



About Kayaking: Special Olympics Kayaking is a flat-water racing event and is one of the newest Special Olympics sports. It requires fundamental abilities in order to be safe and successful. Every athlete aims to travel through a specific water distance paddling on his/ her own achieving the best possible time.

Established: Kayaking first made an appearance at Special Olympics World Summer Games in 2003 as a demonstration sport in Dublin, Ireland, following this it was introduced to the programme.

Differences of Special Olympics Kayaking: Special Olympics Kayaking uses touristic-type boats, while in International Canoe Federation races, athletes use professional boats. The touristic boats are more stable than professional flat-water racing kayaks. Additionally, Special Olympics requires all athletes to pass a swimming test before races and requires that all Special Olympics athletes wear a personal flotation device during race. Competitions at Special Olympics have preliminary and final round races, while the International Canoe Federation has heats, semi finals, and final rounds.

By The Numbers:

In 2019, 113 Special Olympics Ireland athletes participated in kayaking.

At the 2007 Special Olympics World Games in Shanghai, China, athletes from 6 countries competed in Kayaking events

Events for Competition:

Singles Tourist Kayak 200m and 500m

Associations/Federations/Supporters:

Irish Canoe Union <http://www.irishcanoeunion.com/>

Divisioning at Special Olympics: Athletes in every sport and event are grouped by age, gender, and ability, giving everyone a reasonable chance to win. At Special Olympics there are no World Records because each athlete, whether in the fastest or the slowest division is valued and recognized equally. In every division, all athletes receive an award, from gold, silver, and bronze medals, to fourth through eighth place ribbons. This idea of equal ability groupings is the foundation for competition in Special Olympics and can be witnessed at all events, whether it's athletics, aquatics, table tennis, football, skiing, or gymnastics. All athletes are given an equal chance to participate, perform, and be recognized for doing their best by their teammates, family, friends, and fans.