

Dragon Boat Festival Rules & Regulations

Example: Boat number 2 go backward 2 seats

"Boat (number) X hold your boat"

Example: Boat 2,3,4 and 5, hold your boat where "hold" means to keep the boat stationary, that is, keep it from drifting in spite of the current, cross wind, or unchecked momentum, paddlers must backpaddle, draw sideways or whatever to accomplish this, under the direction of the Steerer, crews should master these maneuvers to ensure they have the best start possible.

- (e) The Referee, in consultation with the Starter, is empowered to implement a dead slow running start should wind or current conditions warrant; this would involve the boats creeping ahead while all aligned.
- (f) Where there are fewer than five contenders in a round of competition the Dock Master must confirm the numbers of the vacant lanes to the Starter and to the finish Line Judge prior to the race being started.
- (g) In the event that there is no dragon head or the head is seriously damaged, the most forward part of the affected boat will be the references for aligning that boat and determining the moment of finish.

16.2 Starting Sequences

- (a) The Starter on shore controls the count down to the cannon that is fired to signal the race start.

"We have alignment" Drummer of each crew signifies "ready" by raising a hand,

"Attention paddlers" Pause of a few seconds,

An air Horn blast or similar signal will start the race (1-5 seconds after the "Attention" command)

16.3 False Starts

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- (a) It shall be considered a False Start when, as the air horn sounds:
 - i Any boat is out ahead of the rest of the start Line,
 - ii Any boat is already moving ahead and/or being paddled ahead,
 - iii Any other condition arises that, in the opinion of the Referees or the Starter, compromises a fair start; this includes distracting calls or sounds from teams at the start line prior to and up to the formal start command, flag or horn.
- (b) If a team(s) causes a false start and no safety provisions are compromised, the referee will allow the race to continue and the offending team will receive a time penalty. No restart will be called. Any Team that has caused two false starts may be subject to disqualification.
- (c) Should a false start be declared, in the opinion of the referee, constitutes a safety hazard, the Starter and Referee will employ whatever means necessary to stop all crews from paddling, including:
 - i Displaying a red flag,
 - ii REPEATED blasts from horns, whistles or other noise makers,
 - iii Giving verbal instructions through megaphone,
 - iv Making hand signals; throat cutting gesture with a flat palm,
 - v. Crossing the course ahead of the bows of the dragon boats; or coming alongside.

17 Race Conduct

17.1 Race Underway – Proper Lane

- (a) The correct course for each boat is a straight line from its starting position to the finish. Each boat must remain in its correct lane, keep clear of and not interfere with the other boats in the race, and generally keep their distance from boats in the adjacent lanes, subject to the instructions of the Referees.
- (b) Any boat failing to keep its proper course or heading off course will be warned by the Referee and must comply immediately with the Referee's orders to take corrective action to move to a satisfactory position e.g. "Go left/right," "Turn hard left/right," "Straighten out," "Stop paddling," "Hold your boat," "Go forward," etc.

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- (c) The Drummer is encouraged to beat the drum from the start of the race entirely through to the finish. Drumming is a very essential part of dragon boat racing.
- (d) It is forbidden for a crew to “wake ride” or “ride wash,” that is, to gain advantage from the wash of another boat by paddling across the angle of its bow wave or stern wake to gain advantage by riding the forward face of the wave or wake. The referee following the field shall decide if wash hanging is taking place, signifying a foul and calling the offending crew.
- (e) When one boat is in a position to overtake another boat during a race, it is the duty of the boat overtaking to keep clear of the boat being overtaken at all times; similarly, the boat being overtaken must not alter course to make difficulties for the overtaking boat.
- (f) Crews shall be responsible for taking all action necessary to avoid colliding and minimizing impact with other boats and crews. Steerers, who are facing forward, must be able to command the boat effectively and send effective signals to their drummers, who are facing rearwards; they must remain vigilant and maintain a proper constant lookout for impending collisions, reacting as follows:
 - i stop the paddling (“stop paddling” or “Let her run”) to lose speed
 - ii stop the boat from ramming another (“Stop/Hold the boat”) to QUICKLY lose speed
 - iii start back paddling the boat astern (“Back up” or “Back her down”) as in a “crash stop”
 - iv quickly pulling ahead and maneuvering out of harms way if this can be done safely.

17.2 Proper Finish or DNF

- (a) Each boat must finish in her assigned lane, within the defined boundaries of the course, with the crew fully intact. The boat is deemed to have completed the race only when the entire boat travels across the finish line, with all the crew it started with aboard. The crew must remain aboard for the full duration of the race and through to the return to the dock.
- (b) The time of the boat’s finish area will be taken at the instant that the nose of the boat reaches the finish line and a visual recording will be taken to provide an official record of the order of finish of each race.
- (c) Failure to finish within the proper finish can result either in relegation of the team to last

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place in the round or in being assigned a race result of DNF (Did Not Finish).

- (d) Once the boat passes over the finish line into the Run Out area, steerers **MUST** remain in their lane, slow down and not turn or accidentally swerve into any adjacent lane(s), possible cutting off other boats arriving from behind.

17.3 Return to Base

- (a) Upon completion of their race, crews must remain in their boats, and the boats must be brought back to the dock without delay since all boats are needed immediately for use in the next race; lingering before the spectators and crowds is prohibited for this reason.
- (b) Returning crews may have to wait their turn to secure a place to berth at the dock, and should take up a holding position where directed by the boat marshals.
- (c) Crews shall be directed to a berth by a Dock Official and must disembark in an orderly manner; all paddles/PFD's are to be returned promptly.

18 Race Officiating

18.1 Refereeing and Disqualification

- (a) Referee(s) will follow each race to observe the course taken by each boat. Above all other matters the Referee shall first be concerned with the safety of all participants. The jurisdiction of the Referee extends over the race and all matters connected with it, from the time of the directing of boats to the start through to the finish.
- (b) The Referee shall have equal power to judge, stop the race, caution or disqualify any crew or competitor, and is the sole judge of a boat's own water and proper course during the race. His/her decisions in all cases shall be final.
- (c) Failure by a crew to comply with the Referee's instructions may result in further disciplinary action, including disqualification from the remaining competition. A Referee may, at his or her discretion, disqualify a team without stopping the race.
- (d) Whenever it is deemed appropriate to disqualify a crew arising from an infraction of the rules governing the race underway, the crew shall be advised at the time of the infraction/disqualification.

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- (e) If, in the opinion of the Referee, an outside boat interferes with a boat racing on the course and this interference would effect the standings in the race, the Referee can order the race to be rerun.
- (f) It shall be considered a Foul when, after the race has commenced, any competitor by his paddle, boat or person comes in contact with the paddle, boat or person of another competitor; or deliberately steers into another boat – whether such boat is or is not on its correct course and lane – unless such contact is so slight as to not interfere with the race, in the Referee’s estimation.
- (f) In the event of a Foul or an impending collision or any other infractions of the rules during a race, a Referee shall be empowered to:
 - i Instruct crews to stop paddling; continuation of the race and resumption of paddling the affected crews will be at the discretion of the Referee; this option may be used in the event of an impending collision, for example.
 - ii Disqualify the offending team(s)—in which case the crews must cease paddling and not complete the race – yet allow the rest of the race to continue uninterrupted at his or her discretion in spite of the disqualification.
 - iii Stop the race and, at his /her discretion, disqualify the offending crew; teams other than any which have been disqualified shall then be directed back to the Start Line to start the race over.
- (g) At the conclusion of each round of competition, Referee will signal with a white flag if a fair race was run, but if there were any fouls or disqualifications, he/she will signal with a red flag.
- (h) The Finish Line Judge shall declare the official order and time of finish results for each boat that properly crosses over the Finish Line, whose decision is final. Unsolicited videos, photos or verbal accounts pertaining to any disputed finish(es), course fouls or other matters have no official status or bearing on the adjudication.

19 Safety Considerations

- 19.1 Each Team Member is solely responsible for his or her own safety at all times while engaging in activity relating to practicing in and racing dragon boats. Crewmembers, particularly drummer and steerspeople, must be aware that they have responsibilities for the safe control of their dragon boat and should never head out on the water if they are in any way impaired by spirits,

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drugs or other substances that adversely affect and impair their perception, judgement, balance, reaction time, hearing and vision. Both the Team manager and Team Captain will ensure that all their competitors are:

- (a) Wearing a proper Personal Flotation Device (PFD) for every Crew Member at all times on board dragon boats.
 - (b) Suitably dressed for the weather, water and race conditions and that they are not wearing anything (such as personal accessories or jewelry) which may impede their ability to escape form a capsized boat or swim unaided once I the water.
 - (c) Must be water competent and, ideally, able to swim at least 50 meters while wearing a PFD and in wet competition clothes, unaided.
 - (d) Paddlers with physical restrictions (disabilities) are permitted to race on the same team with more able bodied paddlers, and to compete alongside other teams in their Division as part of an integrated crew, subject to prior consultation with the Registrar and a review by the Race committee to ensure that the nature of the disability and any adaptive procedures, appliances or supporting devices can be accommodated within the facility, safety and operational standards of the Event.
- 19.2 Distress Signal. In the event of a crew being in distress, for example, a crew member lost overboard, the Drummer, Steersperson or other crew members shall alert the Rescue Boats and Race Officials by waiving vigorously, above head height.
- 19.3 Any injuries sustained as a result of participating in the practices or races must be reported immediately to the Dock master, and the Team Manager must submit an injury report to the Festival/Event immediately following the injury. Incident Report forms are available at the dock.
- 19.4 Overloading
- If rough water conditions and/or the weight of the normal crew complement result in the dragon boat taking on water (i.e. being overloaded for the marine conditions), then the Crew Captain or Steerer must decide whether to race with only 16 to 18 Paddlers (to decrease the weight of the boat load, raise the margin of safety and minimize the risk of swamping and sinking.) It is the responsibility of the Team Captain to ensure that the crew always complies with the minimum and maximum crew loads.
- 19.5 Swamping and Collisions

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- (a) Should a boat(s) swamp, the crew must remain with their boat, check for their teammates, await rescue and take a head count, then repeat same every 30 seconds until all are recovered and accounted for:
 - i Confirm that PFDs are properly fastened and stay all together with the boat,
 - ii Do not attempt to swim to shore,
 - iii Minimize body heat loss by holding still and huddling close together,
 - iv Reassure panicking crew,
 - v Arrest severe bleeding, support injured crew,
 - vi Provide weak swimmers with additional buoyancy. e.g. handful of paddles.
- (b) Other boats must stay clear of the area and allow motorized rescue and recovery craft room to maneuver; crews must not take any actions which could result in their also capsizing and complicating the accident situation.
- (c) Should a collision occur between a boat and any fixed, floating or hard object, crews must quickly determine whether any participant has sustained a serious injury and alert Referee by signaling with their paddles held vertically, high up in the air.

19.6 Person Overboard

- (a) In the event that any crew member goes overboard or falls off the drum seat, the dragon boat should be stopped immediately and **NOT TURNED INTO THE PATH** of any oncoming boats in adjacent lanes; should the steerer go over the side, the drummer must take command of the boat and bring it to an immediate stop.

19.7 Loss of Steering or Boat Control

- (a) If the Steerer loses control of the boat and the boat starts to swerve out of its lane and/or into oncoming traffic, the Drummer and Steerer must work together to stop the paddling, if it is safe to stop and the stopped boat won't cause difficulties to other oncoming boats.

20.0 Festival House Rules



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- 20.1 Teams are not permitted to sell T-shirts or other items on or near the Festival.
- 20.2 The Festival/Event , its staff and volunteers will not be responsible for lost or stolen articles left in any area of the site.
- 20.3 Teams are strongly encouraged to have a team first aid kit made up and available, with such supplies as Band-Aids, treatment for blisters and other common paddling ailments, sunscreen and sunburn lotions, etc.
- 20.4 Please report any vendors or persons claiming to be affiliated with the Festival/Event and authorized to sell products, services, plans or other solicitations.

For example;

- individuals who claim to be authorized to take videos of teams racing in order to sell to team members. Solicitation and other unauthorized activity is not permitted at the Festival/Event.
- 20.5 Crew members, particularly, Drummers and Steerers must be aware that they have responsibilities for the safe control of their dragon boat and **SHOULD NEVER HEAD OUT ON THE WATER IF THEY ARE IN ANY WAY IMPAIRED BY SPIRITS, DRUGS, OR OTHER SUBSTANCES** that adversely affect and impair their perception, judgment, balance, reaction time, hearing and vision. It is the responsibility of the Team Captain, the Team Manager and the Steerer to ensure that no persons board the dragon who are unfit for their duties and responsibilities.

21.0 Breast Cancer Challenge Race and Carnation Ceremony

21.1 Crew Composition:

To qualify for Breast Cancer trophy and medals, Breast Cancer teams must roster and race with 100% survivors for all qualifying races and the Breast Cancer Challenge (i.e., for the entire Festival). It is expected for both drummer and stern to also be survivors. For safety reasons, a supporter may steer. This permission can only be granted by the Race Director. Seeding for the Breast Cancer Challenge may be based historical and/or real-time results. There will be as many finals (A, B, C, etc) for the Breast Cancer Challenge as needed, but only the top 3 Survivor-only teams in the A division will medal.



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Any Breast Cancer teams consisting of both survivors and supporters will race as Exhibition in the BC Challenge. However, they will still be recognized as a Breast Cancer Survivor team and be able to participate in the Challenge Race and Carnation Ceremony.

21.2 Race Format for Breast Cancer Survivor Challenge:

Breast Cancer Survivor Teams will be seeded into lanes for the Challenge race based on their performance in historical or real-time races. Final placing/ranking in the Challenge race will be determined by time, regardless of the number of entries/races, with the fastest Survivor-only teams in the Challenge race(s) being the winners, and any Mixed Survivor/Supporter team placing in a lesser place.

22.0 Rule Amendments

22.1 The Festival/Event reserves the right to amend the rules at its discretion and without notice.