

October 2026

HUT!

In this issue:

- P2 2026 Race Calendar
- P3 OMCKRA Year-End Gathering Info
- P4 2026 Points Leaders Update
- P5 Beyond the Next Stroke: The Spirit of the MRX
- P7 Update - The Tripper Class



[OMCKRA.COM](https://omckra.com)

We've updated our website - check it out!



[@omckra](https://www.instagram.com/omckra)



[Ontario Marathon Canoe
Kayak Racing Association](https://www.facebook.com/omckra)

A MESSAGE FROM OMCKRA

We're almost at the end of the racing season for 2026 and we're so proud of the efforts that we've seen all across our community this spring and summer. With all but one event in the rearview mirror it's a great time to take a look back and share some stories as well as keep people updated on what is still to come.

Thanks to those that have been hosting group paddles as well as to those who have been attending those same paddles. When you look at the results from some of the late-season events you can really see the progression the OMCKRA community has made through repeated practice.

Read on for some updates from the board - we have some exciting news to share and are hopeful that we'll get to see lots of you at the Nottawasaga Fall Classic and/or the year-end gathering in a few short weeks.



2026 Race Calendar

APRIL & MAY



APRIL 26 Upper Jock River Race
Location: Ottawa

MAY 9 Marsh Mash Canoe Race
Location: Bradford

MAY 23 Saugeen Bluffs Canoe Race
Location: Paisley



Want to know more? Visit omckra.com

JUNE



JUNE 6 Canoe The Nonquon
Location: Port Perry

JUNE 6 Saugeen Paddlers Voyageur Canoe Race
Location: Paisley

JUNE 13 Mattawa River Canoe Race
Location: North Bay

JUNE 27 Wallaceburg Baldoon Paddle Event
Location: Wallaceburg

Want to know more? Visit omckra.com

JULY & AUGUST



JULY 18 Parry Sound 50
Location: Parry Sound

JULY 25/26 North of 7 River Run & OMCKRA Provincials
Location: Bancroft

AUG 8 Kingston to Ottawa (K2O)
Location: Kingston

AUG 9 Wai Nui Why Not Race
Location: Oakville

AUG 21/22 Canadian Marathon Nationals
Location: Mont Laurier, QC

Want to know more? Visit omckra.com

SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER



SEPT 12 Muskoka River X
Location: Huntsville

SEPT 19 Toronto International Outrigger Canoe Race
Location: Toronto

OCT 17 Nottawasaga Fall Classic
Location: Wasaga Beach



Want to know more? Visit omckra.com



OMCKRA Year-End Gathering

The OMCKRA Year-End Gathering is quickly approaching!

Registration is well underway and there are limited spaces remaining - if you have any questions about the weekend please get in touch with Bill (bill.mcgowan@ymcagta.org).

Quick details:

- Oct 30 - Nov 1, 2026
- Open to OMCKRA members and their families/friends
- Arrive anytime, stay as long (or little!) as you'd like
- Food and accommodations are included in the weekend cost (there are different "packages" based on how long you're able to/would like to stay)
- We're asking everyone to bring their Stock-class boats to paddle in for the weekend

For more information on the weekend, a virtual tour of the host site, pricing, and to register, follow the link that says "Register Here" below.

Given that this is the first time OMCKRA is doing this, we're still working on the schedule for the weekend, but our rough outline so far is below. Have ideas/input? Shoot us an email at omckra@gmail.com!

Register Here!

	DAY 1 Friday	DAY 2 Saturday	DAY 3 Sunday
M O R N I N G	* = kids program options available - Fire Building - Arts & Crafts - Adventure Racing - Flying Squirrel - Low Ropes - Archery/Atlatls	8:15 Breakfast 9:30 *Group Paddle Technique Session 11:00 Regatta! (sprints & goofy challenges) 12:30 Lunch	8:15 Breakfast 9:30 Winter/Off-Season Training Knowledge Sharing Session 10:15 Final Group Paddle 12:30 Lunch
A F T E R N O O N	4:00 Arrival Begins Settle into lodges 6:00 Arrival Buffet Dinner	1:30 *Season-End Awards @ WL - Points Awards - Race of the Year Award 2:15 *Mini Marathon Fun Race 4:30 Camp Activities! - Climbing Wall - Disc Golf - Archery 5:30 Dinner	1:30 Pack-up, Thank-You's and Departure 
E V E N I N G	7:00 Evening Social Session 8:00 Casual Campfire & Snack	7:00 Camp Activity (Team Game) OR Quiet/Down Time & Gear Swap 8:00 Casual Campfire & Snack @ Centennial **Clocks go back 1 hour @ 2am!	



2026 Points Standings



Leaders in each category so far this season are:

Grand Masters Female

Bonnie Pankiw (8 pts)
Ellen Pazdzior (5 pts)
Liz Loek (5 pts)
Karen Simpson (4 pts)

Grand Masters Male

Jeff Brainard (27 pts)
Stan Anusiewicz (17 pts)
Rob Ross (16 pts)
Dean Brown (13 pts)
Stephen Wasteneys (12 pts)
Iain Craig (12 pts)
David Johnston (11 pts)
Darryl Bohm (7 pts)
Don Stoneman (6 pts)

Masters Female

Kim Pfaff (11 pts)
Leila Myers (8 pts)
Melissa Mayer (5 pts)

Masters Male

Dean Coulson (17 pts)
Andrei Zoubakine (15 pts)
Chris Pfaff (11 pts)
Chris Veldman (5 pts)

U20 Male

Ewan Pengra (4 pts)

Open (Senior) Female

Audra Nicholson (21 pts)
Raina Vingerhoeds (7 pts)
Christine Smith (4 pts)

Open (Senior) Male

Evan Welburn (12 pts)
Bill McGowan (11 pts)
Kamil Sitnik (5 pts)
Oliver McMillan (4 pts)

U17 Female

Lillian Krieger (4 pts)

*Points listed are only for those that have competed in
3 or more races, which qualifies you for end-of-
season points awards.*

There is only one race left (Nottawasaga Fall Classic, Oct 17) but there is much yet to be decided in the points races. All of the Open Male, Masters Male, Masters Female and Grand Masters Female categories are still up for grabs!

It has been an interesting year in the points races with both the Nonquon and Parry Sound 50 being cancelled, placing a increased weighting on the OMCKRA Provincials (North of 7 River Run), which was 2 individual races on the same weekend. If you're keen on making a push for your category in the 2027 racing season, that event is a can't-miss!



Beyond the Next Stroke: The Spirit of the MRX

In the early morning light, approximately 59 entries, canoes, kayaks and even a stand-up paddleboard, gathered at Openongo Lake for the seven o'clock start of the MRX, considered by some to be the most demanding single-day paddling race in the world.

There was excitement in the air, but also a deep sense of purpose. Every athlete standing at that starting line understood the extraordinary challenge ahead: more than 90 kilometers of relentless paddling, demanding portages, unpredictable terrain and hour after hour of asking both body and mind to keep going.

It is difficult to fully comprehend what that requires. Paddlers must find their rhythm and somehow hold onto it as exhaustion sets in. They climb out of their boats, carry their equipment across rugged portages, return to the water and begin paddling all over again, always focused on the next stroke, the next turn and the next checkpoint.

Watching them, I kept thinking about the place endurance athletes must go within themselves, the place where discomfort fades into the background and the only thing that matters is continuing forward.

That, perhaps, is the heart of the MRX. It is not simply a race against distance or time. It is a test of preparation, resilience, trust and the willingness to discover just how far the human spirit can carry us when the body begins to protest.

Every participant who crossed that starting line took on something extraordinary. Whether they reached the finish or made the difficult decision to end their race somewhere along the route, each one demonstrated remarkable courage simply by accepting the challenge.

Continued on next page





Beyond the Next Stroke: The Spirit of the MRX



The mystery of the MRX adds another dimension. Competitors do not receive the route map until the day before the race, requiring them to quickly absorb the course, anticipate its demands and prepare for whatever may await them. Preserving that sense of intrigue while safely coordinating an event of this magnitude must require an enormous amount of work.

Race Directors Mike Varieur and Rob Horton, together with their dedicated team of volunteers, created an event that was exceptionally well organized and filled with a genuine sense of community. From the athletes on the water to the volunteers, families, friends and supporters waiting along the route, everyone became part of something much larger than a race.

Those of us cheering from the sidelines formed our own little community, sharing stories, encouragement and the excitement of waiting for familiar boats to appear. Every time one came into view, the energy rose again.

I captured many photographs throughout the day, and I hope they convey even a little of the determination, strength and heart I witnessed.

To every athlete who dared to take on the MRX, and to every volunteer, organizer and supporter who made the journey possible: thank you. You reminded us that courage is not the absence of pain or uncertainty. Sometimes courage is simply taking the next stroke, and then another, and another, until the finish finally comes into view.

Until next year...

Tanis Hargrave





Update - The Tripper Class



The tripper class was introduced to us as a racing category by Mike and Rob at the MRX in 2024. Since that race, there has been steady participation in both the 2025 and 2026 MRX's in the Tripper category.

OMCKRA introduced the concept that it would like to adopt the Tripper class as a recognized racing category among it's existing set of Marathon, Stock and Rec classes at it's AGM in September. There was good conversation had about the topic, and the vote to adopt the Tripper class was successful. There have not been an established set of boat and paddle specs for this new(ish) category published yet, but keep an eye out for those in January's HUT! newsletter.

What does this mean for me? The Tripper category will be an available and approved category for all race organizers to optionally choose to add to their events beginning in 2027. Like all currently approved race categories, racers will be able to enter in this category, race others in their class, and earn points towards the OMCKRA points standings.

Our hope at OMCKRA is that this will help get more people into our sport of Marathon Paddling. There are thousands of canoe trippers out there and we're looking forward to recognizing their skills in their preferred craft at a race in 2027. We encourage you to tell all your tripper friends!