

Rules of racing

1. General

- 1.1. The dragon boat races shall be under the supervision and control of the Chief Race Official who shall retain authority over all matters related to racing.

2. Race Division.

There are two race divisions.

1. **Community Division.** This division is reserved for local teams with little to no practice or race experience. All local teams will be offered one practice during the week leading up to the festival. Coaches and steerspeople (person steering the boat) will be provided.

2. **Sport Mixed Division.** This division is reserved for teams who practice and race on a regular basis. Practice slots may be available for traveling teams on the Friday evening before the festival. Sport teams may use their own steersperson.

3. Team Composition

All crews in the community mixed division may have a maximum of **16 paddlers**; this does not include the drummer or steersperson.

All crews in the sport mixed divisions may have a maximum of **20 paddlers**. Crews must have a **minimum of 8** female paddlers; this does not include the drummer or steersperson.

The drummer and steersperson for any crew may be male or female.

The minimum for any crew is 10 paddlers, a drummer, and a steersperson.

The minimum age for a participant is 12 years old.

4. Racing

- 4.1. All teams will race three times. This includes two heats and one final. The **fastest** of the two heat times will be used to place teams into their final. The top teams will race in the "A" final, the next fastest teams will race in the "B" final, the next in the "C" final, and so forth. All teams will race in a final.
- 4.2. The race distance is 200 meters.
- 4.3. All races are timed electronically with a finish line camera.
- 4.4. The starting procedure shall be "We have alignment", *PAUSE*, "All paddlers Ready", *PAUSE*, "Attention Please" followed by an air horn. Any team caught false starting will receive a 3-5 second penalty.

- 4.5. The race ends when the nose of the dragon head crosses the finish line.

5. Safety

- 5.1. All participants must wear a certified PFD (Personal Flotation device). Your own PFD may be used so long as it is United States Coast Guard Approved. US coast guard inflatables may be worn so long as they are worn in accordance to the manufacturers recommendation.
- 5.2. All participants are strongly discouraged from taking any kind of valuable or electronic device on board with them as there is a possibility of these items getting wet.
- 5.3. Unless necessary and under the control of the coach, it is strictly forbidden for a paddler to stand up in the boat for risk of capsizing (especially at the finish of a race).
- 5.4. Any participants injured or who become ill during the festival are to report to medical staff immediately. If the condition is serious, medical staff may restrict a participant from continuing in the festival. Their decision is final.
- 5.5. **All participants must sign a waiver form before being allowed to practice or race.**
The waiver of a participant under the age of 18 must be signed by a Parent or Guardian. It is the captain's responsibility to ensure that all participants in his or her crew have signed a waiver form. Any paddler caught racing who has not signed a waiver form risks the disqualification of his or her crew from the race.
- 5.6. Capsizing is extremely rare but there is a possibility that it could happen. Observing the following safety guidelines will ensure the safety of all participants.
 - 5.6.1. Before getting in the boat, each paddler must identify their buddy. Their buddy is their seat partner. The drummer will buddy with the two stroke (front two paddlers), and the steersperson with the last two paddlers.
 - 5.6.2. In the event of a boat capsizing all paddlers are to remain calm, check that their buddy is ok, remain with the boat, and wait for instructions from the safety boat.
 - 5.6.3. The safety boat that will make sure that everyone is present and check for anyone that needs immediate medical attention.
 - 5.6.4. Once the safety boat has guaranteed that everyone is ok, they will begin retrieving participants.

6. Etiquette

- 6.1. All participants are expected to treat the officials, organizers, volunteers, their fellow competitors, and spectators with respect. Any abuse of this fact witnessed during the festival is to be reported to the organizing committee who will review the situation and take appropriate action that may include expulsion of a participant or crew from the festival.

- 6.2. All crews are expected to respect the rules and regulations of racing and the judgment of the officials. Un-sportsmanlike towards the officials in this regard may bring about further penalty and risk disqualification the infracting crew.