



Boston Dragon Boat Festival

2011 RULES AND REGULATIONS

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ADMINISTRATION

1a) Waivers and Rosters

All team members must sign waivers stating that they have read and understand the conditions of the waiver and are aware of and accept all risks associated with the event, and waive all rights to take legal action against any of the sponsors, their volunteers and employees, the Boston Dragon Boat Festival, its volunteers and employees, the Boston Dragon Boat Festival organizing committee, its volunteers and employees, its directors, volunteers and employees, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, its directors, volunteers and employees, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Cities of Boston and Cambridge, their volunteers and employees, and any other person, partnership, corporation or association in any way associated with the Boston Dragon Boat Festival, for injury or death, or for loss or damage to property, howsoever caused. For participants under 18 years of age, parents or guardians must also read, understand and sign the waivers.

Team Captains must submit to the Boston Dragon Boat Festival properly signed, dated and witnessed waivers by the deadline provided to the Team Captains by the Boston Dragon Boat Festival. The Boston Dragon Boat Festival may accept late submission of waivers at its discretion; however, waivers must be read, understood, signed and witnessed well in advance of any on-water activity. Team Captains must submit to the Boston Dragon Boat Festival properly completed team rosters by the Boston Dragon Boat Festival. The Boston Dragon Boat Festival may accept late submission of rosters at its discretion.

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1b) Dragon Boats and Equipment

The Boston Dragon Boat Festival shall provide Dragon Boats, paddles, drums, and personal floatation devices. Any teams or members wishing to use their own personal floatation devices must first have these items approved by the Boston Dragon Boat Festival Race Director. Personal paddles needed for extreme height requirements or other documented physical need must be pre-approved by the Race Director. **No carbon fiber paddles** will be allowed under any circumstances.

All equipment shall be returned in good condition immediately following practices and races. In the event that the Boston Dragon Boat Festival determines negligence, replacement or repair costs shall be charged to the team responsible.

Only the drum and drumsticks provided by the Boston Dragon Boat Festival shall be used to signal the stroke rate in addition to non-electrically assisted voice commands.

1c) Teams

Teams are prohibited from selling any items due to Department of Conservation and Recreation Regulations.

A person may be a registered team member of more than one team only if the other team(s) is in a different division. Clubs with more than one team cannot interchange members among teams if they are in the same division. **This rule will be strictly enforced to ensure fair racing by preventing "stacking".**

Drummers and Steerspersons may race in more than one race, and do not have to be on the team roster for which they are assisting.

All local team members must be registered and complete a minimum of three practice sessions.

All visiting teams must attest to their race experience with the Race Director prior to entering the event.

All team members must wear team uniforms when racing.

A registered team member must be 18 years old prior to the first practice session or if between the ages of fourteen and seventeen, have a waiver signed by the parent(s) or guardians. Participants under eighteen must be fitted with an age and weight appropriate flotation device if the Boston Dragon Boat Festival cannot do so.

Every registered team member must be listed on the team roster and must have read, understood, signed, dated, and have had witnessed the waiver. Waivers must be filed by the Team Captain with the Boston Dragon Boat Festival.

Teams are allowed a maximum of 22 registered members, comprising of: 1 Drummer, 1 Boston Dragon Boat Festival Qualified Steersperson, and 20 Paddlers. **A maximum 16 of the registered paddlers may race at one time.** The additional four paddlers are to be considered alternates and may paddle as the captain wishes. Of any of the above, one person must be registered as the Team Captain.

Each team must compete with a minimum of 6 women paddlers per Dragon Boat per race. If a team is short the required 6 women paddlers, it shall race shorthanded accordingly. (See Race Director)

Each team must race with a maximum of 16 paddlers per Dragon Boat, plus one Drummer, plus one Steersperson. Teams with fewer than 10 paddlers will not be allowed to race unless the Race Director grants permission.

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At its discretion, the Boston Dragon Boat Festival may permit a women's team to use a male steers-person.

Breast cancer survivors will race each other if there is more than one team. They may also race in the women's division.

Other cancer survivors will be placed in divisions at the discretions of the Boston Dragon Boat Festival.

Each team must race with a Drummer.

Each team must race with a Steersperson who has been deemed qualified by the Boston Dragon Boat Festival by observation at practice. Prior to race day, each team must designate a team member who has been deemed qualified as a Steersperson by the Boston Dragon Boat Festival. At its discretion, the Boston Dragon Boat Festival may at any time replace any team's Steersperson with another Steersperson, despite that replacement not being a registered member of that team. At its discretion, the Boston Dragon Boat Festival may at any time direct that a team not participate further in on-water activity due to its Steersperson not being capable.

Visiting teams Steerspersons must have previous Dragon Boat Race experience as attested to by the Captain of the team.

At its discretion, the Boston Dragon Boat Festival may at any time require a check of listed crewmembers against their team rosters.

Teams attempting to cheat by stacking may, at the discretion of the Boston Dragon Boat Festival, **may face a 5 second time penalty or be disqualified immediately** and not allowed to race. Please be advised that this is your only warning!

Team Captains shall ensure that only registered team members participate in on-water activities. Any team permitting a non-registered person to participate in any on-water **activity may face a 5 second time penalty or be disqualified immediately and not allowed to race**, subject to the discretion of the Boston Dragon Boat Festival.

At its discretion, the Boston Dragon Boat Festival may assess **a 5 second time penalty or disqualify** and prohibit from further participation any team member or team if such a team member or team displays poor conduct on or off the water.

Each team and each team member is required to follow these rules.

The Team Captain shall be responsible for:

- Team Conduct.
- Communication and Distribution of Information to the Team.
- Communication with the Boston Dragon Boat Festival.
- Collection and filing of all requisite information and forms with the Boston Dragon Boat Festival.
- Liaison with race officials.
- Attendance at the pre-race Team Captains' meeting, with location, date and time to be provided by the Boston Dragon Boat Festival.
- Local Captains must attend a Rules of the River training session with their designated steersperson prior to or at the first practice.

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2. Safety Procedures, Emergency Procedures, and General Sanctions

2a) Application

Safety Procedures, Emergency Procedures, and General Sanctions apply throughout the Boston Dragon Boat Festival, including but not limited to practices and races.

2b) Safety Procedures

The Steersperson is responsible for the Dragon Boat and the team.

The Steersperson shall communicate the safety procedure and emergency procedure to each team member before each practice session and before each race.

Dragon Boats shall give way to each other and must give way to all other persons and vessels.

Each team member shall wear a personal flotation device during all on-water activities, including all practices and races.

Each team member should be capable of swimming 50 meters while wearing a personal flotation device. The Team Captain shall ensure that all team members are capable of complying with this rule.

Each team member is responsible for his or her own safety at all times while engaging in activities related to practicing and racing in Dragon Boats.

Individuals or teams deemed unsafe by the Boston Dragon Boat Festival or its designate shall not be permitted to continue on-water activities, including all practices or races.

2c) Emergency Procedures

In the event of a Dragon Boat swamping or capsizing, the following shall apply. The Steersperson shall retain charge of the team until rescue personnel arrive.

The Steersperson shall immediately determine if any persons are trapped in the Dragon Boat, and act accordingly.

Each team member must ensure that the team members immediately in front, behind, and beside, are not trapped in the Dragon Boat.

Each team member must follow directions given by the Steersperson, until such time as rescue personnel arrive, after which each team member must follow directions given by rescue personnel. The crew must hold onto the Dragon Boat. Individuals must not swim to shore unless instructed by rescue personnel. Upon ensuring that no persons are in distress, the rescue personnel may direct the team to swim the Dragon Boat to shore, with or without towing assistance by the rescue personnel.

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2d) General Sanctions

At its complete discretion, the Boston Dragon Boat Festival may assess a 5 second time penalty, dismiss or disqualify at any time, including but not limited to any practices or races, any person or team from further practices or races for:

- Violating safety principals or procedures
- Participating or attempting to participate in on water activities while inebriated or while carrying alcohol
- Violating rules
- Demonstrating poor sportsmanship, conduct, or behavior
- Willfully, recklessly, or negligently damaging or losing equipment
- Disobeying reasonable requests or instructions made by officials or their designees

When equipment is damaged or lost through the willfully, reckless, or negligent actions of a person or team, then that person or team shall be responsible for financially reimbursing the Boston Dragon Boat Festival

3 PRACTICES-- LOCAL TEAMS (AND VISITING TEAMS WHICH ARRIVE EARLY)

3a) Location/Check in Procedures

Practices will take place at the MIT Pierce boathouse. For directions please read the registration instructions. Public parking is extremely difficult on Memorial Drive and the surrounding area. Car-pooling or public transportation is highly recommended.

No paddler is allowed on the dock until checked in which consists of the following: waiver form has been completed correctly and signature witnessed by dock staff; photocopy of their id is LEGIBLE and matched; all paddlers, including drummer/captain and steerer are present. No team will be allowed on the dock to practice with fewer than 8 paddlers. NO PHOTO COPY OF THEIR ID ON FILE, NO PRACTICE. The Team Roster will be marked with the date that they attended practice. This will help us keep track of whether they have fulfilled their required three practices. All Teams shall be advised of the rules to be followed at practice by the Dock Master.

3b) Schedule Practice

As part of the registration fee, local teams shall be granted three mandatory practices during the evenings or weekends beginning in May preceding the race. Captains may schedule a total of six practices maximum. To schedule a practice please email bostondragonboat@gmail.com with your contact information for date and time availability.

All practices shall be scheduled in sixty-minute blocks. Teams shall assemble twenty minutes prior to their scheduled practice start time. All practices shall be coordinated by the Boston Dragon Boat Festival or such persons or organizations as it may designate, and team members and teams shall follow the directions given by the Boston Dragon Boat Festival or such persons or organizations as it may designate. By the completion of its final practice, each team's captain shall either inform the Boston Dragon Boat Festival of which member(s) on its roster have been deemed qualified as Steers-persons by the Boston Dragon Boat Festival, or shall make arrangements with the Boston Dragon Boat Festival for the Boston Dragon Boat Festival to provide a Steersperson for the race.

Teams assembling with fewer than eight Paddlers plus Drummer plus Steers-person may forfeit their practice without right to rescheduling at the discretion of the Boston Dragon Boat Festival.

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4 RACES

4a) Locations

Saturday Time Trials will be at MIT's Pierce Boathouse. Map and directions on www.bostondragonboat.org

Sunday Races will take place on the Charles River starting behind the Western Ave Bridge facing the Weeks Footbridge. For a map and directions please consult www.bostondragonboat.org.

On Sunday Teams shall assemble on the Boston Side of the Charles River at the marshaling area of the Dragon Boat docks near the registration tent.

4b) Race Scheduling and Arrival Times

Saturday

Saturday Heat Schedules will be made available to Team Captains as soon as all Teams have been registered. Notification will be by email. Arrival time will be 45 minutes prior to assigned race time for registration.

Sunday

Sunday Race Schedules will be emailed to Captains as soon as possible after the compilation of Saturday's Time Trials.

The starting order for all races will be determined prior to race day by the Boston Dragon Boat Festival, and be issued to Team Captains by email. The starting order will also be posted at the marshaling area. Each race will start as soon as possible following the race preceding it, with races to be held approximately every 15 minutes.

Although the order of races shall remain constant, the start times shall be approximate. Each team must be prepared to race significantly before its estimated race time. Team Captains are responsible for monitoring the progression of the races and ensuring that their team is ready to race when called upon, regardless of the estimated start time. In its discretion, the Boston Dragon Boat Festival shall not wait for teams which are not ready to start prior to their estimated race times.

4c) Pre-Race Procedure

Teams shall report to the marshaling area at least 15 minutes prior to the estimated start time of their race. Team Captains are responsible for reporting in at marshaling area (outside yellow tape), and may accompany their teams onto the docks only when called by race officials.

Teams shall board the Dragon Boat designated to them and will proceed to the start area on instructions from the Dock Staff.

When proceeding to the start area, teams shall paddle beside the Boston shoreline up past the race official's launch, without entering into the racing lanes regardless of whether the racing lanes are in use or not. Staying in lane will help to avoid collisions and congestion when Dragon Boats turn for the start. All Dragon boats shall stay clear of powerboats even though Dragon Boats have the right of way.

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Once past the starting line, the teams shall then make broad turns to the left so that they line up in the start area back from the start line facing down their lanes. Unless otherwise directed, teams shall not venture into the river 100 meters beyond the start area. In the event of maneuvering difficulty caused by wind, the starter may direct teams to assemble in the river past the start area, and then direct the teams to approach the start area as a group.

4d) Race Procedure

The Starter shall have control of the race prior to the start. Only Steerspersons may communicate with the Starter, and such communication shall be kept to an absolute minimum.

In the Starter's discretion, without waiting for stragglers or waiting for teams which have ventured into the river above the start area, the Starter shall ask the teams to "Please approach the start line." All teams shall immediately do so, lining up in the middle of their designated lanes, facing straight down the course, not crossing the start line, and holding in position one half boat length before the starting line.

If, in the Starter's opinion, a Steersperson is not capable, the starter shall direct that that team withdraw from the race. The starter will ask each crew to bring their Dragon Boat up to, but not over the start line. The starter will instruct each team as to how to position itself, and may occasionally be assisted by the timekeeper. Once all teams are in the middle of their lanes, facing straight down the course, not moving forward, and not having crossed the start line, the Starter shall call: "Ready!" and within two seconds sound the start horn. If the start horn is not available, a voice command will be used by saying, Ready, Set, Go. Upon the word go or upon hearing the starting horn, each team shall proceed to the finish directly along the middle of its racing lane, without crossing out of its racing lane, without encroaching on the side of its racing lane, and without riding the wake of another Dragon Boat.

A false start shall be indicated by the Starter sounding the start horn a second time. Steerspersons and Drummers are responsible for noticing if a false start has been called. After a fair start, the Starter shall resume control of the race.

The Chase Boat shall follow the Dragon Boats down the course, and if necessary and where possible, direct Steerspersons to maintain the middle of their lanes. If a Dragon Boat appears to be losing directional control, is crossing out of its lane, is encroaching on the side of its lane, or is riding the wake of another Dragon Boat, the Official in the Chase boat may either stop that Dragon Boat, or any or all other Dragon Boats, so as to avoid possible collisions. If progress of a Dragon Boat is affected by another Dragon Boat, the Chase Boat Official shall either halt the race and issue a restart, or offer the offended team the opportunity to run the course again in a later heat.

If, for any reason, circumstances arise such that the Starter or the Chase Boat Official, at their discretion, determines that a race should be halted, then either official shall halt the race and issue a restart. If a Dragon Boat is not steering straight down the course, its crew shall immediately hold the Dragon Boat (jamb their paddles into the water and stop the Dragon Boat) so as to prevent the Dragon Boat from crossing out of its lane or spinning out. Restarts make take place immediately, or may be held later in the day, at the discretion of the Race Director. At the finish, the Chase Boat Official will signal a clean race by radio transmission to the Race Director. Penalties shall be reported by the Starter or Chase Boat Official to the Race Director.

4e) Post-race Procedure

Upon crossing the finish line, all teams shall turn left and proceed back to the docks, being very careful to not turn broadside into Dragon Boats still finishing. Paddlers with access to bailing buckets shall bail continuously from the finish until back at the dock. Paddlers shall not splash or otherwise deliberately bring water into the Dragon Boat. Upon arrival at the dock, each Dragon Boat must be substantially free of water and be ready for the next race.

Teams shall approach the docks at a dead slow pace so as to avoid collision damage.

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4f) Race Penalties

Teams missing the start of their race may be assessed a five second penalty or disqualified from that race. Neither the Race Director, nor the Starter is obliged to wait for tardy teams.

In all races, time penalties and restarts will be called at the Starter or Chase Boat Official's discretion:
Any Dragon Boat false starting may be penalized 2 seconds. Any Dragon Boat false starting for the second time in the same race may be penalized an additional 3 seconds.

Any Dragon Boat affecting the progress of another Dragon Boat may be penalized 5 seconds.

Any Dragon Boat crossing out of its lane but not affecting the progress of another Dragon Boat may be penalized 2 seconds. **NO WAKE RIDING!** Any Dragon Boat not obeying instructions from the Starter or Chase Boat Official shall be disqualified at their discretion. The onus is on the team, particularly the Drummer and Steers-person, to keep alert to such instructions, particularly while progressing down the course. General sanctions continue to apply in addition to race penalties.

4g) Protests

Any protest must be lodged by the Team Captain with the Race Director in writing within fifteen minutes of the conclusion of the protested race. The cost of lodging a protest is \$100, payable in cash at the time of the lodging of the protest.

The Race Director shall summon the Starter, Chase Boat Official Time Keeper, and Finish Line Judge(s).

The Race Director shall render a decision on a majority basis of the Starter, Chase Boat Official Finish Line Judge(s) and Time Keeper.

There is no appeal of the Race Committee's decision.

If the application is successful, the \$100 protest fee shall be returned to the Team Captain, and the Race Director shall admonish the Starter and Chase Boat Official with reference to twenty lashes.