staging area when you arrive – you could even move up toward the front if you're polite to other paddlers. Since each boat has its own, individual start time, you won't be “on the clock” until you actually launch.

Q: Whose idea was this, anyway!?

A: It actually came at the suggestion of our timekeeper, who has worked the Mid-Am since 2009 and timed hundreds of races in his career. By giving each boat its own time slot, it eliminates the discrepancies and errors that arise when boats miss their assigned times or switch heats, etc. This system offers great flexibility for everybody involved and will also provide much greater accuracy and quicker results (read: sooner awards ceremony) at the end of the race.

If you have further questions, please contact Jeff Long at jlong@fvpd.net or 630-966-4527.