



2026 Vancouver Island Dragon Boat Festival

Summary Info

Date: Saturday 25 July and Sunday 26 July

Check-in: Friday 24 July, 5pm to 7pm, Saturday 25 July 7am to 7:30am

Location: Fairway Gorge Paddling Club
2940 Jutland Road, Victoria V8T 5K6

Race Courses: 500M. 200M and 100M heats;
100M Knockouts; 1500M Oval Gut and Glory races; 500M Flag Relays
and Grand Mixed and Grand Women's 500M Finals.

Categories: mixed, women's and exhibition-status

Race Management: Fairway Gorge Paddling Club

Boats: Millennium dragon boats

Standard Races:

- 500M seeded heats
- 200M positioning heats
- 100M positioning heats
- 500M grand finals

Specialty Races:

- 100M Knockout Rounds
- 250M flag relay championships (each relay team races 250M for a 500m combined distance and shared time)
- 1500M Guts & Glory ovals (see race maps)

Team Check-In:

- Check-in Table (106-2940 Jutland, FGPC Waterfront Outfitters storefront front desk)
- 5pm to 7pm Friday 24 July
- 7am to 7:30am Saturday 25 July (for last minute check-ins)
- Team tent assignments will be available at check-in
- FGPC provides pre-assigned spaces for one 10 x 10 tent for each team; see check-in desk for locations; note that teams are responsible bringing their own tents, and tents should not be placed until the morning of Saturday 23 August after 7am
- The team manager, captain, or designated representative must check the team in. Remember to bring confirmation of any outstanding online waivers (printout of email confirmation or electronic copy viewable on smartphone or tablet) for any additions to your roster made after midnight on Thursday August 21.
- **Please Note: last minute changes/additions to your roster will only be accepted until 7:30am Saturday morning. After that, no changes are permitted and the same roster must be drawn from for every race over the weekend.**

Saturday, July 25 (First Day of Races)

- Stern/Managers' Meeting (top of middle dock) -- 7:15am
- Marshaling for races (main breezeway) -- 7:30am
- 500M heats begin -- 8:00am
- Morning 200M and 100M heats begin -- 10:40am
- Afternoon 200M and 100M heats begin -- 1:00pm
- Knockout rounds begin -- 2:50pm
- Retail and craft vendor tents open -- 8:00am - 4:00pm
- Lunch break 12:20 pm
- Food vendors open 11am - 4:00pm

Sunday, July 26 (Second Day of Races)

- Stern/Managers' Meeting (top of middle dock) -- 7:15am
- Marshaling for 1500M Guts and Glory begins -- 7:30am
- 1500M Guts and Glory start -- 8:00am
- 500M Flag Relays start -- 11:30am
- Lunch break -- 1:30pm
- 500M Flag Relays continue -- 2:00pm
- Grand Finals begin at 3:30pm
- Retail and craft vendor tents open -- 8:00am - 4:00pm
- Food vendors open -- 11am - 4:00pm

Message from FGPC's Race Management Team

Welcome Teams

The [Race Schedule](#) is a separate document and is available [HERE](#). Results and race advancements will be posted at two locations (main dock bay doors and the main marshaling area) to let you know how your teams finish and when you race next. Every team in both mixed and women's divisions will have a minimum of five races.

Notes for the 500m Flag Relay Championships (Sunday)

- All mixed and women's teams will be paired with corresponding opposites to form relay pairs (e.g. fastest mixed with slowest mixed, second fastest with second slowest...and so on).
- Each "slower" relay pair will start their paired heat heading southbound from the finish line in an assigned lane (lanes 1 through 3), racing south in their lane to meet their faster relay partner who will be waiting in a held position at the 250m mark.
- Each of the race lanes will have a 48" orange buoy placed in the middle of the 250 mark.
- After meeting each relay team's partnering team at the 250 mark and handing the relay flag from the arriving drummer to the departing drummer (starboard to starboard), the southbound team is deemed to have completed their leg of the race; they must remain in place until all northbound finishing teams have left the 250m mark before returning to the docks.
- The flag for each relay pair must be exchanged from starboard to starboard (e.g. from the **left hand** of the arriving drummer to the **left hand** of the departing drummer), and both boats must hold in place as their flag is exchanged, with the 250m buoy positioned between the drummer of each boat. Time penalties will be incurred if relay paired teams do not exchange their flag in this format.
- As soon as the arriving flag has changed hands, the northbound team can begin the final leg of their race, heading north through the finish line.
- There are no turns in this race: each team in the relay pair starts at one end and finishes at the opposite end of the 250m race course, amounting to 500m of racing shared by each relay pair.
- The official relay finish time for each relay pair is recorded when the northbound team crosses the north finish line.
- For the purposes of consistent racing, the fastest of the two teams in each pairing (as determined through Saturday advancements) will start at the south (250m) start line.

Notes for the 1500m Guts & Glory Championships

- The Guts & Glory Challenge races involve a single 1500M wide-oval with two wide turns over one full rotation of the course.
- All crews will be ranked and included in the Guts & Glory Challenge.
- Crews will begin the course in 15 second intervals.
- Overlap rules apply and time credits and penalties (and DNF-status for penalties in excess of 10 seconds) will be enforced by water marshals.
- The fastest adjusted overall times in the mixed and women's divisions win their respective challenge division, and will count in the overall rankings for mixed and women's overall finish times for the Vancouver Island Dragon Boat Festival.

Notes for the 100M Knockout Challenge

- The 6 top ranked women's and mixed crews will participate in a 3 heat 100M knockout challenge
- The first heat will consist of the top 6 crews in each division
- Based on finish order of the first heat, the four fastest-finishing crews will continue to the second heat
- Immediately after the second heat, the two fastest 2nd-heat crews will face off in the final (third) heat

How medals are earned at VIDBF

VIDBF is a pentathlon. Every race your crew paddles this weekend — 500m, 200m, 100m, 1500m oval, and the 250m flag relay — counts toward your cumulative time, and your cumulative time determines everything. There is no qualifying round, no medal race to save yourself for, and no point in the weekend where your fate is settled early. The weekend is the final.

Here's what that means. Divisions at VIDBF aren't assigned in advance and aren't locked in as the weekend unfolds. They are formed only once — after the last pentathlon event is complete — by sorting each division's field top to bottom on combined time across all five events.

From that final sort, the three fastest crews advance to the **Grand Final**: one last 500m, raced boat-on-boat, where championship gold, silver, and bronze are decided first across the line.

Every other crew lands, by cumulative time, in a competitive division — **A Division** for the next-fastest group, then **B**, **C**, and **D** down the field. Each division is its own podium: gold, silver, and bronze to its three fastest crews, official placements to the rest.

You'll know exactly where you stand all weekend. The official leaderboard is refreshed after each pentathlon module is complete — that is, once both the mixed and women's fields have finished racing that format. Five events, five leaderboard updates: after the

500m, after the 200m, after the 100m, after the 1500m oval, and after the flag relay. Each refresh shows the running cumulative standings — where your crew sits, who's within reach, and who's within reach of you.

Because nothing is settled until the final event, everything stays live until the final event. A crew sitting comfortably in A-Division medal position through Saturday can drop a flag exchange on Sunday and slide into B. A crew that closes with its best race of the weekend can climb past three boats that faded. Your division, your podium, and your company are all still being decided in the last race you paddle — and the leaderboard will tell you precisely what's at stake when you paddle it.

So race everything, and race it to the end. There's no throwaway heat, no safe lead, and no event that counts less than the others. The crews on podiums Sunday afternoon will be the ones that held their standard through all five — including the fifth.

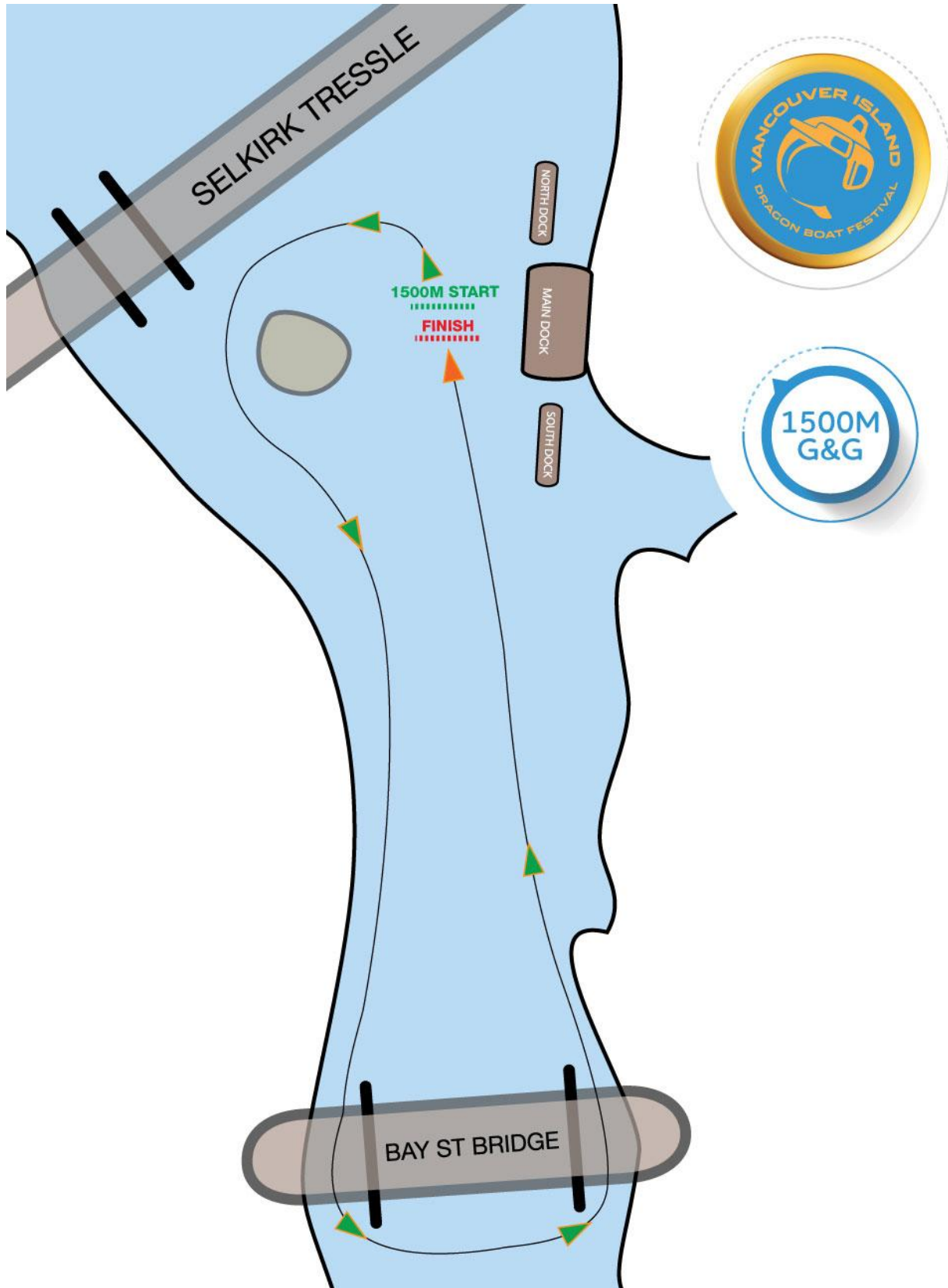
The Vancouver Island Dragon Boat Festival race schedule and race times are subject to change. Please check [HERE](#) for updates. Although every effort will be made to stay on schedule, the races may run ahead or behind schedule by as much as 30 minutes. Please be on site and prepared to marshal and race a minimum of one hour prior to scheduled race times.

A heads-up to paddlers who are racing on any combination of women's and mixed teams: provision for “**hot-swapping**” during division changeovers is built into the race schedule between mixed and women's division. However, no hot-swapping or cross-rostering is permitted within the same division unless the affected team has been rated as “exhibition”; teams deemed to be cross-rostering within mixed or women's divisions will be disqualified unless at least one of the affected teams is racing as an exhibition team. If you have concerns about hot-swapping over the race weekend, please consult with the head marshal or race official for clarification.

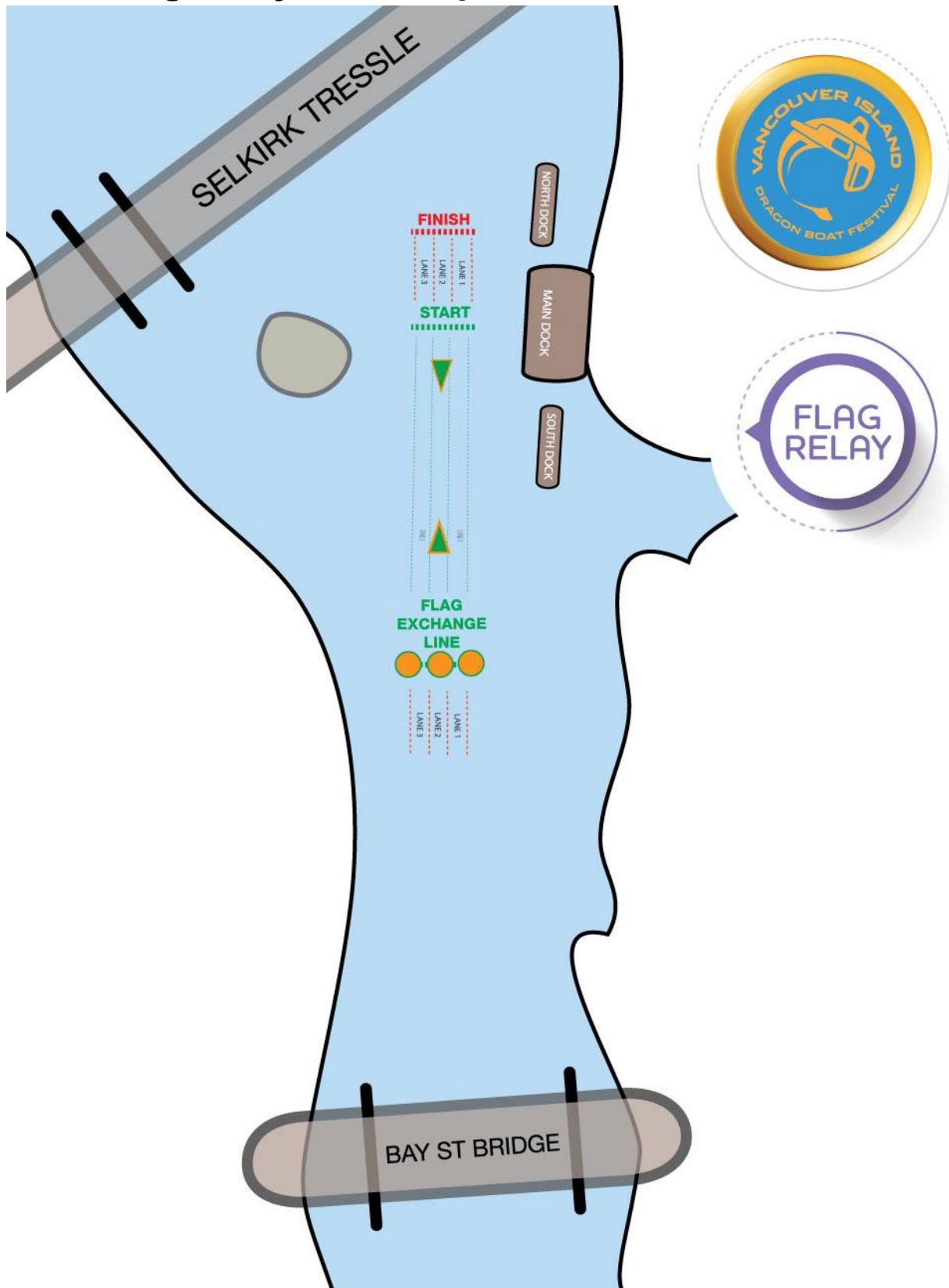
Race Maps



1500M Oval Race Map



250M Flag Relay Race Map



Stern/Managers' Meetings

Saturday Sterns Meeting: Mandatory (attendance will be taken)

- Date: Saturday 25 July
- Time: 7:15am
- Location: Duck Pond (at the top of the ramp of the south dock)

Sterns are required to attend the sterns meeting. Note that the first teams will begin marshaling at 7:30am for the first races of the morning. Drummers and stroke pairs are encouraged to attend the sterns' meeting as well.

Sunday Sterns Meetings: Mandatory (attendance will be taken) for Guts & Glory 1500M and 500M Flag Relay Races

- Date: Sunday August 24
- Time: 7:15am
- Location: Duck Pond (at the top of the ramp of the south dock)

Sterns are required to attend the sterns meeting. Drummers and stroke pairs are encouraged to attend the sterns' meeting as well.

On-Water Safety

Here is a review of some important on-water safety points for FGPC-managed festivals.

- Listen to water marshals and follow their directions.
- The head water marshal / safety officer will hand the dragon boats over to the starter for your final approach to the start line.
- Tide and traffic are taken into consideration when preparing to line you up to start.
- Race officials will only recall a race if they feel the race has been substantively compromised in the first 50-meters; otherwise time penalties and time credits will be applied to ensure continuous racing on schedule
- The start commands will be: "all boats hold; all boats we have alignment; attention..." followed by the sound of a digital horn. The digital horn will start the race between 1 and 3 seconds following the call for attention. Start times will deliberately vary.
- Each race will be accompanied by one or more chase boats. These are there to provide guidance should they see lane encroachment or safety issues. Steerspeople must listen to and abide by safety instructions as directed by water

officials. Please remember that collision avoidance is the primary responsibility of every stern.

- Safety / chase boat referees will watch for wash-riding and may ask you to increase spacing if they feel wash-riding is occurring. Maintain a separation of at least 5 meters between boats for open-lane straight-shot races.
- PFDs must be worn by all paddlers, sterns and drummers; Transport Canada-certified PFDs as well as ISO-certified PFDs are permissible at FGPC-managed dragon boat races (including both hydrostatic and manual inflatables providing air cartridges are installed and operational).
- Amplification (e.g. “cox boxes”) or any extra noise making devices are not permitted in the boat during the races without prior permission from the race director.
- Protests: if a team or teams wish to protest or contest the finish order or circumstances of a race, the stern or drummer must communicate with the head dock marshal and request, complete and submit an official protest form to the head dock marshal before they leave the dock, and they must pledge a \$50 protest fee.

With your attention and cooperation, you and your paddlers along with our race management team can ensure safe, fun and successful racing for everyone.

Paddlers’ Village:

VIDBF’s paddlers’ village will run on either side of Jutland Road adjacent to FGPC’s facility at 2940 Jutland Road. Tents spaces are pre-assigned and location will be provided to team captains when they check in. Teams must locate themselves at their assigned tent number and location for the purposes of marshaling and safety. Note that security staff will patrol the race site and Paddlers’ Village after-hours, but the tent area is not fenced or secure. Paddlers should not leave valuables and personal items unattended. FGPC is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

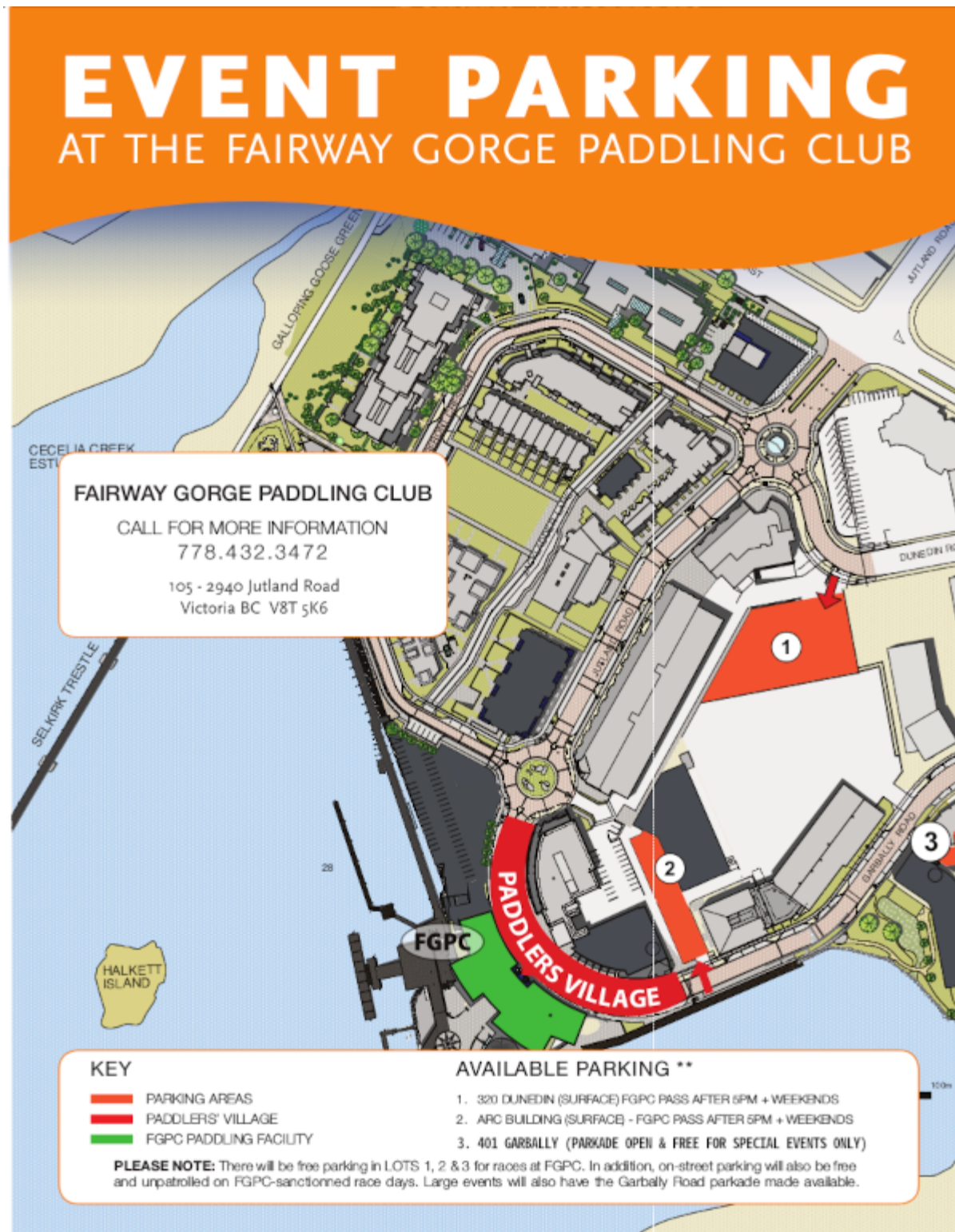
Tents: Teams are encouraged to bring their own tents. There is a strict **one tent per crew** limit in our village. Tents are available from FGPC by pre-order at a rate of \$100 (including staff set up and take down). Please [click here](#) to order a tent.

Location: Refer to Event Parking Map below for location of Paddlers’ Village and event parking

We will be providing a case of water per crew, and there are water taps available, so please bring your water containers.

Paddlers are encouraged to bring their own paddles and PFDs, but a limited quantity of “club” equipment will be available for racing. **Note:** FGPC-provided PFDs and paddles must be returned by paddlers after every race. Club-supplied paddles and PFDs are not permitted in the Paddlers’ Village.

Event Parking



Limited parking is available. Everyone is encouraged to use public transportation, bike, walk, or carpool as paid and no-charge surface parking is limited in the Selkirk area. A parkade has been made available to festival participants for both race days, and we

welcome paddlers to take advantage of this free, secure parking. The location of the free-for-the-festival parkade is: 401 Garbally Road (on the same street as Paddlers' Village). Please work with your team to ensure vehicles are unloaded quickly and not left unattended as there is very limited space in the Paddlers' Village area. Unattended vehicles will be towed at the owner's expense. Note that street parking is not permitted within the Paddlers' Village zone, and is time-limited and enforced / ticketed on Saturday for vehicles parked for more than 1 or 2 hours (as marked) in the Selkirk community.

Please make use of the free-to-paddlers parkade at 401 Garbally Road.

Paddlers, spectators and supporters may want to use the Victoria Harbour Ferry system to travel to the race site from downtown.

Please be aware that there are local residents that need to access their parking, so please do not obstruct entrances or emergency exits of local residences.

Volunteer Stern and Drummer Pool:

The information / registration tent will maintain a list of volunteer sterns and drummers. Sterns and Drummers **on existing registered teams** who are willing to volunteer to steer or drum for other teams should come to Check-in to be added to the volunteer pool. It is understood that should a scheduling conflict arise, home teams will take priority. It is up to the teams/steers/drummers to connect and let the race registrar know which other team/s they will be steering/drumming for. FGPC staff sterns are available through the registrar and for a fee; staff sterns cannot be hired by teams without prior arrangement with the registrar, or unless race management determines that safety requires replacing an existing team stern.

Listing of Vendors

Food Vendors

FGPC'S FAMOUS "BETTER WITH BLACKER BRISKET BBQ" (SANDWICHES)

- 19.00 hand-held brisket sandwiches
- 16.00 pulled pork sandwiches
- INCLUDED: drink & potato chips
- **Must be pre-ordered before 20 July**
- [Click here to order](#)

Country Crepes

- We make savoury and sweet crepes – about 15 flavours. Both traditional and

buckwheat. Our crepes can be served as a meal, snack or dessert item.

Greek on the Street

- Greek on the Street serves authentic Greek street food inspired by the traditional flavors of Greece and the Mediterranean. Our menu features freshly prepared pita wraps and skewers, including chicken, gyro and pork souvlaki, along with a variety of vegetarian and vegan options such as veggie wraps, falafel wraps, and zucchini fritters wraps.

Retail Vendors

FGPC Waterfront Outfitters

- Paddling Gear; Safety Gear; Paddles;
- Sunscreens; Sunglasses; Novelty Items

Scimitar Sports

- Paddling Clothing

Rack Fashions

- Women's Clothing & Accessories

Silver fX

- Hand carved sterling silver local indigenous jewelry.
- Sterling silver paddle and cancer survivor jewelry
- Sterling silver jewelry with or without stones.

Sponsors and Community Supports

Gold Sponsor



Boat Sponsor



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VICTORIA

Vancouver Island Race Series Sponsors



Silver Sponsors



Bronze Sponsors



FGPC Paddlesports Camps Partner



FGPC Partners

