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|  | BOSTON DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL RULES & REGULATIONS  Presented by: Boston Dragon Boat Festival  www.bostondragonboat.org |

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**BOSTON DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL RULES AND REGULATIONS**

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| **ADMINISTRATION** |

**Waivers**

* All team members must sign waivers stating they have read and understand the conditions of the waiver.
* For participants 14-18 years of age, parents or guardians must also read, understand, and sign the waivers.

**Rosters**

* 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 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 two weeks prior to the start date of the Boston Dragon Boat Festival. The Boston Dragon Boat Festival may accept late submission of rosters at its discretion.
* Ensure all information provided is accurate. Ex: Legal name, birthdate, contact information, especially emergency contact.

**Dragon Boats and Equipment**

The Boston Dragon Boat Festival shall provide dragon boats, paddles, drums, and personal flotation devices (PFDs). Teams may use their own PFDs at the festival if all of the team members’ PFDs match and the teams have received approval from the Boston Dragon Boat Festival Race Director. Teams may also use their own IDBF approved paddles at the festival. All equipment borrowed shall be returned in good condition following practices and races. In the event that the Boston Dragon Boat Festival determines negligence then replacement or repair costs shall be charged to the team responsible.

The drum and drumsticks provided by the Boston Dragon Boat Festival shall be the primary way to signal the stroke rate by the drummer to their team in addition to voice commands.

**Team Guidelines**

* Teams are prohibited from conducting sales of any items due to the Commonwealth’s 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 equitable racing. If this rule is violated then it will be grounds for a team disqualification.
* Drummers and Steerspersons may race in more than one race and do not have to be on the team roster for the team which they are assisting (subject to approval by the Boston Dragon Boat Festival Race Committee).
* 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 similar team uniforms when racing (subject to review by the Boston Dragon Boat Festival Race Committee).
* A registered team member must be 18 years or older prior to the first practice session or be between the ages of 14 and 17 and have a waiver signed by their parent or guardian. Participants younger than 18 must be fitted with an age and weight appropriate PFD by their team, if the Boston Dragon Boat Festival cannot do so.
* Teams are allowed a maximum of 24 registered members, comprised of: 1 Drummer, 1 Boston Dragon Boat Festival Qualified Steersperson, and 20 Paddlers. A maximum of 20 paddlers or a minimum of 16 paddlers may race at one time. The additional 2 paddlers are to be considered alternates and may paddle as the captain wishes. If a team has less than 16 paddlers, the festival may allow the team to race at the festival’s discretion.
* Each co-ed team must compete with a maximum of 8 women paddlers and maximum of 12 men paddlers, no less than 16 people per boat.
* Each team must race with a Drummer, who will need to actively drum during the race.
* Each team must race with a Steersperson who has been deemed qualified by the Boston Dragon Boat Festival. In order to be deemed qualified a Steersperson must pass a written test and an on-the-water skills test. 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, even if that replacement is not a registered member of that team. At its discretion the Boston Dragon Boat Festival may at any time direct that a team shall cease further 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. A women's team may use a male steers-person.
* At its discretion, the Boston Dragon Boat Festival Race Committee may at any time require a check of listed crew members against the submitted team rosters.
* Teams attempting to cheat by “stacking” or “tanking” may, at the discretion of the Boston Dragon Boat Festival Race Director, face a 5 second time penalty or be disqualified immediately. Please be advised that this will be the only warning given!
* 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, subject to the discretion of the Boston Dragon Boat Festival Race Committee.
* 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 un-sportsman like 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 Race Committee
* Collecting 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. Location, date and time of the Team Captains meeting will be provided by the Boston Dragon Boat Festival before the race

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| **Safety Procedures, Emergency Procedures, and General Sanctions** |

**Application**

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

**Safety Procedures**

* The Steersperson is responsible for the safety of 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 100 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.

**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.

**General Sanctions**

At its discretion the Boston Dragon Boat Festival may assess a 5 second time penalty to a team or disqualify at any time any person or team from further practices or races for any of the following actions:

* 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

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| **PRACTICES-- LOCAL TEAMS (AND VISITING TEAMS WHICH ARRIVE EARLY)** |

**Location/Check in Procedures**

Practices will take place at the MIT Harold W. Pierce Boathouse (406 Memorial Dr, Cambridge, MA 02139). Public parking is extremely difficult on Memorial Drive and the surrounding area so car-pooling or taking public transportation to practice is highly recommended.

No paddler is allowed on the dock until checked in, which consists of the following:

* Team roster has been completed correctly
* Electronic copy of the paddler’s photo ID is LEGIBLE and matched with the roster
* All paddlers, including the drummer, captain & steersperson are present

No team will be allowed on the dock to practice with fewer than 8 paddlers.

If the festival does not have an electronic copy of a paddler’s photo ID on file then that paddler will **NOT** be allowed to practice.

The Team Roster must be marked with the date that each paddler attended practice. This will help the festival to keep track of whether all paddlers have fulfilled their required three practices.

All Teams shall be advised by the Dock Staff of the boathouse and river rules to be followed at practice.

**Schedule Practice**

As part of the registration fee local teams shall be granted six practice sessions (three mandatory) during the evenings or weekends beginning in May (dates TBA) preceding the race. Captains may schedule practices after they have completed the electronic team registration including payment. Captains may sign up for practices through an online signup system that will be announced by the festival. Captains may send email to [race@bostondragonboat.org](mailto:race@bostondragonboat.org) if they have any questions.

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 Race Committee/Dock Staff. Team members shall follow the directions given by the Boston Dragon Boat Festival Race Committee/Dock Staff. By the completion of their sixth practice each team's Captain shall either inform the Boston Dragon Boat Festival of which crew member(s) on its roster have been deemed qualified as a Steersperson by the Boston Dragon Boat Festival Race Committee/Dock Staff or shall request a Steersperson for race weekend.

Teams assembling with fewer than eight Paddlers plus a Drummer and Steersperson may forfeit their practice without the right to reschedule at the discretion of the Boston Dragon Boat Festival Race Committee.

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| **RACES** |

**Location**

Saturday Time Trials will be at the MIT Harold W. Pierce Boathouse (406 Memorial Dr, Cambridge, MA 02139).

Sunday’s races will take place on the Charles River starting behind the Western Avenue Bridge facing the John W. Weeks Footbridge. For a map and directions please consult the Boston Dragon Boat Festival website <https://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.

**Race Scheduling and Arrival Times**

**Saturday**

The Saturday Heat Schedule will be made available to Team Captains as soon as all Teams have been registered. Notification will be by email. Racing will begin in the early morning (~7:00 AM). Teams shall arrival 1-2 hour prior to their assigned race time for registration check-in and to receive their ID wrist bands. Each team will race in two-time trials back to back on Saturday.

**Sunday**

The Sunday Race Schedule will be emailed to Captains as soon as possible after the compilation of Saturday’s Time Trial results.

The starting order for all races will be determined prior to race day by the Boston Dragon Boat Festival Race Committee 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. At its discretion the Boston Dragon Boat Festival Race Committee shall not wait for teams which are not ready to start prior to their estimated race times.

**Pre-Race Procedure**

Teams shall report to the marshaling area at least 20 minutes prior to the estimated start time of their race. Team Captains are responsible for reporting in at the marshaling area and may lead their teams onto the docks only when called by the race officials. Teams shall board the Dragon Boat assigned to them and will proceed to the start area on instructions from the Race Officials/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.

Once past the starting line, the teams shall then make sharp turns to the left so that they line up in the start area back from the start line facing down their lanes. Teams shall not venture into the river farther than 50 meters beyond the start area unless otherwise directed by the race officials. 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.

**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.

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 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: “Attention please”; "Ready!" and within two seconds sound the start horn. If the start horn is not available then 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 and all other Dragon Boats, so as to avoid possible collisions. If progress of a Dragon Boat is affected by another Dragon Boat then 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 then its crew shall immediately “Hold Water” so as to prevent the Dragon Boat from crossing out of its lane or spinning out of control. Restarts may take place immediately or be held later in the day at the discretion of the Race Director. At the finish line 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.

**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.

**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 Steersperson, to keep alert to such instructions, particularly while progressing down the course. General sanctions continue to apply in addition to race penalties.

**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 then the $100 protest fee shall be returned to the Team Captain.