

Style Canoeing Rendezvous East Sum Up

**Story and photos by Tom Connell
(ORCKA, WCHA, WCA member)**



Traditional solo flatwater

paddling was the order of the day at the first-ever **Style Canoeing Rendezvous East**, held over five days in mid-July 2025 at [Murphy's Point Provincial Park](#) near Perth, Ontario. This was jointly sponsored by ORKCA and Paddle Canada, with ORCKA/WCHA/WCA member Lee Benson and PC/RACCC member Dot Bonnenfant playing key organizational roles in bringing this idea to life. The gathering featured a sequence of paddling clinics offered by legendary instructors Becky Mason, Reid McLachlan, and Charles Burchill, covering both basic and advanced techniques across a wide spectrum of paddling manoeuvres (including a mini-intro to freestyle in two quadrants). Paddlers came from Ontario, Quebec, Manitoba, and further afield as well. While most participants seem to appreciate traditional solo paddling for its own sake, refinement of these skills can improve stroke effectiveness across flatwater and whitewater situations. In addition to skills clinics, the group enjoyed lots of unstructured time on the water, and some highly coordinated precision paddling demonstrations by the whole group. The Rendezvous benefited from classic mid-summer weather, interspersed with the occasional downpour that only served to demonstrate the irrepressible commitment of the assembled paddlers. Above all, the event provided everyone with a great opportunity to get to know other Canadian-style paddlers, resulting in widespread agreement to build on the success of this event.



Thank you to our awesome event sponsors: [Ostrom Outdoors](#) packs and accessories, [SlackSeat](#) to save knees while soloing, and [Frontenac Outfitters](#).

For more photos, see Lee Ann Starzynski's amazing Google album [here](#). (Please provide credit and request permission to use any of the photos.)

For paddlers interested in more traditional solo flatwater paddling (and an introduction to freestyle), a paddling weekend will be held at Pinehurst Lake Conservation Area, near Cambridge Ontario, on Saturday & Sunday, September 27-28, 2025, with optional extra prep and play on both Friday and Monday. (Please contact Lee Benson at environment@orcka.ca for more information and watch for **online registration** at <https://www.orcka.ca/events-coming> closer to the event.)

ORCKA – [Ontario Recreational Canoeing and Kayaking Association](#); PC - [Paddle Canada](#); WCA – [Wilderness Canoe Association](#); WCHA – [Wooden Canoe Heritage Association](#); RACCC – [Ottawa's Canoe Camping Club](#)