



Race Rules/Regulations

The following rules are based on International Dragon Boat Federation (IDBF) recommendations for festival racing. The Chief Official shall have the authority to modify or add additional rules based on conditions. In all matters the Chief Official's decision is final and may not be appealed.

1. CONDUCT OF CREWS

1.1 Crews must follow the directions of the Race Officials at all times during the competition. Failure to do so may result in the disqualification of the competitor or crew.

1.2 Any dragon boat crew or competitor who attempts to win a race by other than honorable means, or who deliberately breaks the Racing Rules, shall face disqualification from the competition.

2. MARSHALLING / EMBARKING

2.1 Crew Responsibility - It is a crew's responsibility to ensure that the dragon boat and its equipment is fully functional and water-worthy. Boats and equipment must be carefully checked before embarking.

2.2 Paddle Breakage/Equipment Failure - Crews are allowed to carry two (2) spare paddles. These may only be used in the event that a paddle breakage occurs during a race.

2.3 Boats - Crews must use the assigned boat. Crews will not be permitted to choose or reserve a specific boat.

2.4 Movement up the Course - After a crew has boarded, it must leave the Dock immediately and proceed directly to the start area. Crews must keep clear of the Racing Lanes and must not interfere with a race that is in progress. Traffic must stop until a race in progress has passed.

3. STARTS and STARTING PROCEDURES

3.1 Start Area - It is the boat Captain's responsibility to make sure that each crew member is familiar with the starting procedures. All boats shall assemble behind the Start Line, at least three (3) minutes before their Start Time.

3.2 Late Arrivals - The Starter may warn a crew arriving late in the start area and if such a warning is given it shall have the same effect as one given for a False Start, for that race. The Starter may start a race without reference to absentees.

3.3 Racing Lane - A crew must race in the lane allocated to its boat. In the event that only one boat remains at the start of a scheduled race, that crew will be required to paddle the course to register a qualifying time for participation in subsequent rounds.

3.4 Starting Position - The front of the boat or the head of the dragon will be aligned with the start line. Crews should take care not to line up or drift past the start line. The starter may use a drifting or rolling start if conditions warrant.

3.5 Starter's Commands - When the Aligner is satisfied that all the boats are correctly aligned, the Starter shall alert the crews by saying 'Are you ready?' If the crew is **NOT READY**, then the Drummer must immediately raise a hand above head height to indicate the situation to the Starter. Excessive or unwarranted delay may result in penalty or disqualification.

3.6 Starting Signals -When the Starter is satisfied that all crews are ready, the starting signals of **the word 'ATTENTION' or 'ATTENTION PLEASE'** followed by the word '**GO**'. The word '**GO**' may be replaced by a starting gun, electronic starting signal or other distinct sound. The interval between the words '**ATTENTION**' and '**GO**' (or sound signal) shall not exceed five (5) seconds.

3.8 False Starts - If a crew starts after the word '**Attention**' and before the word '**Go**' it has made a False Start. **False Starts will result in a time penalty being added to the time of the crew.**

3.9 Stopping a Race – In the event of a significant false start or collision the starter or umpire may stop the race and conduct an immediate re-race. The Starter shall repeatedly signal with a horn or other device and the umpire boat will attempt to get in front of the boats by driving across the course while waving a red flag. All boats must stop immediately.

3.10 Damage to boats prior to Start- If a boat is damaged prior to the start, the crew must alert the umpire boat (or in the event there is not an umpire boat – the starter) and attempt repairs. The umpire or another race official shall have the discretion to determine if the boat may be raced or must return to the dock for repair. Equipment failure in the first 50 meters of a race is cause for a re-start. The crew must immediately stop paddling and the drummer and helm must both wave their hands above their head. A broken paddle is NOT considered equipment failure.

4. RACE CONDUCT

4.1 Correct Course and Clear Water - The correct course for each boat is a straight 'line' down the course or down the middle of its marked Racing Lane, from the Start Line to the Finish Line. Even when crews are in their Racing Lanes or following a racing 'line', at least two (2) meters of clear water must be maintained around each boat. For the purpose of this Rule, the boat includes the crews' paddles and therefore the 'clear water' is between paddle blade and adjacent paddle blade. Crews must 'give clear water' when told to by an Umpire or other race official.

4.2 Umpire's Warnings - A Course Umpire (when available) shall follow each race, in a motor boat to observe the course taken by each Dragon Boat. Any boat that fails to keep within its Racing Lane/Line will be warned by an Umpire. This will be done via a bull horn or other PA device and by raising a red flag. If such warnings are ignored the crew(s) concerned risk time penalty or disqualification from the race.

4.3 Wake Riding - (Wash Hanging). It is forbidden for a crew to 'wake ride' that is, to gain an advantage from the wake or wash of another boat by paddling across the angle of its bow wave and gaining an increase in speed by 'riding' the forward face of the wave. The Umpire following the boat shall decide if wake riding (wash hanging) has occurred and notify the Chief Official accordingly, who will decide what action to take.

4.4 Collisions - In the event of a collision or impending collision between two (2) or more boats the crews **must immediately stop paddling**. Umpire(s) must report the circumstances to the Chief Official, who may disqualify the offending boat(s) or, if the result of the race has been materially affected, order one or more boats to re-race, before the next round of the competition. When in the opinion of the Chief Official one or more of the crews involved could have avoided the collision by taking corrective action, for example, to stop paddling, but did not do so, and then the crew or crews concerned may be disqualified.

4.6 Distress Signal - If a crew is in distress, for example, a crew member lost overboard or ill, then the drummer or helm shall alert the Rescue Boats by waving their arms above the head.

4.7 Boat Swamping, Deliberate Capsizes - If, in the opinion of the Chief Official, a boat has been swamped or capsized deliberately by its own, or another crew, during the course of a race, the crew or crews concerned may be disqualified from the competition.

4.8 Boat Damage - If, in the opinion of the Chief Official, a boat has been damaged by its crew deliberately, or by another crew during the course of a race, the crew or crews concerned may be disqualified from the competition and the crew may be financially liable for the damages.

4.9 Capsizes – If a boat capsizes:

- All paddlers should stay with the boat as it will float.
- Steersperson and drummer will do immediate head counts and look under the boat if necessary for missing paddlers.
- Paddlers should check for their bench mate, assess any injuries, confirm PFDs are on and working.
- Paddlers will wait for instruction from the safety boats while staying with boat and reassuring other paddlers.
- First aid may be administered on the water or paddler transported to the shore if necessary.
- To avoid mass confusion and further jeopardize the safety of all, other boats in the area may approach, but must await commands from safety boats regarding rescue assistance.
- Paddlers will be rescued in priority of injured, non-swimmers, etc.
- Equipment will be gathered and brought back to shore after all paddlers are taken care of.

5. FINISHES

5.1 Crossing the Finish Line - A boat has finished the race when the foremost part of the boat crosses the Finish Line with the same number of Racers in it as started the race. (The Dragons Head, when in position, forms part of the boat).

5.2 Dead Heats - If two (2) or more boats reach the Finish Line at the same time they shall get the same classification. If space does not allow both teams to advance equally, the crews may re-race or advance based on coin toss or other manner at the discretion of the Chief Official.

5.3 Disembarking. Once a crew has finished a race it must return immediately to the dock area and disembark. A crew is not released from the directions of the marshalling Officials until all members of the crew have left the Crew Assembly Area.

6. DISPUTES, PROTESTS and DISQUALIFICATIONS

6.1 Disputes - Disputes that arise during a competition between Crews shall be addressed to the Chief Official and dealt with in the same way as a Protest.

6.2 Racing Protests - In the event of a crew wishing to make a protest following a race, concerning the conduct of another crew or the race result, the captain, and only the captain, must lodge the dispute with the Chief Official within fifteen (15) minutes of the end of the race. (This fee is non-refundable and will be treated as a donation to the charity.)

6.4 Decisions. The decision of the Chief Official is final.

7. RULES SPECIFIC TO VANCOUVER LAKE PADDLE FOR LIFE DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL 2017

7.1 Mixed Division Requirements – All mixed crews must have a minimum of 5/10 (10 and 20 paddler boats respectively) female paddlers per boat. In the event a crew does not have at least 5/10 women in a race, the team can choose to a) race with an open seat for each female paddler missing from the minimum requirement, or b) be assessed a 2-second penalty for each male paddler beyond 5/10 in the heat. There is no maximum limit to the number of females in a boat. This rule does not apply to helms or drummers.

7.2 Racing Protest – This is a fun race to raise money for charity. If you really feel you must protest or dispute something, see the Chief Official immediately following your race.

7.3 Race Jury - The Race Jury shall consist of the Chief Official, Chief Marshal, the Dock Master and the Chief Judge.

7.4 Race Format – The first two rounds of racing are time trials that will seed the teams into their respective semi-finals or finals. The times of the first two rounds will be combined to determine ranking.

7.5 Weather and Safety – If weather conditions deteriorate to the point where racing is no longer safe, the Chief Official will cancel the remaining races and the results from the first two rounds will be used to determine overall winners. In the case of ties, fundraising will be used to break ties. Teams are allowed to add to their fundraising total at the Award Ceremony.

7.6 Alcohol – Any participant who has been drinking alcohol will no longer be able to participate in the event that day.

7.7 Life Jackets- Coast Guard approved PASSIVE life jackets (PFD's) are to be properly worn at all times on the boats. Inflatable PFD's are not allowed.

7.8 Drumming – Drumming is an integral part of the sport. The drummer must begin beating the drum after the first 50 meters of the start. The drum stick must be struck on the top of the drum so that the sound is audible throughout the boat. Failure to drum will result in first a warning and then time penalties.

7.9 Double Rostering – Callers and helms may be rostered on multiple teams. All paddlers rostered with a Women's team may paddle for one other Mixed team, but not for any other Women's teams. All women rostered with a Mixed team may paddle for one other Women's team, but not for any other Mixed teams. Anyone rostered on more than one team must indicate so on their waiver form.

While this cross-rostering is allowed, no team may hold up the start of a race for a team member that is on another dragon boat and completing another race without approval from the Race Directors. Any team delaying the start of a race for this reason shall forfeit the race for which they are entered.

8. REFUND POLICY

8.1 Festival Cancellation – In the unlikely event of cancellation or postponement of this event due to circumstances beyond reasonable control of Paddle for Life, including but not limited to, safety, weather, acts of God or similar concerns, Paddle for Life cannot be held responsible for any cost, damage, or expense which may be incurred by registrants as a consequence of this event being postponed or cancelled. Depending upon weather forecast, a decision may be made on the morning of the event.

8.2 Refunds – Because this is a charity event, registration payments are not refundable. We appreciate your cooperation and consideration.

8.3 Withdrawals – If a team wishes to withdraw any time prior to race day event, Rule 8.2 Refunds shall apply.