



Boston Dragon Boat Festival

June 8-9, 2024

Rules of Racing

1. General

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. All rules of racing apply to both days of racing.

2. Team Composition

There are four Classifications:

1. **MIXED** - All crews in the MIXED classification must have a maximum of 10 male and 10 female paddlers, this does not include the drummer or the steersperson.
2. **WOMEN'S** – All crews in the WOMEN'S Classification must have all women paddlers.
3. **All Cancer Survivor** - All crews in the ACS Classification must have all cancer survivor paddlers. There are no minimum/maximum gender requirements for paddlers. The steersperson and drummer may or may NOT be a cancer survivor.
4. **YOUTH** - All crews in the Youth Classification must have all paddlers between the ages of 14 and 17, inclusive. There are no minimum/maximum gender requirements for paddlers. The steersperson and drummer may or may NOT be a youth.

The steersperson and drummer may be male or female on all crews.

The minimum for any crew is 16 paddlers, a drummer, and a steersperson. The maximum for any crew is 20 paddlers, a drummer, and a steersperson.

The minimum age for a participant is 14 years old.

3. Rosters

All teams may have up to **24** participants on their roster comprising of 1 Drummer, 1 Boston Dragon Boat Festival qualified Steersperson, and 22 Paddlers (includes 2 alternates).

Teams using their own steersperson must declare that person as the steersperson on their roster. If a team does not have their own steersperson then that roster spot shall be left empty.

A **paddler** may be a registered team member of more than one team only if the other team(s) is in a different division (Example divisions are ACS, Club, Collegiate, Corporate, Community, Finance, Health, University Alumni, Women, etc.)

An organization with more than one team cannot interchange paddlers among teams if they are in the same division.

Steerspeople are permitted to steer with multiple teams within the same division.

Steerspeople steering in one division may **not** also race as a paddler in the same division.

Steerspeople steering in one division may paddle in a different division.

Teams must provide their own **drummer**. The drummer must be part of the 24-person roster.

Drummers are permitted to drum with multiple teams within the same division.

Drummers in one division may **not** also race as a paddler in the same division.

Drummers in one division may paddle in a different division.

It is important to note that races will not be held up for teams cross rostering. For example, if a mixed team and a women's team share a paddler and those two teams have back-to-back races the paddler will not be allowed to race in both races if this is deemed to delay the races. This is also true for drummers and steerspeople wishing to cross roster.

Qualified Steerspeople will be made available to all teams on race days. Team captains can request a qualified Steersperson in the marshaling area.

Teams may provide their own Steersperson. By providing their own steersperson the team acknowledges that their steersperson, captain, and crew fully understands the following:

- The Steersperson is competent in controlling the boat.
- The Steersperson is in control of the boat and safety of the crew.
- The Steersperson will follow instruction from dock staff, on water referees, race starter, and Chief Race official.
- The Steersperson will respect all rules of racing.
- The Steersperson will race in the center of their lane.
- The Steersperson will avoid collisions in all scenarios, including during a race.

The Chief Official has discretion to replace any team's Steersperson with another Steersperson at any time if they decide it to be necessary.

Team Captains shall electronically submit to the Boston Dragon Boat Festival their completed roster with properly signed and dated waivers by the deadline provided. The Boston Dragon Boat Festival may accept late submission of rosters/waivers at its discretion; however, waivers must be read, understood, and signed in advance of any on-water activity. Team Captains must submit to the Boston Dragon Boat Festival final team rosters at least two weeks prior to the start date of the Boston Dragon Boat Festival.

Team Captains shall ensure all information provided is accurate. Eg: Legal name, birthdate, contact information, especially emergency contact.

4. Pre-Race Procedure

Teams shall report to the marshaling area at least **30 minutes** prior to the estimated start time of their race. Although the order of races shall remain constant, the start times shall be approximate.

Each team must be prepared to race significantly before or after its estimated race time. Team Captains are responsible for monitoring the progression of the races. Teams reporting late risk losing their opportunity to race.

When proceeding to the start area teams shall paddle beside the Boston shoreline up past the race official's launch without entering the racing lanes, regardless of whether the racing lanes are in use or not. All Dragon boats shall stay clear of powerboats, always giving them right of way.

Teams shall not venture into the river farther than 100 meters beyond the start area unless otherwise directed by the race officials.

5. Race Procedure

The Starter shall have control of the race prior to the start.

Only Steerspersons and drummers should communicate with the Starter and such communication shall be kept to an absolute minimum.

At the Starter's discretion, without waiting for stragglers or teams which have ventured into the river past 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 team to 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.

Any teams not cooperating with the starter's instructions may receive a time penalty.

Once the starter is satisfied with the alignment the starting procedure shall be **"We have alignment"**, followed by **"Attention Please"**, followed by an **air horn** or the word **"Go"**. Any team caught false starting will receive a time penalty. Time penalties will be at the discretion of the chief official. The starter may at any time change the start procedure if they deem it necessary. For example, the starter may skip the "we have alignment" and jump straight to "attention please".

Crews must race in the middle of their lane. Crews not racing in the middle of their lane may receive a time penalty from the chief official.

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 steersperson does not hear the chase boat referee this cannot be used as an excuse for not maintaining the middle of their lane. It is always the steersperson's responsibility to remain in the middle of their lane, with or without instruction from the referee.

Steerspeople must avoid collisions all cost. Any steersperson that loses control must stop their boat immediately. Failure to stop may result in time penalties and/or disqualification.

If progress of a Dragon Boat is affected by another Dragon Boat then the chief official may award a re-race or time bonus.

Drummers are required, however active drumming is not mandatory. The festival and race officials highly *recommend* that teams attempt to actively drum.

6. Protests

Any protest must be lodged by the Team Captain with the Chief Race Official in writing within twenty 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 Chief Race Official will consult with the appropriate officials and make a final decision.

If the application is successful, then the \$100 protest fee shall be returned to the Team Captain. If the protest is denied then the team captain will forfeit the \$100. Any monies not returned from the protest procedure will be given to a local charity.

7. Race Progressions

The Saturday races are all 200-meter races.

All teams will race in two back-to back qualifying races.

The average times from the back-to-back races will serve two purposes.

- a. The top four teams per division will race in a 200m final.
- b. The average times will be used to rank teams for the Sunday races.

Teams racing in a Saturday division final will race for medals (gold, silver, and bronze). The times from the Saturday division finals will NOT be used for the Sunday rankings.

The Sunday race schedule will be posted online as soon as possible after the last race on Saturday.

The Sunday races are all 500-meter races.

Based on Saturdays average times, regardless of classification or division all teams will be placed into one of five divisions (assuming there are 60 teams): A, B, C, D, and E.

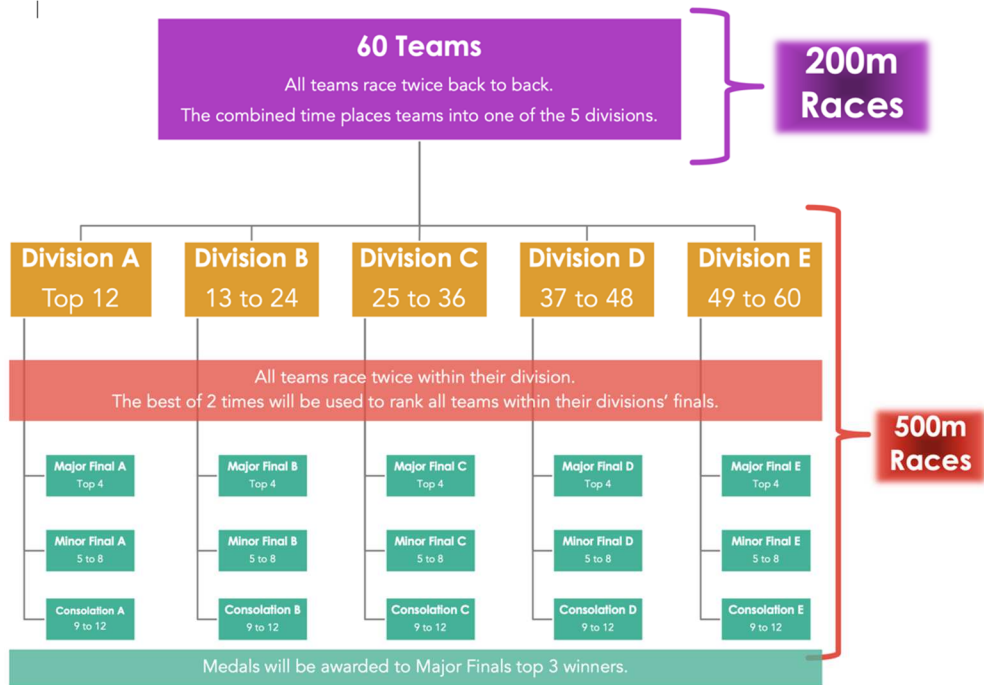
Each division will have 12 teams.

All teams will race 2 x 500m races against teams from their division.

The better of each team's time will be used to seed the finals.

The top 4 from each division will race in the Championship/Major final for medals.

The middle four and bottom four from each division will race in the Minor and Tail/Consolation finals, respectively. These races will not be for medals.



A bigger version is available at the end of this document.

8. Equipment.

The Boston Dragon Boat Festival shall provide dragon boats, paddles, drums, steering oars, and personal flotation devices (PFDs).

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

Teams may use their own PFDs at the festival. PFDs must be USCG approved. Inflatable PFDs are not allowed.

Teams may use their own IDBF approved paddles at the festival.

The drums and drumsticks will be provided by the Boston Dragon Boat Festival. Drummers wishing to use their own drumstick may have it approved by the head dock marshal.

9. Safety

Safety must be the priority at all times.

- The Steersperson is responsible for the safety of the Dragon Boat and the team.
- Dragon Boats shall give way to each other and must give way to all other persons and vessels.
- Each team member should be capable of swimming 100 meters while wearing a Personal Flotation Device. The Team Captain shall ensure that all team members can comply 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.
- 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 or lost from paddling or during capsizing. The race organizers are not responsible for ANY lost items.
- Unless absolutely 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).
- Any participant deemed not fit to race by any staff, festival committee member, or volunteer will be asked to sit out. Not deemed fit to race may include: excessive alcohol consumption, dehydration, bodily injuries, disrespecting officials, other participants or staff.
- 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.

10. 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 them, 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.

11. Etiquette

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.

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

12. Awards.

Gold, silver, and bronze medals for the top 3 teams in each Saturday division final (Example Saturday divisions are ACS, Club, Collegiate, Corporate, Community, Finance, Health, University Alumni, Women, etc.)

Gold, silver, and bronze medals for the top 3 teams in each Sunday division major final (A Major, B Major, C Major, etc.)

60 Teams
All teams race twice back to back.
The combined time places teams into one of the 5 divisions.

200m Races

Division A
Top 12

Division B
13 to 24

Division C
25 to 36

Division D
37 to 48

Division E
49 to 60

All teams race twice within their division.
The best of 2 times will be used to rank all teams within their divisions' finals.

Major Final A
Top 4

Major Final B
Top 4

Major Final C
Top 4

Major Final D
Top 4

Major Final E
Top 4

Minor Final A
5 to 8

Minor Final B
5 to 8

Minor Final C
5 to 8

Minor Final D
5 to 8

Minor Final E
5 to 8

Consolation A
9 to 12

Consolation B
9 to 12

Consolation C
9 to 12

Consolation D
9 to 12

Consolation E
9 to 12

500m Races

Medals will be awarded to Major Finals top 3 winners.