

Choosing a Multi-sport Kayak

Often, multi-sport athletes enter their kayak after a run or bike section feeling hungry, thirsty, and tired. The kayak section should be a low-impact part of the race.

The kayak requirements for a multi-sport athlete are different from those of a pure kayak racer. Multi-sport athletes need a different type of boat that, regardless of kayaking ability, provides the following features:

- Low wetted area, which means high cruise speed for low effort aerobic power output
- As large as possible a footrest space to enable running shoes to be worn
- A large space for legs to make it easier to deal with leg cramps
- A comfortable seat for better rest while paddling
- Low-profile smooth decks for easier paddling on the correct course in windy conditions
- Stability at rest to enable eating and drinking without falling out

When purchasing a multi-sport kayak always be conservative.

- Spray-deck fastened securely, so there is no water to empty out *en route*
 - Robust retractable rudder system for reliable steering using only your brain and your big toe
 - Extra-strong construction along the keel-line for greater resistance to accidental damage and leakage during the race.
- When purchasing a multi-sport kayak, always be conservative. You don't want the run-kayak-cycle to turn into a run-swim-cycle. In kayak multi-sport, swimmers are losers. Stay warm and dry inside a stable boat (for your personal ability) and you may do better than you ever imagined. This is particularly true if the weather is rough on race day.

For a first-time kayaker, paddle as many boats as you can. Not all are equal!

Do not dismiss sea kayaks. There is a range of sea kayaks that are pretty nimble and stable, and offer a nervous paddler a great deal of security.

Don't be pushed into a particular boat just because it is the only one offered. A way of making some informed choices is to join your local kayak club and ask fellow multi-sporters, but, essentially, make your own choice. Each person is different in their weight, height, and confidence level, and these factors will have a bearing on the choice of boat for you.

FURTHER INFORMATION

- www.jkkka.yaks.co.nz
- www.paddlerzone.co.nz
- www.paddlingperfection.com
- www.q-kayaks.co.nz
- www.sissonkayaks.co.nz
- www.sportzhub.com/ruahine
- www.vokkayaks.co.nz
- www.wildabout.co.nz



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