



## **Dragon Boat Association Race Rules The Vancouver International Taiwanese Dragon Boat Races**

**Updated – Aug 15, 2007**

The aim of the Vancouver International Taiwanese Dragon Boat Race is to promote dragon boat racing as a recreational and sporting activity in the spirit of multiculturalism and for enjoyment.

### **1.0 Team Registration for the Vancouver DBA Races**

- 1.1 The Race Director / Registrar is responsible for issuing the Registration Package containing information for prospective teams and for registering dragon boat teams. Each Team must submit a completed Registration Form to the Race Director / Registrar, accompanied by a cheque for the applicable fee payable to the Dragon Boat Association.

### **2.0 Conditions of Entry**

- 2.1 All participants must agree to abide by the regulations stipulated by the DBA as a condition of their participation in the event. Individuals and teams must conform to all criteria and be able to satisfy and comply with all requirements, as set forth in the Official Regulations. The DBA, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to accept or refuse any entry of a team or any registration of an individual to the event.
- 2.2 Waivers: All team members must sign a waiver release stating that they have read the conditions of the waiver and are aware of the risks associated with the races, and accept the risk and thus waive any right they may have to any cause of action against any or all of the sponsors, organizers, officials and the DBA for injury to person(s) or loss/damage to personal property.
- 2.3 All team members must return a duly signed waiver to their Team Manager, who shall be responsible for submitting them from all members of his or her team to the Race Director / Registrar by the date specified on the Deadline Friday Aug. 31 2006, at the Plaza of Nations (Dock) 2:30pm-4:00pm

The Registrar Karen will be at the Plaza of Nations (Dock) 2:30pm-4:00p, where she will give teams their race package includes wristbands after they hand in a clean signed team waiver. Early pick -up call Richard to arrange a time 604-562-5932

- 2.4 Any infraction of the race regulations on the part of an Individual Team Member(s), by the Crew or by the Team itself may result in the disqualification of the entire team from further participation in the Event. Each team is entirely responsible for its own conduct and compliance with the Official Regulations. Any team that allows a non-registered individual to participate as a Crew Member on its team may be subject to disqualification from further participation in the event.

### **3.0 Team and Boat Crew Definitions**

- 3.1 Official Dragon Boat Team: consists of the following 25 Team Members:
  - (a) 1 Team Manager (cannot be a member of the racing crew and must be present on shore at all times when team participates remain ashore) plus,

(b) 24 Racers maximum: The Drummer, the Steerperson and 20 Paddlers drawn from the Official Team Roster form the Boat Crew, with up to 2 Alternates (or spares, substitutes or reserves). One member of the Boat Crew must be designated as the Team Captain

(c) Teams using Taiwanese flag-pulling dragon boats consist of the Drummer, the Steerperson, the Flag Puller, and 18 paddlers for a total of 21 racers on the boat.

3.2 22 Racers is considered to be the normal Boat Crew for all other dragon boats other than the Taiwanese dragon boat. While 18 Racers is considered to be the minimum number required to race – the Drummer, the Steerperson plus at least 16 Paddlers. Teams using Taiwanese Dragon Boats must also have a Flag Puller.

3.3 Team Rosters:

The names of all team members must be registered on the Official Team Roster, and no individual is permitted to be on more than one team. Only those racers listed on their respective team's roster can race for that team. Any Team which allows a non-registered person to participate as a Crew Member on that team is liable for and is subject to disqualification from further participation in the Races, at the absolute discretion of the DBA Race Committee.

3.4 Final Racing Team Roster:

The roster is a minimum of 18 to a maximum of 25 names for the actual competition. The final and official racing Team Roster must be submitted to the Registrar by the deadline specified in the Calendar of Events and Deadlines issued by the registrar.

The Official Team Roster must be printed neatly or typed so names are clearly legible.

Variations to the foregoing Roster Regulations are permitted only with the prior written approval of the Race Committee.

## 4.0 Types of Teams

4.1 Age Basis

(a) Adult Boat Crew:

Manager must be 19 years of age or older as of day of the races. All racers must be at least 13 years of age or older as of the day of the races.

(b) Junior Boat Crew:

Manager must be 19 years of age or older as of the day of the races. All racers must be at least 13 years of age and not yet 19 years of age as of the day of the races. Crew members require their parent or guardian's consent in order to participate and compete.

4.2 Gender Composition Basis

Mixed Crews – boat crew must be comprised of a minimum of 8 female paddlers with the balance of the crew being of either gender.

4.3 Level of Crew Skill, Experience, Involvement and Commitment

The Races are open to participants with varying degrees of experience in dragon boat racing. The format of the Races will have a series of final races that will allow teams of comparable racing level and ability to race against one another.

4.4 Individual Team Member Eligibility and Fitness for Dragon Boat Racing

A registered Team Member is defined as any person who is:

- on the final Racing Roster of a team that is duly registered and in good standing with the DBA.
- at least 13 years of age as of the day of competition

4.5 Adult Team Managers and Crew Members may be members of one and only one team and may not be on any other team's Roster.

4.6 Failure by any Team Manager to comply with the rules above may result in the forfeiture of the Team's Race.

4.7 Every Team Member is required to read a set of the Official Rules and regulations, be knowledgeable of its content, and abide by it. Every Team Manager, Captain, Steersperson, Drummer and Flag Puller are **required to read and to be knowledgeable** of the Official Rules and Regulations in order that their respective team can act accordingly.

4.8 Swimming Ability:

Each Crew member is required to be able to swim 100 meters while wearing a PFD; it is the responsibility of the Team Manager and Team Captain to ensure that all members of their team are able to comply with this regulation.

Paddlers with physical limitations (disabilities) are permitted to race with more able bodied paddlers, 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.

4.9 Safety Considerations

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.

Each and every Crew Member is required to wear a Personal Flotation Device (PFD) at all times when on board dragon boats.

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 DBA immediately following the injury. Incident Report forms are available at the dock.

**5.0 Team Sponsorship and Identity**

5.1 The DBA retains all rights to advertising, sponsorship and commercial representation for the Event.

5.2 Sponsors are those who are directly supportive of the Races, such as Cup and Boat sponsors, contributors, etc.; they will be acknowledged and represented as Sponsors of the Races.

5.3 Team Sponsors are those who are supportive of individual Teams and may not be considered a sponsor of the Races; DBA is not obligated to individual Team Sponsors, and may refuse any commercial representation on the site and on the water venue.

5.4 It is not a requirement for a Team to be supported by a Team Sponsor(s).

5.5 Where the involvement of an individual Team Sponsor is determined not to be in the best interest of the DBA or the Event Sponsor(s), the DBA may refuse entry

of the supported Team to the Event unless an alternative Team Sponsor is acceptable.

5.6 Representation of the organization responsible for the Team and its Sponsor(s) shall be limited to:

- Clothing, such as team uniforms, hats, headbands, pins, etc.
- One freestanding team flag not exceeding twelve (12) square feet in area

## 6.0 Detailed Team Member Roles, Duties and Responsibilities

6.1 Team Manager shall be responsible for:

- (a) Team conduct covered under the Official Rules and Regulations,
- (b) Communicating and distributing to all team members race and festival information,
- (c) Processing and submitting all required team forms, waivers, fees, team name/description,
- (d) Liaison with the Registrar and Race Officials,
- (e) Attending all specified meeting.

6.2 Team Captain shall be responsible for:

- (a) Team conduct whenever the team is on the water or dockside,
- (b) Liaison and communication with Race Officials while team is on the water or dockside,
- (c) Altering or curtailing the practice and the routing of the boat should the weather or water conditions exceed the crew's capabilities or put their safety in jeopardy,
- (d) Taking charge during an accident or mishap,
- (e) Reporting to Dock or Race Officials on any damage to the boat, or loss/damage of equipment or boat accessories,
- (f) Ensuring that all changes to crew seating positions or rotations with team members from shore take place ONLY WHILE DOCKSIDE.

6.3 Steerperson shall be responsible for,

- (a) Standing at all times at the boat steering station and keeping a proper lookout for other marine traffic, floating debris, fixed obstacles, lines and tethers, rocks and shallows, and all other hazards to navigation and dangerous marine and weather conditions,
- (b) Knowing the boat crew commands to call out and how to steer/control to maneuver the boat so as to avoid colliding with floating or fixed objects and to avoid damaging the dragon boat and any of its attachments in particular,
- (c) Knowing the marine rules of the water and practices for avoiding collisions when in the proximity of recreational and commercial vessel traffic and while racing,
- (d) Knowing the designated marine areas (practicing, racing, out of bounds) and the associated procedural rules for approaching and leaving the dock, warming up, racing down the course, keeping within the designated lane, etc.,

- (e) Practicing the entire team in the emergency “crash stop” maneuver to avoid collision and ramming, and establishing effective communications signals with the Drummer,
- (f) Stopping the boat and signaling to Race Officials immediately in the event that any crew member(s) suffers an injury or mishap.
- (g) Being familiar with how to inch the boat forward into position at the start line without drifting onto an adjacent lane(s),
- (h) Properly positioning the boat in the assigned lane at the start and during the race. Failure to do so may result in penalty or disqualification.
- (i) Stopping the dragon boat during the race if he or she loses control of the steering.
- (j) Holding the tether until the Starter says RELEASE TETHER. Failing to do so can result in disqualification or penalty.

6.4 Drummer shall be responsible for:

- (a) Directing the actions of the paddlers in coordination with the steerperson to control the movements of the dragon boat in all directions (forward, sideways, pivoting, turning, backing), whenever underway, docking and unloading, starting, racing, finishing and particularly for stopping to avoid collisions,
- (b) Keeping a proper lookout aft (rearward direction),
- (c) Complying with the requests of Race Officials and Referees
- (d) Ensuring the boat is brought into the correct, marked racing lane for competition
- (e) Ensuring that no noise makers, whistlers, electronic aids or amplifying devices are employed to signal within or communicate with the boat, other than the drum and drum sticks provided.

6.5 Drummer and Steerperson must both be competent at calling commands to control and halt the boat, for if either one of them falls overboard, it will be up to the remaining individual to take charge of the boat.

**7.0 General**

7.1 Responsibility for the Race rests with the DBA Race Committee for setting and administering the policies, rules and regulations governing these activities. It is responsible for working with associations, registration of teams, marine operations and support, safety, operation of the races, and all matters pertaining to the running of the racing program. The interpretation of policies, rules and regulations rests with the DBA, or an appropriate body designated solely by DBA, who hold the final authority over their applications, and whose decisions are final.

7.2 Competition Structure

- (a) The racing program is organized into a series of races, as determined by the Race Committee, and the teams may be divided to groups in order to obtain a fair competition for the teams. The DBA reserves the right to reclassify teams in order to ensure a balanced program. The Race Committee develops a contest structure, race schedule and competition program by taking into account such factors as the number and type of teams entered, minimum number of teams needed to form a separate division, and other practical considerations. Generally, there is the objective of enabling teams to race at least three times during the Event.

- (b) Crew placements in the initial heats and lane assignments shall be randomized or based on seeding method; subsequently, the standing of the Crew will be determined either by order of finish, or by the finish time, depending on how the contest has been structured; each team will advance or be eliminated in accordance with the structure of the scheduled competitive rounds.

## 8.0 Racing Regulations

- 8.1 All boats, paddles, drums, life jackets (PFDs) are to be approved and/or provided by the DBA. Use of personal Grey Owl paddles is permitted. Use of carbon fibre and kelvar paddles within the standards of IDBF (International Dragon Boat Federation) is also permitted. If unsure, please obtain approval from the race director. No additional equipment will be authorized for use, other than any adaptive devices required to facilitate participation by disabled paddlers, provided such participation and adaptive devices have received the approval of the Race Committee prior to the Event.
- 8.2 Seating pads made of foam or other materials and other devices (for elevating the paddler to a greater height when seated) are not allowed on board the dragon boats by member of a team.
- 8.3 Paddlers are not permitted to alter the supplied paddles in any way, including, but not limited to, applying sticky or waxy substances to the shaft, roughening, or taping the hand gripping surfaces.
- 8.4 All boats, paddles, drums, PFDs and any other equipment used during the races must be returned to the DBA intact and in full; replacement costs or repair of such equipment will be charged to the responsible team should negligence be determined by the DBA.
- 8.5 Signaling devices, radio communications, other electronic items and any noisemaking devices shall not be used by any team during the races.
- 8.6 Only the drum and drumsticks provided shall be used to signal the stroke rate. Whistles, rattles, air horns, or any other noise making devices are prohibited from use.

## 9.0 Watercourse Description: Lanes, Markings, Designated Areas

- 9.1 Racing lanes: Racing lanes may or may not be marked by numbered signs or buoys. Steerpersons are to aim for the Finish Line and avoid collision with other Dragon Boats and Marine Traffic.
- 9.2 Start Line: A row of individual tethers, one per boat, arranged in a straight line and fixed to a suitably rigid line or pier.
- 9.3 Finish Line: A surveyed line that is parallel to the Start Line and demarked by official indicators. Buoys placed at or near the Finish Line are meant for guidance only.
- 9.4 Run Out: The area immediately after the Finish Line in which the dragon boats coast to a stop after crossing the line. Crews must make all attempts to stop the boat quickly after crossing the finish Line and avoid collisions with Dragon Boats coming up from behind, i.e. STOP IT QUICKLY AND KEEP A STRAIGHT LINE.

- 9.5 Dock Approach Area: The waters immediately surrounding the various berths and docking stations.
- 9.6 Warm-Up Area: A designated portion of the watercourse in which crews can do a short warm-up paddle. This area will be between the Dock and the Staging Area. Teams are to proceed to the Staging Area only with permission of the Referee.
- 9.7 Staging Area: A position on the water adjacent to the Start Line, where all boats must converge to await call up to the Start Line.
- 9.8 Out-of-Bounds Areas: All other waters in which dragon boats are not permitted to traverse during the Competition.

## 10.0 Daily Program of Competition and Last Minute Changes

- 10.1 The starting times of the races are determined by the Race Committee are subject to change.
- 10.2 The Race Officials reserve the right to call meetings of Team Officials to emphasize procedures, go over any program adjustments or resolve any last minute concerns.
- 10.3 Teams should plan to be on site well before their scheduled time to race; there are a number of stages that teams must pass through in order to be properly prepared for a successful race.
- 10.4 Should it be necessary to alter the schedule, a notification procedure will be established. It is the responsibility of the Team Manager to be alert for any last minute changes to the race schedule and to know when his or her team is next scheduled to report to the Check In point and expected to race.

## 11.0 Good Sportsmanship

- 11.1 If, in the opinion of the Referee, a boat is deliberately swamped or capsized, the Race Officials reserve the right to disqualify the offending team from any official standing and may disqualify that team from further participation in the Event. If the crew deliberately damages a boat or its equipment, the DBA reserves the right to impose a financial and/or disciplinary penalty.
- 11.2 Participants are at all times to practice the principles of good sportsmanship. Any crew or competitor who attempts to win a race by other than honorable means, or who deliberately breaks the rules, or who disregards the honorable nature of the rules shall face disqualification of the whole team from the competition.

## 12.0 Penalties Arising From Racing

- 12.1 Penalties may be imposed by the Race Committee on a Team or its members for the following:
  - (a) Violation of safety procedures,
  - (b) Infraction of stated rules and regulations,
  - (c) Unsportsmanlike conduct,
  - (d) Disobeying reasonable requests or instructions from Race Officials,
  - (e) Willful damage to or loss of equipment and boats,
  - (f) Violation of sponsorship rules,

- (g) Misrepresentation of the Race/Event or the Race/Event Organization.

12.2 Penalties may include:

- (a) Disqualification from any official standing and/or awards
- (b) Disqualification of entire team from further participation in the Event
- (c) Requirement for financial reimbursement for damaged or lost equipment
- (d) Disqualification of entire team from participation in future Races
- (e) At the officials discretion, a time penalty

**13.0 Racing Protests and Appeals.**

13.1 **Protests by teams will be limited to race conduct and race rule infractions only.** A Race Appeals Panel consisting of race officials will decide on all protests.

13.2 A team may protest:

- (a) Illegal paddle/seat/PFD used by another team
- (b) A Crew not complying with the roster rule
- (c) Collision initiated by another team during the race

A team may **not** protest:

- (a) Boat or lane assignment
- (b) Interference from another boat that **did not** result in a collision

13.3 On-water race officials will signal any fouls or disqualification to the Finish Line Judge by raising a red flag and notifying offending team(s) of the specific infraction.

13.4 The Finish Line Judge will withhold results of the race and notify:

- (a) Scoreboard officials to post a notice indicating that the race results are being appealed.
- (b) The public address announcer that the race results are under appeal, until a release is given by the Race Appeals Panel.

13.5 If a protest is to be made, the protest must be lodged by the Team Captain within fifteen minutes of the start of the race in question.

13.6 **A non-refundable payment of \$50.00 is required for all protests.**

13.7 All protests must be submitted in written form (provided upon request) to the Race Appeals Panel, at the Finish line.

13.8 Upon accepting the protest, the Race Appeals Panel will immediately convene a meeting together with all parties for a hearing and make its decision, which will be final and binding on all parties concerned. The Race Appeals Panel will then notify the Finish Line Judge to release the adjudicated race results.

**14.0 Rules of Racing Competitions**

#### 14.1 Arrival On Site and Team Round Up

- (a) Teams need to assemble at some meeting point on site at least 30 minutes before their scheduled Race Start Time and get organized; use the washroom facilities as time and facilities are not available once teams report to Check In. Adjust uniforms, do warm up exercises and stretching, review race strategy, etc. Plan for some extra time to move around the site since it will be congested.

#### 14.2 Check In and Line Up

- (a) The scheduled times when teams are to race will be determined in advance and will be distributed to all Team Managers, whose responsibility it is to know when his or her Team is next expected and schedules to compete, and to keep track of any changes to the schedules announced/posted by Race Officials.
- (b) Teams must report in to the Crew Marshall at Check In thirty minutes ahead of their scheduled Race Start time in order to get ready; failure to do so on time may result in disqualification and the removal of the team from that round of competition with relegation to the position of last place for that round.
- (c) All paddlers must wear their team wristband for the duration of the festival. Paddlers will not be allowed to race without their team wristband on their wrist. Failure to comply with this rule may result in disqualification.
- (d) Personal belongings are not to be brought into the crew assembly area and only those teams in a forthcoming race are allowed through.
- (e) Once reported in, crews will be directed by Race Officials to pick out PFD's; all crew must select the proper size PFD and wear it in the correct manner.
- (f) Crews will then be directed to the final Line Up area where they will form up according to their pre-planned order of seating in the boat, and behind the appropriate lane number marker to await being called down or directed to the dock.
- (g) When instructed, crews are to proceed down the ramp and down to the dock area, where they will be directed to the proper boat.

#### 14.3 Boarding and Casting Off

- (a) Once a dragon boat is ready, the crew will be summoned to go on board; crews must board in accordance with the Dock Master's instructions and are not permitted to choose the boat to be used, nor the lane they are to race in; any water should be bailed out of the boat.
- (b) After a final check out by a lower Dock Official, the crew will be permitted to cast off and pull away from the dock.

- (c) It is the responsibility of the Dock Master to ensure that all of the right crews are correctly identified and dispatched, in boats bearing the correct lane number.
- (d) Once clear of the dock, all crews come under the authority of the Referees, and must comply with their directions.

#### 14.4 Warm-Up Area

- (a) Upon clearing the dock, all crews are to proceed without delay to the Warm-Up Area, which also serves as the Boat Holding Area. FAILURE TO PROCEED DIRECTLY COULD RESULT IN DISQUALIFICATION FROM THE ROUND OF COMPETITION OR TO THE AWARDED OF TIME PENALTY, TO BE ADDED TO THE OFFENDING TEAM'S FINAL RACE TIME RESULTS, thus affecting its standing and advancement in the competition structure.
- (b) It may be necessary for early-arriving boats to remain in the Warm-Up Area while waiting for any late-arriving boats to join them. Because of the shortness of time between races, it is critical that early-arriving boats stay put and do not wander or engage in an extended warm up; this will also help to ensure fairness in terms of all crews having comparable opportunities to warm up.
- (c) While in the Warm-Up Area, steerspersons should actively assess the effects that the wind conditions, and particularly wind direction, for when the boat is called up to the Start Line.

#### 14.5 Boat Call Up and Alignment for the Start

- (a) From the Warm-Up Area, the Referees will call boats forward to proceed to the Staging Area, in readiness to go to the Start Line.
- (b) When approaching the Start Line tethers, it is important that the crew adjust their paddling so that they do not interfere with other boats. Caution should also be exercised to avoid hitting the pier or other fixed objects. The steersperson shall instruct the paddlers so as to maneuver the boat backwards in order for a paddler to reach for the tether. The steersperson is the person designated to hold the tether when the starting sequence begins.
- (c) The steersperson should be holding the tether until the Starter says RELEASE TETHER. If the steersperson releases the tether prematurely more than once then the team will be disqualified or issued a time penalty.
- (d) It is also critical that the steersperson take into account the effect that the wind and/or the current are having on the boat, whether they will cause the boat to drift at an angle. It is the responsibility of the steersperson to ensure that the boat is properly positioned in the lane at the start of the race.
- (e) The Referee will address individual boats to adjust their position in order to line up the heads of the dragon boats evenly at the Start Line. Since tethers are being used, only small adjustments requiring the effort of a few paddlers should be needed under normal conditions.

Example: Boat 4, ahead 1 seat

Example: Boat 2, back 1 seat

Example: Boat 1, Boat 3, hold your boats. The command “hold your boat” means that the boat should be kept stationary.

- (f) In the event that a boat has no head or the head is seriously damaged, the most forward part of the affected boat will be the reference for aligning that boat and determining the moment of finish.

#### 14.6 Starting Sequence

The Starter on shore controls the count down to the start signal. Commands are as follows:

1. **ARE YOU READY?** (Drummer of a crew can signify “NOT READY” by raising a hand. Drummer has about 1 to 2 seconds to respond. If you are ready no response is necessary)
2. **RELEASE TETHER** (Steerperson releases hold of the tether, making sure the tether does not become entangled with himself/herself or any part of the boat)
3. Start Signal which could be an AIR HORN blast between 1–2 seconds after Release Tether

#### 14.7 Racing 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 a suitable 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,” “Straighten out,” “Stop paddling,” “Hold your boat,” “Go forward,” etc.
- (c) The Drummer must actively 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 “wash hang” 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.







