

ESCA PADDLE for CANCER Dragonboat Festival Guidelines for Racing



SAFETY NOTICE



This notice gives important safety information for crew members taking part in Dragon Boating. Please take time to read it carefully.

Dragon Boat racing is inherently safe and cap-sizes are rare, except where the crew is at fault. However, in any water sport there is always an element of danger. This information is intended to minimise the risks to you.



CONDUCT

Crews must comply with all instructions given to them. Once in the boat, crews must obey the commands of their Helm/Steering person. Crews who engage in dangerous, unruly, thoughtless or offensive behaviour will be disqualified. Deliberately capsizing a Dragon Boat can be dangerous and may damage the boat. It also disrupts the racing programme. Crews that cause their own or another boat to capsize or who ram another boat will be disqualified. Alcohol impairs judgement and can increase the risk of hypothermia. Crews who have been drinking excessively will not be allowed to race.

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ABILITY TO SWIM

All crew members must be able to swim at least 50 metres when dressed for racing, and must be competent in cold, deep and open water.



BUOYANCY AIDS

Buoyancy aids are provided by the organisers and must be worn. Ensure your partner's buoyancy aid is securely fastened.



DRESS

Crew members must be adequately dressed for the conditions. Typically, paddlers should wear:

- T-shirt or vest and shorts - NOT jeans
- Buoyancy aid
- Suitable light footwear e.g. trainers, plastic sandals, wetsuit boots.

Waterproof top and trousers, when conditions require it.



BEFORE RACING

Before racing begins, Crew Captains must complete a "Registration Waiver Form" and give it to the Race Officials.

A bracelet will be given after safety training is completed and must be worn by each member of the crew. Crew members must tell their Crew Manager if they are weak swimmers or if they have a medical condition that may affect them during the day. Before each race, a count of the number of people in the boat must be made by the Crew Captain and given to the Boat Marshall. This will be used in the event of a capsize to ensure no one is lost.



AFTER RACING

The crew remains under the control of the Helm/Steering person until the boat is unloaded. When approaching the landing area, keep your hands clear of the boat's sides to avoid them being crushed by another boat. Stay seated in the boat until told. Then unload one person at a time starting from one end as directed by the Helm/Steering person. Otherwise the boat can capsize or can be damaged.

Brace the Boat!

BRACING THE BOAT

To steady the boat, when sideways on to the wind or waves, the Helm/Steering person will tell the crew to "Brace the Boat". Paddlers must lean out slightly over the side of the boat and press their paddles flat on the water, at arms length.

Stop the Boat!

STOP THE BOAT IN AN EMERGENCY

To prevent a collision, the Helm/Steering person will tell the crew to "Stop the Boat". Paddlers must immediately place their paddles deeply and vertically in the water and hold them firmly. A backwards stroke with the paddles can then be made.



BUDDY SYSTEM

The Buddy System allows the crew to be checked quickly following a capsize.

- Each person in the boat is paired with the person on the same seat and is given a number numbering from the front.
- The "Stroke Pair" (first pair) in the boat are responsible for the Drummer and the rear pair (last pair) are responsible for the Helm/Steering person.
- In the event of a capsize, each person's responsibility is to ensure that their partner is safe and well.



CAPSIZED BOATS

If a Dragon Boat capsizes, each pair of paddlers must immediately account for their buddies, to ensure that no one is trapped under the overturned hull, lost or injured. The Boat Captain must account for every crew member by calling out pair numbers and checking everyone answers "OK". He/She will ensure the number of crew corresponds with the count made when the boat was loaded. The crew should stay calmly in the water with the boat and wait the arrival of the Safety Boat or assistance. Do not attempt to turn the boat upright. In an overturned position, it can be used as a float.

Once on the land all the crew members must again be accounted for and any injuries dealt with immediately.

The boat recovery should only be attempted by experienced persons. The boat can be damaged if it is lifted while there is water left in.

The Start

COURSE AND START

Racing will be over a course of approximately 280/300 metres. Boats will embark from the shore line and paddle on the inside of the race course to and beyond the start.

There the four crews will line up and drift towards the start where they will come under the instructions of the starting marshal. The starting command is as follows: "Are you ready", "Attention" and then "GO".

The Finish

FINISHING LINE

The finish line is set up with an electronic sighting and a video recording to accurately assess the results. The "Buoys" are for guidance only due to the potential of drifting in strong winds or currents. The finish judges will sound a horn when a boat crosses the finishing line.