

# Riverfront Dragon Boat & Asian Festival Race Rules & Regulations 2023

## I. Introduction

- A. Rule of Construction  
The following rules shall be read and interpreted consistently with each other and shall be read and interpreted to foster the purpose of fair competition and sportsmanship in a safe environment.
- B. Scope of Application  
These rules shall apply to all race divisions. Each crew is entirely responsible for its own conduct and for complying with the rules provided herein.
- C. Situations not covered  
In the event the rules do not adequately cover a situation, race officials are empowered to make such decisions and instructions as are necessary to carry out their responsibilities and to affect the purpose of fair competition and sportsmanship in a safe environment.
- D. Violation of the Rules and Regulations  
Any crew member or team that fails to observe the Rules and Regulations herein may be disqualified or be assessed a penalty.

## II. Definitions - For the purpose of these Rules and Regulations, the following terms will be used:

- A. "Chief Race Official" shall mean the race official, appointed by the Event Organizer, who supervises and observes each race, records the order of finish at the finish line for each race, decides all valid protests regarding race conduct, and is the ultimate interpreter of the Rules and Regulations in conjunction with the Event Organizer whenever necessary.
- B. "Crew" shall mean any active group of paddlers, drummer, and steersperson, which has completed a team roster. The term "crew" is used interchangeably with the term "team" in the Rules and Regulations.
- C. "Crew Assembly Area" shall mean the area immediately along the dock loading area.
- D. "Crew member" shall mean any properly registered person affiliated with a crew as a paddler, drummer or steersperson.
- E. "Dockmaster" shall mean the race official, appointed by the Event Organizer, who controls the conduct of teams, crew members and Event dock staff around the Crew Assembly Area and the launching dock area.
- F. "Drummer" shall mean a properly registered crew member whose specific task is to beat the drum, has completed a mandatory waiver and is listed on a team roster. The minimum age for a drummer will be 14 and there must be specific parental permission for this position and the parent must be in the boat with the minor at all times per insurance regulations. The drummer MUST be a proficient swimmer.
- G. "Event" shall mean the Riverfront Dragon Boat & Asian Festival, held on August 19, 2023 in Hartford, Connecticut.
- H. "Event Organizer" shall mean Riverfront Recapture, with an office located in Hartford, CT.
- I. "Materially Affects" shall mean situations when the order of finish of a race has been compromised or other conditions which affect the advancement of an aggrieved crew.
- J. "Paddler" shall mean a properly registered crew member whose specific task is to propel a boat with a single bladed paddle while seated, and who has completed a mandatory waiver and is listed on a team roster.
- K. "Race Controller" shall mean the race official, appointed by the Event Organizer, who hears all protests about race conduct and provides guidance to the Chief Race Official and other race officials whenever necessary.
- L. "Race Officials" shall include the Chief Race Official, Umpires, Starter, Dockmaster, and the Race Controller.
- M. "Starter" shall mean the race official, appointed by the Event Organizer, who controls the conduct of teams and crew members at the start line, brings the teams to the start line, and calls the start of each heat.
- N. "Starting Area" shall mean the area between the start line and 50 meters behind the start line.
- O. "Steersperson" shall mean a properly registered crew member or one appointed by the Race

- Organizer whose specific task is to steer and maneuver a boat with a steering oar, and who has completed a mandatory waiver and is listed on a team roster or assigned by the Race Organizer.
- P. "Umpire" shall mean the race official, appointed by the Event Organizer, who follows the boats down the racing course and records any violations of the Rules and Regulations during the course of the heat.
- Q. "Unsportsmanlike conduct" shall include, but not limited to, failure to heed the instructions of race officials, use of obscene language or gestures, delaying a race without valid justification, intentional or flagrant disregard of principles of safety and fairness, or abusive behavior toward any race official, crew member, Event Organizer and its employees, or spectator.

### III. **Safety and Fair Conditions - General: The Event Organizer and race officials are committed to minimizing risks and maintaining a safe environment for practices and races for all crew members.**

- A. **Swimming Requirement:** Crew members must be able to swim at least 50 meters while wearing light clothing. It is the responsibility of the crew to ensure that all crew members comply with this rule.
- B. **Personal Flotation Device (PFD):** Personal flotation devices (PFDs) are required at all ERDBA events. PFDs will be available to all crew members and must be worn as intended by the manufacturer at all times. The guidelines of the IDBF regarding acceptable PFDs will be followed. **The waist versions that inflate on contact with water are not acceptable for dragon boat racing due to safety concerns.**
- C. **Jumping Off Boat:** At no time shall crew members jump off the boat. Such behavior shall result in disqualification of the offending crew.
- D. **Rescue Procedure:** In the event a boat capsizes on water, the affected crew members are required to stay close to the boat and wait for a rescue boat to arrive. No one should attempt to swim ashore. Crew members should attempt to keep the boat from capsizing but only if it can be done safely.
- E. **Unsafe Weather Conditions:** In the event of lightning, all crews on the water must return to the launching dock area and follow the instructions of race officials and Event dock staff. If a race is in progress, the Starter or Umpires will sound the horn twice to signify the stoppage of the race and instruct all competing crews to return to the launching dock area.
- F. **Regulatory Preemption:** These rules concerning safety should not be construed as authority over and above requirements necessitated by regulatory agencies.

### IV. **Team and Crew Member Registration**

- A. All entry fees are non-refundable should the crew decide to withdraw from the race or should the race be canceled for reasons beyond the Event Organizer's control.
- B. **Registration Process:** Team Captains must register online. Team members must also register online including the submission of waivers. Team Registrations must be complete by July 21, 2023.
- C. **Team Roster:** Only crew members listed on the team roster and team registration shall be permitted to race on the team. Team Rosters must be electronically submitted by July 30, 2023.
- D. **Cross-Rostering**  
**Club Teams: Each paddler shall be registered under the name of only one team within each Division.** Divisions are as follows:
- Club Mixed Division
  - Club Women's Division (Female Only)
  - Club All Cancer Paddlers
  - Club Breast Cancer Paddlers
- Paddler may cross roster to a different Division **within their Club.** You may not race for another club's team.
- Boats will not be held for any paddler that is not present at the time of embarking for a heat.
- Team must ensure cross-rostering does not conflict with the race schedule.

- Club paddlers may not compete for any other Club.
- A steersperson and drummer may steer or drum for more than one team but must ensure it does not conflict with the race schedule.
- A steersperson or drummer may not paddle for any other team in their race Division.
- Any paddler rostered on a Club Team may not cross-roster to a Community Team.**

**Community Team:**

- Any paddler rostered to a Community Team may cross-roster to a Club Team.
- A drummer may drum for more than one team but must ensure it does not conflict with the race schedule.

- E. Credentials: **On the race date, you may be required to present identification and will be issued wristbands based on your male/female registration status. Wristbands are non-transferable and must be worn at all times during the Event.**
- F. Right of Refusal: The Event Organizer reserves the right to refuse entry to any crew in the race at its sole discretion.

**V. Divisions and Crew Composition**

**\*\*Club teams competing for ERDBA must comply with the ERDBA rules.**

Club teams may carry up to 20 paddlers and have a minimum of 16 paddlers. Team rosters may not exceed 26 members consisting of 24 paddlers, one steersperson, and one drummer. Each team member and drummer must be at least 14 years of age. Steersperson must be over the age of 18. Anyone under the age of 18 MUST have parent in the boat with them at all times per insurance regulations.

1. **Club Mixed teams** - must contain no more than (10) male paddlers, Any number of female paddlers, (1) drummer, and (1) steersperson.
2. **Club Women's teams** - All paddlers and drummer in the boat must be female. Steersperson is the only person that may be any gender on the roster.
3. **Club Breast Cancer Paddlers-** Roster must only contain persons who have been diagnosed with breast cancer either currently or in the past. (Family members/supporters are prohibited from participating in this division. Teams that include supporters will register in Club Mixed Division.) Club teams competing for ERDBA must comply with ERDBA rules.
4. **Club All Cancer Paddlers** - All paddlers and drummer of all genders who have been diagnosed with any type of cancer, either currently or in the past. (Family members/supporters are prohibited from participating in this division. Teams that include supporters must register in Club Mixed Division.) Club teams competing for ERDBA must comply with ERDBA rules.

B. Community Teams must be based out of **Connecticut only.**

- Rosters may contain up to 26 members consisting of 24 paddlers, (one steersperson if you choose) and one drummer. A professional steersperson will be provided to you.
- Boat may carry up to 20 paddlers and must have a minimum of 16 paddlers to race + a drummer
- **Boat may have a maximum of 10 male paddlers, any number of female paddlers**
- The drummer must be listed on the official roster.
- Each team member and drummer must be at least 14 years of age. If you choose to use your own Steersperson, they must be over the age of 18.
- Anyone under the age of 18 MUST have parent in the boat with them at all times per insurance regulations.
- Team registration includes (2) pre-race day practices.

- VI. Waivers: All crew members must sign an electronic waiver. All crew members must submit their individual electronic waiver prior to the start of their first practice session.**
- VII. ERDBA "peer checking" protocols should be followed for ERDBA teams seeking to "qualify" this event towards their eligibility for upcoming ERDBA regionals.**
- VIII. Marshaling, Embarking and Proceeding to Start.**
- A. Reporting to the Marshaling Area: A crew must assemble in the Marshaling Area 45 minutes before the scheduled race time.
  - B. Lane & Boat Assignments: The Dockmaster or other race official shall provide the lane and boat assignment for each team prior to a race. Teams may not request changes to lane assignments or boats.
- IX. Embarking: After a crew has boarded a boat, it must leave the launching dock area and proceed directly to the starting area, and must not cross or travel in the racing lanes, obstruct the path of competing crews or accompanying launches, cause a wash, or otherwise interfere with a race in progress or about to be in progress.**
- A. Approaching the Start; Warm-up on the Course:
    - 1. No crew shall enter the starting area until the previous race has cleared and unless explicitly permitted to do so by the Starter or Umpires.
    - 2. No crew shall practice on the course during the time when racing is in progress without permission of the Starter or Umpires.
    - 3. All teams must be at the start line 3 minutes prior to the start of the race.
  - B. Substitutions of Crew Member: Once a boat has embarked, no substitutions or changes to the crew roster may be permitted for the assigned race.
- X. Starting Procedure: It is the responsibility of each team captain to make sure that each crew member is familiar with the starting procedure before the start of all races. Crews in the starting area must obey the instructions of the Starter, Umpires, and other race officials under the control of the Starter.**
- A. Crew Responsibility: Crews must take up their correct positions in the Starting Area in accordance to their lane assignments. It is the responsibility of the crew and not the Starter, umpires, or other race officials to maintain its correct position before the start. It is the responsibility of the Steersperson to watch the Starter and Umpire and to instruct the crew to follow the directions of the Starter and Umpire.
  - B. Starting Line: The starting line will be marked by buoys on the water. The buoy closest to the launching dock area (west side of the river) is lane 1 and the buoy on farthest from the west bank of the river is lane 5.
  - C. Alignment: Before the start, the Starter shall cause the bows of all boats to be aligned with the plane of the starting line. If wind or other conditions make alignment difficult, the Starter shall use his or her best judgment to determine when alignment is as correct as possible under the circumstances.

#### D. Start

1. When the Starter is satisfied that the crews are correctly aligned, the Starter will alert all crews by stating "we have alignment....are you ready?" (this is the last chance for drummer or steerer to object)... "attention, please" ...horn (vary within 1 to 5 seconds) A horn will then be sounded to signify the start of the race.
2. If a crew is observed by the Starter or the Umpire to have moved paddles after "attention, please" has been called and before the sounding of the horn, the Starter shall raise a red flag and shall sound the horn twice, at which point, all crews must stop paddling and return to the start line for realignment. The offending crew shall be given a warning for jumping the start.
3. If a crew is not ready when the Starter warns, "attention, please" the drummer must fully extend both arms above the drummer's head to attract the Starter's attention. No crew shall be permitted to take such action in any other circumstance.
4. False Start: A crew commits a false start when its bow crosses the plane of starting line before the Starter's horn sounds. More than one crew may be assessed a false start at the same time. In the event of a false start, the Starter shall sound the horn twice and raise a red flag. Umpires shall intercept the boats and instruct them to return to the starting line. Any crew that fails to immediately return to the starting line after the Starter has called a false start shall be (i) given a warning, (ii) excluded from competing in the re-race, or (iii) assessed a time penalty of five (5) seconds by the Chief Race Official to be added to the offending crew's finishing time for the re-race. Once the crews have returned, the Starter shall announce the identity of the crew(s) that committed the false start and assess a warning upon the offending crew(s). A crew that receives two warnings, including false starts, applicable to the same race shall be excluded from the re-race.

#### E. Equipment Failure After Start:

1. Within 50 meters - If a crew experiences equipment failure after the race has started and up to fifty (50) meters from the start line, the race shall be restarted provided that the affected crew stops paddling immediately and both the paddlers and the drummer fully extend their arms above their heads. The Starter or Umpire shall then raise a red flag and sound the horn twice, at which point, all crews must return to the Start line for realignment. If the equipment failure is deemed to have been the result of failure to inspect the equipment the offending crew will be assessed a warning. Equipment failure does not include broken paddles.
2. Beyond 50 meters - In the event that unforeseen circumstances materially affect the outcome of a race, the Chief Race Official, Starter or Umpires may interrupt the race and order a re-race, order a timed run with only the crews affected, or take such action as is necessary to restore the aggrieved crew's fair opportunity of winning.

- F. Unsportsmanlike Conduct: Any conduct that gives a crew a material advantage, which in the opinion of the race officials violates the purpose of the Rules and Regulations, may be assessed a time penalty of two (2) to five (5) seconds.

### XI. Race Conduct

- A. A Crew's Water: The proper course for each boat is a straight line from its starting position to a corresponding point on the finish line with at least two (2) meters of clear water between itself and the adjacent boat(s). Clear water will be measured by the distance between the paddles of adjacent boats. Each boat must remain in its allocated lane and must not interfere with other boats. Each crew is responsible for its own steering.

1. Impedance - Crews shall be assessed a five (5) second penalty or disqualified, if they deviate from their racing lanes or impede other racing crews on the water which materially affects the results of the race. The Chief Race Official may also take such action as is necessary to restore the aggrieved crew's fair opportunity of winning.
  2. Collision - In the event a lane violation results in a collision between two or more boats and it materially affects the result of the race, the Chief Race Official, Starter, or Umpire may order one or more boats to re-race the race, with or without the offending crew. If, in the opinion of the umpire, a crew could have avoided the collision by following the umpire's instructions to alter its path (within its assigned lane) or a crew initiated a collision by steering into a boat veering off its path, the Chief Race Official may disqualify the offending crew(s) or assess a time penalty on the offending crew(s). The Chief Race Official may also take such action as is necessary to restore the aggrieved crew's fair opportunity of winning.
- B. Umpires' Instructions: Umpires shall follow racing crews and warn crews that are not in its assigned racing lane or is impeding the course of another racing crew. Crews shall obey the umpires' instructions at the risk of penalty or disqualification. If a crew fails to respond to instructions, the Umpires may identify and order the offending crew to stop paddling. Umpires may instruct a non-offending crew to stop paddling if it is necessary to prevent a collision.
- C. Interference: Interference shall consist of physical contact with another crew (including clashing of paddles), washing another crew, or failing to observe two meters of clear water between boats. It shall not be interference if a crew is washed or obstructed while paddling outside its own water. A crew that leaves its own water does so at its own risk.
- D. Deliberate Swamping or Capsizing: If, in the opinion of the race officials, a boat has been swamped or capsized deliberately by the crew, the Event Organizer reserves the right to disqualify and refuse such crew's entry in the Event and future Events. A penalty of \$500 may be imposed on the team.
- E. Deliberate Destruction of Boat: If, in the opinion of the race officials, a boat is damaged deliberately by the crew, the Event Organizer reserves the right to impose a penalty of \$5,000 on the offending crew. The Event Organizer also reserves the right to require the offending crew to pay for the costs of repairs to the damaged boat and the right to disqualify the offending crew from this year's Event and future Events.
- F. Wake Riding/Hang Washing: Any instance of a crew riding the bow wave created by another boat in order to gain an unfair advantage will result in a time penalty of two (2) to five (5) seconds.
- G. Overtaking: When a crew is overtaking a crew ahead of it, the overtaking crew must provide two (2) meters of clear water between itself and the adjacent boats. When a crew is being overtaken by an advancing boat, it must not block or interfere with the path of the overtaking crew.
- H. Drumming: Drummers must be seated in the drum seat at all times during the course of a race. Drumming is an essential part of dragon boat racing. Once beyond 50 meters from the starting line, drummers must continuously beat the drum (leathered top of the drum) with their drum sticks until the end of the race.
- I. Paddling Technique: Only a seated paddling technique is permitted during the course of a race. No paddler is permitted to paddle while standing or kneeling.
- J. Unsportsmanlike Conduct: A crew that engages in unsportsmanlike conduct on the water may be assessed a penalty by the Chief Race Official.

## **XII. The Finish**

- A. Finish Line: Like the starting line, the finish line will be marked by buoys on the water.
- B. Order of Finish:
1. A crew has finished the race when the foremost part of its dragon head touches the plane of the finish line. It is recommended that all crews paddle beyond the finish line. (The official finish line is designated by the Chief Race Official).
  2. The finishing order of a race and the time taken by each boat will be determined by the Chief Race Official whose decision shall be final unless a protest has been filed.
  3. Dead Heats - In the rare event of a dead heat, that is, when the Chief Race Official determines that two or more boats finish the race simultaneously, the Chief Race Official shall order a re-race with the crews involved in the dead heat. If a crew refuses to re-race, the Chief Race Official shall award the higher place being contested to the other crew, and may exclude the refusing crew from re-racing the course. If a re-race is not possible due to the racing schedule, the Chief Race Official may allow crews involved in the dead heat to advance in the heat.
- C. Disembarking:
1. Once crews have passed the finish line, all crews must return immediately to the launching dock area and disembark promptly.
  2. All Club Crews advancing to the final and the top three finishers in finals may have their identification checked.

**XIII. Protests and Penalties - Only matters that materially affect the outcome of a race in which the aggrieved crew participated shall be subject to protest.**

A. Lodging a Protest: *A \$75 CASH Protest Fee will be assessed for all Protests. If the protest is confirmed, the fee will be waived. If the protest is denied, the \$75 fee will be assessed and the team will be charged.*

1. A crew wishing to lodge a protest against another crew or the race results must lodge the protest with the Chief Race Official within 15 minutes after the race results have been posted.
2. The protest, together with the reports of the Starter, Umpires, and other race officials will be considered by at least two members of the Jury, which shall be comprised of the Chief Race Official and another race official.
3. Protests regarding equipment failure will be heard but will unlikely result in an overturning of the race result because crews have the ultimate responsibility to check the quality and the integrity of all equipment before embarking.

B. Penalties:

1. Warning - A crew that receives two warnings applying to the same race shall be disqualified from the race. A false start shall have the same effect as a warning. Warnings applicable to the original race shall apply to a re-race.
2. Disqualification - A crew that is disqualified shall be removed from the race, which may or may not affect the crew's ability to advance. Disqualifications may apply to individual crew members as well.
3. Time Penalties - A crew that is assessed a time penalty shall have time added to its race result. Time penalties can range from 2 seconds to 5 seconds.

**XIV. Equipment**

- A. Use of personal equipment: Paddlers may use their own PFD's and/or paddles as long as they comply with IDBF standards and abide by the rules and regulations.
- B. Allocation of Equipment: All boats, oars, drums, drum sticks, and water bailers, used by crew members shall be provided by the Event Organizer.
- C. Modifications or Alterations: No modifications or additions to the boat or equipment may be made by any crew.
- D. Returning Equipment: All boats, drums, PFDs and any other equipment used during the practice sessions and races must be returned to the Event Organizer.
- E. Drumming Equipment: Only the drum and drum sticks provided shall be used to signal the stroke rate. Whistles, rattles, air horns or any other noise making devices are prohibited from use in practice or races.
- F. Extra Paddles: All boats will permitted to have one extra paddle.
- G. Water Bailers: The Event Organizer will provide each boat two hand-held bailers with which water within a boat can be removed. No other equipment for removing water from the boat, including but not limited to pumps and foreign bailers, is permitted.
- H. Electrical Devices: Cox boxes are permitted provided they do not delay the flow of the race.
- I. Seating Pads and Knee Pads: Seating pads and knee pads are permitted on a boat.
- J. Gloves, Tape and Wax: Crew members may wear gloves. Tape and wax are permitted but must not be affixed to or leave a residue on the paddles or the boat seats.
- K. Foreign Substances: Except noted above, no external devices shall be used during the race other than the equipment provided by the Event Organizer.

## **XV. Prizes**

- (1) Division Championship Finals
  - (a) 1<sup>st</sup> GOLD MEDAL
  - (b) 2<sup>nd</sup> SILVER MEDAL
  - (c) 3<sup>rd</sup> BRONZE MEDAL
  
- (2) Community Division Consolation TBD

***Information contained in this document is subject to change – Updated August 2023***