

# Major League Dragon Boat Rules of Racing

2026

## Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	3
1. SCOPE.....	3
2. CONTROL OF THE COMPETITION .....	3
3. DUTIES OF THE RACE OFFICIALS .....	3
4. THE COURSE.....	5
5. THE CREW .....	5
6. CONDUCT OF CREWS .....	6
7. MARSHALLING/EMBARKING .....	7
8. STARTS AND STARTING PROCEDURES .....	7
9. RACE CONDUCT .....	9
10. FINISHES.....	11
11. DISPUTES, PROTESTS, DISQUALIFICATIONS, AND APPEALS.....	121
12. RACING RULES FOR DRAGON BOAT RACES 2000 METRES AND MORE .....	12
13. ADDITIONAL AND MISCELLANEOUS EQUIPMENT.....	16
14. REGISTRATION .....	17
15. AWARDS.....	17
16. MULTI DISTANCE RACE POINTS .....	18
17. COMPETITION REGULATIONS .....	19

## INTRODUCTION

The Rules of Racing have been developed for use in Major League Dragon Boat series events. Where appropriate, the MLDB Rules of Racing mirror the Rules of Racing as formulated by Dragon Boat Canada (DBC) and International Dragon Boat Federation (IDBF).

The purpose of each rule is to ensure that all competitors have an equal opportunity and a safe environment in which to compete. In applying and interpreting the rules or when confronted by a novel situation not covered by the rules, every effort should be made to apply this principle.

All IDBF Rules apply to all MLDB events unless specifically noted within this document. In case of conflict, the present IDBF rules prevail.

### 1. SCOPE

1.1. These Rules are for use at Major League Dragon Boat series events.

### 2. CONTROL OF THE COMPETITION

2.1. Race Officials: Series events will be held under the supervision of the following Race Officials:

Event Director  
Chief Official  
Timer  
Referee  
Starter  
Head Marshall

2.2. If circumstances permit, one person may function in two Race Official roles.

2.3. The Chief Official, in collaboration with the other Race Officials, shall:

- Conduct and supervise the races;
- Postpone or reschedule races in the event of inclement weather or unforeseen circumstances that make it impossible for the competition to take place;
- Hear any protests and settle any disputes between crews;
- Decide on all matters concerning the Rules of Racing, including any infraction of the Rules.

2.4. Jury: At MLDB events, the final authority relating to the Rules of Racing shall rest with the Race Jury. This Jury shall consist of a minimum of three (3) and up to a maximum of five (5) members as appointed by the Chief Official. Members of the Race Jury will only include Race Officials.

### 3. DUTIES OF THE RACE OFFICIALS

3.1. Chief Official: The Chief Official shall act as the Chairman of the Competition Committee.

The Chief Official shall:

- Observe and supervise the races and ensure that the Race Program is followed and runs to time.
- Fully brief all Race Officials before the start of the competition regarding their duties.
- Decide on all matters arising from the actual event as they relate to the Rules of Racing.
- Disqualify any crew or competitor who behaves improperly or shows contempt by bad conduct or speech towards the Race Officials or any other persons, including spectators. The Chief Official or Event Director shall make contact.

3.2 Timer: Organize the Finish and shall record the order of the boats crossing the Finish Line independently.

The Timer shall:

- Operate photo-finish equipment to record finish order and times.
- Record times by means of electronic timing systems or in their absence, stopwatches.
- Before each race, ensure that the timing devices are set and in working order.
- Begin timing on a signal from the Starter. At least two stopwatches or electronic devices shall time each race.
- Compare the times recorded by each timing device, at the end of each race.
- Notify the Chief Official of the agreed times. In the event of a time not being recorded, then this will be shown in the results as No Time (NT). The time recorded for a crew is secondary information and shall have no effect on the finish order of a race. In events where advancement is determined by time, a crew without a recorded time must re-run the race to record a time for advancement.

3.3 Starter: The Starter is directly responsible for the efficiency of the starting facilities and procedures in conjunction with the Referee. The Starter shall resolve all questions concerning the start of a race and shall inform the crews of their Racing Lanes in accordance with the Race Program.

The Starter shall:

- Communicate with the Chief Official before starting a race to confirm that all is ready at the Finish. When this confirmation is received, the Starter shall call the boats to their places on the Start Line.
- Check that the starting gun or other starting device is in good working order before carrying out the starting procedures in accordance with the Rules of Racing.

3.4 Referee: When the boats are in the Starting Area, the Referee shall be responsible for checking each crew's attire, the number of competitors in each boat, and each Dragon Boat's number. The Referee will ensure that the composition of the crews is correct, for example, the number of females in a Mixed Crew.

The Referee shall:

- Bring the boats to the Start Line, when they are called forward by the Starter
- Raise a red flag or provide verbal communication to Race Officials immediately in the event of a false start.

- Show a white flag or provide a verbal all clear to Race Officials, at the end of the race if there is no infraction of the Rules. If there is an infraction of the Rules, a red flag must be shown and the circumstances reported to the Chief Official.

3.5 When a race is run on a course with one or more Turning Points, at least one Referee should be stationed at each Turning Point. Ideally any infractions of the Rules occurring at the Turning Points shall be reported to the Chief Official immediately following the last boat completing the race.

## 4 THE COURSE

4.1 Water Depth: The target depth of water at MLDB events should be a minimum of three (3) meters across all the Racing Lanes, on a site where the bed of the Racing Course is proven to be uniform throughout, that is, not more than 0.5-meter variance across the Racing Lanes. Where the course bed is uneven, then the ideal depth of the Racing Lanes should ideally be five (5) meters up to a maximum of 6.5 meters.

4.2 Race Distance: Race Distances at MLDB events can be 200, 500, and 2000 meters. Other distances may be added.

4.3 Course markers: Buoys of alternating colours shall mark the Start and Finish Lines.

Racing Lanes shall consist of visible buoys in a straight line corresponding to the colour of the Start and Finish Line buoys, in intervals of no more than 100 meters down the length of the race course.

## 5 THE CREW

5.1 Crews can consist of up to a maximum of 26 people. A Crew Roster includes one (1) steerperson, one (1) drummer, twenty (20) paddlers, and four (4) alternate paddlers. A crew cannot substitute a steerperson or a drummer on a Roster in order to have more than the allotted 24 paddlers.

5.2 Race Classes at MLDB events refer to: Mixed, Open, and Women. Race Divisions at MLDB events refer to: Premier, Sport, Community, University, Junior, Breast Cancer Paddler, All Cancer Paddler, Paradrasons. Crews are divided into Divisions and Classes. For example, Sport Women Division or Premier Mixed Division.

5.3 Crew composition for Race Classes is as follows:

- Mixed Crew: A Mixed crew can have a maximum of 10 male paddlers. The drummer and steerperson can be either male or female.
- Open Crew: Any combination of men, women, non-binary, gender fluid, gender non-conforming and gender queer paddlers.
- Women's Crew: All paddlers in the boat must be female. The steerperson and drummer can be either male or female.
- Breast Cancer Paddler Crew: All paddlers in the boat and drummer must be breast cancer survivors. The steerperson can be either male or female.
- All Cancer Paddler Crew: All paddlers and drummer of all genders who are survivors of any type of cancer.
- Paradrasons/Disabled Veterans Crew: Comprised of athletes with some form of physical, psychological, neurological, sensory, developmental, or intellectual impairment. Various

disabilities that may include: limb loss, limb loss of use, spinal cord injury, visual impairment, hearing impairment, PPSD, and neuro muscular diseases such as MS or Parkinson).

5.4 Divisions are defined as follows:

- Premier: Applicable to all crews where there is no differentiation between Sport and Community.
- Sport: Applicable to crews that participate in three (3) or more festivals per year.
- Community: Applicable to crews that participate in less than three (3) festivals per year.
- University: Applicable to crews where all members are current university students.
- Junior: Applicable to crews where all members are in middle school or high school.

5.5 All crew members must sign a waiver before participating in each event and must wear a MLDB issued wristband with the assigned team number clearly displayed, at all times.

5.6 Paddlers may race on only one team in a Racing Class within a Division.

5.7 Steerspeople and drummers may steer/drum on multiple teams within a division of a race class, but can only paddle on one team in the division.

5.8 If a paddler is on two teams, each of which is in a different and/or class division, the Event has no obligation to ensure they are not racing in back-to-back races or when three sets of boats used, paddling within two races. These are referred to as conflicts. It is the team's responsibility to have a substitute listed on the roster of 26.

5.9 If any member of the crew has a conflict, under absolutely no circumstances is the crew member to transfer from one boat to another on the water. The Chief Official has the discretion to disqualify the team or have the offending crew member removed from the boat and not replaced.

## 6 CONDUCT OF CREWS

6.1 Crews must follow the directions of the Race Officials at all times during the competition. Failure to do so may result in the disqualification of the competitor or crew concerned.

6.2 Any crew or competitor who attempts to win a race by other than honorable means, or who deliberately breaks the Rules of Racing, or who disregards the honorable nature of the rules shall face disqualification from the competition.

6.3 It is forbidden, during a race, for crews to receive outside help, or coaching, or be accompanied by other boats along the course, even outside the Racing Lanes. Such acts will result in disciplinary action being taken against the crew(s) concerned.

6.4 Position in Boat: Once a crew has embarked, all paddlers and the drummer will be seated on the seats provided. All racing will be done with paddlers and drummer seated in the boat. Paddlers and drummer will remain seated until they return to the dock to disembark.

6.5 Any participant, groups, organizations, vendors, and institutions must not contain any obscene or indecent, political, religious, racial discrimination or violate laws and regulations during the activities hosted by GWN, and partner event organizers. GWN and its partner event organizers have reserved the rights to terminate relevant abnormal behaviors and activities during the event.

## 7 MARSHALLING/EMBARKING

7.1 Crew Responsibility: It is a crew's responsibility to ensure that the dragon boat and its equipment are fully functional and water-worthy. Boats and equipment must be carefully checked before embarking. GWN Dragon Boat cannot be held responsible for any boat or equipment failure once a crew has embarked and left the Boat Marshalling area.

7.2 Paddle Breakage/Equipment Failure: Crews are advised to carry two (2) spare paddles, of the approved design for the event, in each dragon boat they use during the competition. Paddles may not be strapped to any racer. These may be used only in the event that a paddle breakage occurs during a race. If any other equipment failure happens within fifty (50) meters of the Start Line, the Starter or Referee will call a re-start.

7.3 Marshalling: Crews must report to Marshalling and be ready to embark at the time stated in the race schedule. This will normally be 20-30 minutes before the race time. Race Officials in the Marshalling Area may carry out crew identity checks and competitors must, if so checked, be able to produce government issued or National Dragon Boat Governing Body issued ID on request. Failure to do so may result in the disqualification of the competitor concerned from that competition class, at the Chief Official's discretion.

7.4 Boats: Crews are not permitted to supply their own boat. The event organizers will provide all boats and crews will race in the boat assigned to the crew for that race.

7.5 Embarking: When called forward to Boat Marshalling, crews must embark in accordance with the instructions of the Boat Marshals, who will ensure that each crew is embarked in the boat allocated to them in the Racing Lane draw.

7.6 Movement up the Course: After a crew has embarked, it must leave the boarding area immediately and proceed directly to the Start Area. En-route crews must keep clear of the Racing Lanes and must not interfere with a race that is in progress. This includes moving down the course during a race until the crews racing have passed by.

7.7 Changes to Crew Members: Once a crew has embarked and left the boarding area, changes of crew members or additions to the number of racers in the boat will not be permitted unless expressly agreed to by the Chief Marshall, before the boat leaves the boarding area. Such changes shall be by exception and do not include the changeover or addition of racers due to lateness or unexplained absence.

## 8 STARTS AND STARTING PROCEDURES

8.1 Start Area: It is the Crew Captain's responsibility to make sure that each crew member is familiar with the starting procedures. All crews shall assemble behind the Start Line, or in a designated Start Area, at least three (3) minutes before their Start Time. No later than two (2) minutes before the actual start time, the crews will be called forward and placed into Racing Lanes, by the Starter or Boat Holder, in accordance with the published Lane Draw.

8.2 Late Arrivals: The Starter may warn a crew arriving late in the Start Area and if such a warning is given, it shall have the same effect as one given for a False Start, for that race. The Starter may choose

to award a Time Penalty of up to five (5) seconds to any crew arriving late in the Start Area, or for failing to come up to the Start Line when called. The Starter may start a race without reference to absentees.

8.3 Racing Lane: A crew must race in the lane allocated to its boat. In the event that only one boat remains at the start of a scheduled race, that crew will be required to paddle the course to register a qualifying time for participation in subsequent rounds.

8.4 Starting Position: The position of the dragon boats on the Start Line shall be that the foremost part of the competing boats (which may include the dragon's head) shall be aligned. When races start from a dock, Boat Holders shall hold the sterns of the boats. When a "held" start is not possible, then a "free" start may be permitted.

8.5 Boat Holding: When available, Boat Holders will alter the position of the dragon boats in accordance with the Starter's or Referee's instructions by physically moving the boats or by adjusting the length of rope available to the Steersperson.

A crew may assist in this aligning by moving the boat using their paddles to position the boat on the Start Line, however once the Starter has alerted the crews then all movement of paddles in the water must stop. If the Starter or any Official observes movement of a crew's paddles in or on the water, the Chief Official shall give a Time Penalty, as for "Jumping the Start".

8.6 Drummer Signals: Once the boat has approached the Start Line, a Drummer may raise a hand over his head to alert the Starter that his crew has lost positioning. The Starter may allow re-positioning to occur at the Starter's discretion. *Note: this is a deviation from the IDBF Rules. Crews racing internationally should make themselves aware of the IDBF process. See the IDBF document Rules & Regulations R6.6*

8.7 Starter's Commands: When the Starter is satisfied that all the boats are correctly aligned, the Starter shall alert the crews by saying "Are You Ready?" or "All Boats Hold".

8.8 Starting Signals: When the Starter is satisfied that all crews are ready, the starting procedure will begin with the word "ATTENTION" followed by the word "GO" (or sound signal). The Boat Holder (if used) will release the stern of the boats or the Steersperson the ropes as appropriate.

The word "GO" may be replaced by a gunshot, electronic starting signal or other distinct sound, as specified in the Race Program. The interval between the words "ATTENTION" and "GO" (or sound signal) shall not exceed five (5) seconds.

8.9 False Starts: If a crew starts after the word "ATTENTION" and before the word "GO", it has made a False Start. Referee, or Starter shall indicate a False Start by raising a red flag.

The Starter shall immediately recall the crews by shouting "STOP", "STOP", "STOP", or by a second gunshot.

8.9.1 Course Officials: When the Race Officials are in a safety or official's boat, it shall be placed 50 meters down the Racing Course from the Start Line. On seeing the Red Flag or on hearing the recall signal, the Course Officials boat will cross the course in front of the competing boats and a Course Official will wave a red flag. This will continue until all the boats have come to a stop.



8.9.1.1 If a boat for the Race Officials is not available, then a Referee shall stand on the side of the Racing Course, adjacent to Lane 1 and on seeing the red flag at the Start, or on hearing the recall, a Course Official shall also wave a red flag to attract the attention of the competing crews and with the aid of a megaphone, the Referee will shout "STOP".

8.9.2 Drummer's Task: It is the Drummer's responsibility to watch the Officials and to instruct the crew to STOP when a False Start has been called.

8.9.3 Penalties: Once all the crews have returned to the Starting Area, the Starter will identify the crew or crews responsible for the False Start. The Starter, at their discretion, will give the crew a warning, exclude them from the race, or alternatively award a Time Penalty.

8.10 Jumping the Start: When a crew 'Jumps the Start', which for the purpose of the Rules of Racing, means that a crew has anticipated the Starter's word of Command GO to the extent that a 'False Start' cannot be called but in the opinion of the Starter a material advantage has been gained by the crew or crews, concerned over the others, the Starter may award 'Time Penalties' of from two (2) up to a maximum of five (5) seconds against the crew or crews in question.

8.11 Damage to Boats at the Start: If a crew, whilst in the Starting Area indicates to Race Officials before being called forward to the Start Line, that it has suffered damage to its boat or equipment, the Starter may delay the race for a maximum of five (5) minutes to allow for necessary repairs.

8.12 Equipment Failure off the Start: In the event of a crew experiencing equipment failure for example a broken Drummer's Seat or steering arm/oar (but not a paddle), off the start and up to fifty (50) meters after it, the race will be restarted, providing the crew concerned stops paddling immediately and both the paddlers and the Drummer raise their arms fully in the air. In this case the Starter will carry out the same procedures as for a False Start and when possible the Course Officials/Safety Boat will proceed quickly down the course and stop any crews who may not have heard the recall signal.

8.13 Recall by Race Officials: The Referee may interrupt a correctly started race, if unforeseen circumstances occur, for example, adverse conditions in one or more Racing Lanes resulting in boats being inadvertently swamped, or a collision between two boats, caused by the water conditions, or the breakage of a steering arm/oar that materially affects the whole race. This shall be done in the same manner as for a False Start (even if the competing boats are more than 50 meters from the Start Line). In such circumstances the Chief Official may order a re-run of the race, even to the extent of timed runs down one lane, if time permits, or if it does not a count back of the previous times recorded during the competition by the crew or crews concerned.

## 9 RACE CONDUCT

9.1 Correct Course and Clear Water: The correct course for each boat is down the race course within the marked Racing Lane, from the Start Line to the Finish Line. Crews are responsible for their steering and for leaving their Racing Lane, or deviate from their 'line' at their own risk. Even when crews are in their Racing Lanes or following a racing 'line', at least two (2) meters of clear water must be maintained around each boat. For the purpose of the Rule, the boat includes the crew's paddles and therefore the 'clear water' is between paddle blade and adjacent paddle blade. Crews must 'give clear water' when told to by the Course Officials. In races over 1000 meters, crews may deviate from their Racing Lanes or Lines without penalty, providing they do not impede other crews and clear water is observed around each boat.

9.1.1 Penalties: A Time Penalty of five (5) seconds may be awarded by the Chief Official against a crew that leaves its Racing Lane/Line or impedes another crew, whether or not the action of the crew concerned has materially affected the result of the race. A crew that has gone 'off line' due to an involuntary steering error and in correcting the error leaves its Racing Lane, shall not normally be penalized under the Rule unless another crew is impeded and the race result materially affected.

9.1.2 Warnings: The Referee shall follow each race to observe the course taken by each dragon boat. A Referee will warn any boat that fails to keep within its Racing Lane/Line. If such warnings are ignored the crew(s) concerned risk disqualification from the race if, in the opinion of the Referee, the crew has impeded another crew or has gained an advantage thereby, which has materially affected the result of the race. Alternatively, a Time Penalty of five (5) seconds may be awarded.

9.1.3 Racing Lane Officials: Racing Lane Officials may also be stationed at the ends or down the sides, or both of the race course in such a position as to have a clear 'line of sight' down and across the race course, in order that they can determine the actual 'Racing Line' that a crew is taking. If an infraction of the Racing Rules occurs, the course Officials shall report the matter to the Chief Official.

9.3 Collisions: In the event of a collision between two (2) or more boats, the Officials must report the circumstances to the Chief Official, who may disqualify the offending boat(s) or, if the result of the race has been materially affected, order one or more boats to re-race before the next round of the competition. When in the opinion of the Chief Official one or more of the crews involved could have avoided the collision by taking corrective action, for example, to stop paddling, but did not do so, then the crew or crews concerned will be disqualified from the competition class concerned and may face disqualification from the whole competition.

9.3.1 Cease Paddling: In the event of a collision between two (2) or more boats, and when boats are in close proximity or touching due to the collision, all paddlers in the affected boats must cease paddling immediately. Paddling by affected boats is prohibited until a minimum of 2 meters of clear water is attained around each of the boats involved.

9.3.2 Distress Signal: If a crew is in distress, for example, a crew member is lost overboard, then the members of the crew shall alert the Safety Boat(s) and Officials by waving vigorously, above head height, the red flags carried in the boat for this purpose. If no flags are in the boat then the International Distress Signal shall be used, that is, the arms shall be placed in the outstretched position (horizontal to the sides of the body) and then raised to the vertical position crossing above the head and returning to the horizontal position, repeated until the Rescue Boat(s) respond. A Distress Signal given by a crew without just cause may result in the crew being disqualified from the whole competition.

9.4 Boat Swamping, Deliberate Capsizes: If, in the opinion of the Chief Official, a boat has been swamped or capsized deliberately by its own actions, or another crew during the course of a race, the Competition Committee may disqualify the crew or crews concerned from the competition.

9.5 Boat Damage: If in the opinion of the Chief Official, a boat has been damaged by its crew deliberately or by another crew during the course of a race, the Competition Committee may disqualify the crew or crews concerned from the competition. On recommendation of the Competition Committee, the Jury may impose a fine on the crew or crews.

9.6 Turns: When a race is run on a course with Turning Points, the buoys shall be passed portside (left) in an anti-clockwise direction. When more than one crew is making a turn, at the same Turning Point,

then a crew on the outside line must leave room for a crew on an inside line. That is, the Course Officials must see clear water between boats, as defined in Rule 9.1.

9.7 Turn Buoys: In making a turn, the inside boat shall follow as closely as possible, the course marked by the buoy(s) at the Turning Point. A crew will not be disqualified for touching a Turn Buoy, or for having less than two (2) meters of clear water.

## 10 FINISHES

10.1 Crossing the Finish Line: A boat has finished the race when the foremost part of the boat crosses the Finish Line with the same number of Racers in it as at the start of the race. The dragon's head when in position, forms part of the boat.

10.2 Dead Heats: The front portion of each boat's bow will be clearly marked to assist the Judges in determining the finish order. If two (2) or more boats reach the Finish Line at the same time, they shall get the same classification. In the event of a dead heat for a place that determines advancement to the next round, the crews concerned may be required to race-off but only if there are insufficient lanes on the racing course to allow the dead heated crews to race again in the next round.

10.3 Disembarking: Once a crew has finished a race it must return immediately to the Boat Marshalling area and disembark. A crew is not released from the directions of the Marshalling Officials until all members of the crew have left the Crew Assembly Area.

## 11 DISPUTES, PROTESTS, DISQUALIFICATIONS AND APPEALS

11.1 Disputes: Disputes that arise during a competition between crews shall be addressed to the Chief Official and dealt with by the Competition Committee in the same way as a Protest.

11.2 Racing Protests: In the event of a crew wishing to make a protest following a race, concerning the conduct of another crew, the Crew Manager must lodge the protest with the Chief Official. Such a protest must be addressed to the Competition Committee in writing and made within fifteen (15) minutes of the end of the race in question. A protest against a race result must be made no later than fifteen (15) minutes after the result is officially posted.

11.3 Protest Fees: All protests shall be made in writing and shall be accompanied by a fee of \$50.00. This fee will be refunded if the protest is successful.

11.4 Action and Timing: When a protest is made, the Chief Official must immediately notify any other party involved in it and call a meeting of the Competition Committee to discuss the protest. Only in exceptional circumstances should the Competition Committee take longer than thirty (30) minutes to consider any one protest.

11.5 Decisions: After reaching its decision, the Competition Committee must inform all the parties involved in writing of its decision and of the reasons for the decision. The Chief Official shall hand the decision to the Crew Manager(s) involved, who must then acknowledge receipt of it by signing the Chief Official's copy and endorsing it with the time of receipt in case of any further appeal to the Jury.

11.6 Disqualification: In the event of a crew being disqualified from a race or the competition, the Competition Committee must record their decision and the reasons why in writing. The Chief Official

must hand this notice to the Crew Manager concerned who must acknowledge receipt of the notice by signing the Chief Official's copy and endorsing it with the time of receipt.

11.7 Appeals: The acknowledgement of receipt of submission is the start of the period in which the Crew Manager(s) may appeal to the Jury against the decision of the Competition Committee.

11.8 Time Limit: An appeal against a decision of the Competition Committee shall be addressed to the Chairman of the Jury and handed in no later than fifteen (15) minutes after the Crew Manager(s) has been informed, in writing, by the Competition Committee of any disqualification or dispute involving their crews.

11.9 Appeal Fees: A fee of \$50.00 shall accompany all appeals. The fee will be refunded if the appeal is successful.

11.10 Jury Meetings: The Chairman of the Jury shall allow a further fifteen (15) minutes to elapse for any necessary investigations to take place, before calling a meeting of the Jury to debate the appeal. Only in exceptional circumstance should this take longer than thirty (30) minutes for any one appeal.

11.11 Final Decisions and Appeals: The decision of the Jury is final.

## 12 RACING RULES FOR DRAGON BOAT RACES 2000 METRES AND MORE

The rules that follow are primarily designed for dragon boat races that take place on a defined Racing Course as part of a standard Dragon Boat event with all the normal safety boats; race facilities; support services and qualified officials. For long distance races that take place outside of these conditions, for example on large inland waters or the sea, additional local rules and regulations should be considered.

Rule 12 should be read in conjunction with Rules 9.1 through 9.7

12.1 The Race Course: The Racing Course shall be of a circulatory nature having two straight sections and two turns in one circuit of the Course. The Turns shall be marked with buoys at each end of each straight section; one (1) at the apex of each turn and two (2) at each turn, one either side of the apex buoy, to indicate the curve of the turn. In total a minimum of six (6) buoys are recommended to a maximum of ten (10). If possible, there should be additional buoys to mark the whole line of the Turn at each end of the Course. Each straight section must be marked down its length by a line of buoys, a maximum of 100 meters apart. This line of buoys shall constitute the left hand side of the Racing Line. The Turn Buoys marking the start and finish of each Turn may be included in this total, as may the buoys marking the edge of the normal Racing Course.

12.2 The Racing Lane and Line of Racing: The Racing Lane over the straight sections of the Course shall be a minimum of ten (10) meters wide, with a water depth of at least three (3) meters over a minimum of two thirds of its width. The Line of Racing for crews racing down a straight section of the Course is deemed to be a width of six (6) meters from the buoys marking the left of the Racing Lane.

12.2.1 Racing shall take place in an anti-clockwise direction. Crews are not permitted to race on the inside of the buoys marking the left hand edge of the Racing Lane, except when overtaking after completing a Turn.

12.3 A Crew's Positional Line of Racing: Crews must steer a straight course down the Line of Racing, during the whole of the race, except when overtaking or when crews have started a race in 'Line Abreast'.

12.3.1 It is incumbent on the Steersperson, when not overtaking another boat to maintain a distance of at least six (6) meters from the buoys on the boat's port (left) side, thus allowing crews who may be overtaking on the port side to have as much clear water as possible, in which to overtake.

12.3.2 Crews taking other Lines of Racing to overtake must observe the spirit of Racing Rule 9.1 but especially concerning 'clear water' between boats. If a crew ignores the intention of the 2 meter rule and in doing so causes any other boat(s) to steer an unreasonably wide course to maintain their Line of Racing or avoid a collision, then a Time Penalty of 5-10 seconds may be awarded by the Chief Official. When a crew that is being overtaken alters its course and makes difficulties for the overtaking boat, the same Time Penalties may be awarded by the Chief Official. If the crew being overtaken does not allow clear water to the inside of the course, an overtaking boat may steer inside the course to avoid a collision.

12.4 Overtaking: When a boat is overtaking another boat in a race, it is the responsibility of the overtaking boat to maintain clear water to the boat it is overtaking (Rule 12.4.4). Similarly, the boat being overtaken must allow room (as per Rule 12.2) and not alter its course to make difficulties for the overtaking boat or boats.

Overtaking can be carried out on either side of the boat being overtaken except when the width of the Racing Lane does not allow crews to overtake in clear water on the left or right side of the boat being overtaken. Crews not complying with this rule or 9.1 concerning 'holding line' will receive an automatic Time Penalty of twenty (20) seconds.

12.4.1 When approaching a Turn, overtaking is only permitted on the port (inside) of the boat being overtaken. The crew being overtaken must give way and allow 'clear water' to the overtaking crew. A boat about to be overtaken must not alter its Line of Racing once the front of the overtaking boat is level with or has passed the stern of the boat being overtaken.

12.4.2 When approaching a Turn, the status of whether a boat is overtaking another shall be determined at the 50m mark to the turn. Only those boats overtaking on the port (left) side shall be given priority positioning in the Turn. If priority positioning is given to the overtaking boat, the boat being overtaken must give way and allow 'clear water' to the overtaking boat

12.4.3 A crew overtaking on the right (outside) of another boat during a Turn must hold their line and keep 'clear water' with the boat they are overtaking until the approaching turn has been negotiated, after which time they can complete the overtaking maneuver.

12.4.4 A boat about to be overtaken must not alter its Line of Racing once the tip of the bow of the overtaking boat is level with or has passed the stern of the boat being overtaken. When the stern of the overtaking boat is level with or has passed the tip of the bow of the boat being overtaken, then the overtaken boat must give way and maintain its line.

12.4.5 When overtaking or being overtaken, Steerspeople must maintain clear water between the paddles of their own boat and other boats in the race, 2 meters of clear water between boats should be maintained.

12.4.6 If in the opinion of the Chief Official any racing maneuver by an overtaking crew or a lack of clear water between boats has endangered the safety of another crew, or materially affected the result of the race, the offending crew shall be disqualified from the race.

12.4.7 If a crew's race time has been adversely affected by the actions of another crew, the Chief Official may award, when a Course Official has confirmed that time has been lost through an obstruction or impediment of the crew concerned, a Time Bonus of up to 20 seconds.

12.5 Turning: The Turning Point buoys shall be passed to port (left) in an anti-clockwise direction. In making a turn the inside boat shall follow as closely as possible, the course marked by the buoy(s) at the Turning Point.

- Steerspeople are to ensure that Turning Point buoys are kept on the left side of the boat. The boat must pass to the right of all the buoys and not inside any Turn Buoy.
- A crew will not be disqualified for touching a Turn Buoy, or for having less than two (2) meters of clear water, unless in the opinion of the Chief Official the safety of any crew undertaking the turn at the same time, has been compromised.

12.5.1 Turns: When a race is run on a course with Turning Points, the buoys shall be passed to port (left) in an anti-clockwise direction. When more than one crew is making a turn at the same Turning Point, then a crew on the outside line must leave room for a crew on an inside line. That is, the Course Officials must see clear water between boats.

12.5.2 Turn Buoys: In making a turn the inside boat shall follow as closely as possible, the course marked by the buoy(s) at the Turning Point. A crew will not be disqualified for touch a Turn Buoy, or for having less than two (2) meters of clear water, unless in the opinion of the Course.

12.5.3 Turning Points: When more than one crew is making a turn at the same Turning Point, the crew on the outside line must leave room for a crew on the inside line. Clear water between the paddles in adjacent boats must be maintained around the Turn. A crew on an inside line must not make difficulties for a crew holding an outside line by, for example, steering wide around the Turning Point. Once a crew provides a clear lane for passing at the beginning of a, they must maintain that clear water for passing crew(s) throughout the Turn. If in the opinion of the Chief Official a crew has not attempted to steer in a safe manner around a Turn, then Time Penalties may be awarded against the offending crew(s). Should a Time Penalty be awarded, a minimum of ten (10) seconds shall be assessed for any turning point infraction in a 2000m race.

12.5.4 Last Straight: When a crew has completed its final turn and is in the last straight of the race, it may cross into the main Racing Course and take any Racing Line down the last straight. Overtaking on either side of another boat is permitted during the last straight provided that clear water is given to any other boat on the Racing Course. The crew has finished the race when the foremost part of the boat crosses the line, with the same number of crew members as started the race.

12.6 Impeding/Collisions: If during the course of the race a boat impedes or collides with another boat, the Chief Official shall apportion blame. If the Chief Official decides that a boat has impeded the forward motion of another boat, or that the crew in the impeded boat had, by necessity, to stop paddling; then a Time Penalty of up to thirty (30) seconds may be awarded to the impeding crew. A Time Bonus may also be awarded to the impeded boat as allowed for under 12.4.6. When a collision between boats occurs, then Racing Rule 9.3 shall be implemented with the exception that re-racing will not take place.

12.7 Course Referees: To assist the Chief Official in implementing these and other Rules of Racing, Referees/Referees both waterborne and land based should be positioned around the Racing Course to afford full observation and supervision of the crews in the race. Ideally a Boat with an Referee should be stationed inside each Turning Point to observe the crews negotiating the Turn Buoys.

12.8 Starting Procedures: Boats shall normally be started at intervals. A 'staggered' start using the normal start commands of 'Are You Ready', Attention', 'Go' shall be used. The time interval between each crew starting shall be determined by the standard of the crew racing, prevailing water and weather conditions. The time interval between crews should not be less than ten (10) seconds or more than thirty (30) seconds. The Starter must record the Start Time of each crew. For a staggered start, boats may be lined up ready to start in one of two different formats.

12.8.1 In Line Abreast: Crews should first be 'seeded' according to ability, the slowest crew starting first and the fastest last. Crews should be placed in a line next to each other along (or in a line behind) the actual Finish Line, facing up the normal Racing Course towards the normal Start Line.

- Starting Position: The slowest crew should be positioned on the 'right of the line' looking up the course, facing the Racing Line. On the start command, the first crew shall race straight ahead into the Line of Racing, six (6) meters to the right of the buoys marking the Racing Lane.
- Crossing the Course: The second boat to start and subsequent boats may steer straight ahead on their start command, even if this means that they are racing to the left of the buoys marking the Racing Lane. Crews doing this must then move diagonally across the course in a Line of Racing until they have reached a point on the course that is to the right of the buoys marking the main Racing Lane
- 300 Meter Rule: This crossing to the Racing Lane must be completed within the first straight from the start of the race. During this time, crews may pass on either side of a boat they are overtaking, provided that at all times they maintain 'clear water' between themselves and all other boats.

12.8.2 In Line Astern: Crews should be 'seeded' as in 12.8.1. If conditions allow, all the boats will be lined up one behind the other, with the slowest crew first opposite the main Racing Lane, behind the Start Line. They will move to the start when called in turn.

12.8.2.1 Late at the Start: Failure to be at the Start Line on time will not prevent the Starter from starting the next crew in the line. Crews must steer a straight course from the start, down a Line of Racing six (6) meters to the right of the buoys marking the left edge of the Racing Lane.

12.8.3 Mass Start: When the race venue and the number of competing crews allow, a Mass Start may be used, providing that, in the opinion of the Chief Official, the crews are of a standard to ensure that undue congestion will not occur at the Turns or collisions between boats, particularly in the first straight of the race are unlikely to occur. In a Mass Start, race crews will be randomly allocated Start Numbers. The lowest number will start opposite the main Racing Lane and the highest to the far left of the line. Crews will line up 'In Line Abreast' but all crews will start on the same starting instruction.

12.9 Crew Times, Placings and the Race Winner: When a staggered start is used, the record of Start Times will be compared against the Finish Times recorded for crews. The resulting Time Differential will be used to calculate a crew's actual Race Time. Any race Time Penalties incurred by a crew will then be added to give a crew its Net Race Time.

12.10 When a Mass Start is used, the lapsed time between the Race Start Time and a crew's Finish Time will be a crew's Race Time, to which any Time Penalties will be added to give the Net Race Time. The Gross Race Time will determine a crew's final race position. The Race Winner shall be the crew with the fastest (lowest) Gross Race Time.

## 13 ADDITIONAL AND MISCELLANEOUS EQUIPMENT

13.1 Generally additional equipment designed to be added to the boat or personal or miscellaneous equipment designed to enhance the performance of the boat or a crew member shall not be permitted in GWN events.

The exceptions to this are onboard communications systems that operate purely between crew members, and seat cushions for individual paddlers, provided that they are made of a soft material, such as sponge or foam, which does not effectively raise the height of a seat or seats in a boat (see IDBF regulations).

Team Uniforms protective head gear, footwear and eyewear are permitted.

The Chief Official shall decide on additional and miscellaneous equipment not specifically covered by these Rules of Racing.

*Note: It is not the intention of the Rule to exclude equipment enhancements such as, fasteners for seat pads, sponges or boat bailers, foot blocks and pads for competitors comfort or other items that are not performance enhancing or a safety risk to members of the Crew.*

13.2 Paddles: All paddles must meet the most current IDBF standard.

13.3 Personal Floatation Device (PFD): Unless stated by GWN on gwndragonboat.com for a specific event, all paddlers, drummers, and steerspeople must wear a Coast Guard Approved personal floatation device. Inflatable PFDs are permitted at all GWN events.

13.3 Water Pumps: The carrying of any type of pump in the boat, during a race, which is designed to clear a boat of water, is prohibited.

13.4 Straps and Strapping: In the interest of crew safety, no additional fixtures or fittings, such as straps to fasten a paddler into the boat or onto a seat, are permitted. No strapping of any kind that attaches a paddle to a paddler in any way is permitted.

13.4.1 The Chief Official may relax this rule for physically disabled competitors, if adequate safety systems are provided to ensure that such crew members can easily be released from the boat and rescued in the event of the boat capsizing.

13.4.2 Wrist Straps to Paddles and Boat fasteners. Wrist to Paddle Straps are NOT allowed or any other fastening system that connects a competitor to a paddle or the boat, as such fittings constitute a safety hazard. Exceptions may be made for Adaptive Paddlers provided that any fastening to the wrist is of a 'quick release' nature and does not compromise the personal safety of the Adaptive Paddler concerned.



13.5 Seat Pads: Dragon Boat Seat Pads (cushions) as described in Rule 12.1 shall be made of a soft material, such as neoprene, of a maximum thickness of 15mm that will compress easily when squeezed between finger and thumb. The width of the seat pad shall approximate to the width of a paddling seat.

## 14 REGISTRATION

14.1 Each Crew Manager must complete check in on Race Day at Race Headquarters for their team. Check in consists of confirming the official crew list and receiving racing wristbands for each crew member on the official crew list.

14.1.1 Every crew member listed on the official crew list will be given a racing wristband. This includes all paddlers, drummer, and steersperson. Racing wristbands must be worn at all times during race day. Any Racer that loses a wristband must report to Race Headquarters and provide government-issued identification in order to receive a replacement wristband.

14.1.2 Any Racer not listed on the official crew list, or is listed in "PENDING" status must sign/agree to the assumption of risk form in order to be added to the official crew list and to receive a racing wristband.

14.2 The official crew list must not exceed twenty-six (26) Racers. For teams wishing to add additional Racers beyond the allowable capacity, one Racer must be removed from the official crew list.

14.3 In order for a Crew Manager to check in, at least twelve (12) Racers must be listed on the official crew list.

## 15 AWARDS

15.1 Medals and trophies in Sport Regattas will be awarded as follows:

- **Sport Division:** The top 3 teams by points overall in the Sport Division will receive medals (Gold, Silver, Bronze). Gold medal winning teams will receive a trophy.
- **Community Division:** Medals will be awarded to the top three teams in each Grand Final and top team in each Consolation Final. Gold medal winning teams will receive a trophy.

15.2 Medals and trophies in Festivals will be awarded as follows:

- **Premier:** Medals will be awarded to the top three teams in each Grand Final and top team in each Consolation Final. Gold medal winning teams will receive a trophy.

15.3 Gold medals and a trophy will be awarded to the top team in each Industry Cup race.

15.3.1 Teams with seventy percent (70%) or more crew members belonging to one industry or organization will be eligible to compete in an Industry Cup Race. When offered, the eligible team with the fastest race time within an Industry Cup Race will be deemed the winner. Each member of the team must be prepared to provide proof of employment if requested.

## 16 MULTI DISTANCE RACE POINTS

16.1 Multi Distance Points System: Points shall be awarded by the Chief Official. Points are awarded based on the scale below.

Rank	Nombre d'équipes																						
	40	39	38	37	36	35	34	33	32	31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	18
1	44	43	42	41	40	39	38	37	36	35	34	33	32	31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22
2	41	40	39	38	37	36	35	34	33	32	31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	20	19
3	39	38	37	36	35	34	33	32	31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17
4	37	36	35	34	33	32	31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15
5	36	35	34	33	32	31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14
6	35	34	33	32	31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13
7	34	33	32	31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12
8	33	32	31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11
9	32	31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10
10	31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9
11	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8
12	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7
13	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6
14	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5
15	26	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4
16	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3
17	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2
18	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
19	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
20	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		
21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1			
22	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1				
23	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1					
24	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1						
25	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1							
26	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1								
27	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1									
28	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1										
29	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1											
30	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1												
31	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1													
32	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1														
33	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1															
34	7	6	5	4	3	2	1																
35	6	5	4	3	2	1																	
36	5	4	3	2	1																		
37	4	3	2	1																			
38	3	2	1																				
39	2	1																					
40	1																						

Rank	Nombre d'équipes															
	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2
1	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6
2	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3
3	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	
4	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		
5	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1			
6	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1				
7	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1					
8	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1						
9	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1							
10	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1								
11	7	6	5	4	3	2	1									
12	6	5	4	3	2	1										
13	5	4	3	2	1											
14	4	3	2	1												
15	3	2	1													
16	2	1														
17	1															

16.2 Ties: If two or more crews in the same competition class (e.g. Premier Open) are tied in points after completing races at all distances, the results of the 500m final shall be used as a tie breaker.

## 17 COMPETITION REGULATIONS

17.1 Organizers reserve the right to exclude any participant who is deemed by the Race Officials to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

17.2 Organizers reserve the right to exclude any participant or team for behavior deemed inappropriate or for verbal or physical abuse of staff or volunteers. Only the Chief Official or Event Director may make this decision.

17.3 Crews are expected to respect the rules of the Venue. Unless specifically stated on gwndragonboat.com, the following rules apply:

- No BBQ or cooking devices allowed.
- Where tents are provided to teams or purchased from GWN, no additional tent structures are permitted.
- No alcohol allowed unless purchased from an on-site licensed vendor.
- All cars must be parked in designated parking areas. Absolutely no vehicles are allowed in the Athletes' Village.

17.3.1 No team member or team will solicit or sell merchandise or services within the Athletes' Village. All solicitation and/or sales in other areas of the venue must be approved by GWN prior to the event day.

17.3.2 Teams may hang team banners within the confines of their Athletes' Village site. No banners or signs may be hung on the outside of tents or structures with corporate logos that are not official sponsors of the event.

17.3.3 Crews in violation of any of the above rules will be given ten (10) minutes to rectify the situation. If not rectified within ten (10) minutes, a Time Penalty or disqualification from the event may be assessed at the Chief Official or Event Director's sole discretion.

17.4 All crew members on the official crew list of an event are required to agree to the assumption of risk, by signing a waiver form (hard or soft copy) for an event prior to being allowed to embark in a boat. It is the Crew Manager's responsibility to ensure that all crew members on the official crew list have signed/agreed to the form.

Any crew member caught racing before the close of acceptance of penalties and appeals, who has not signed/agreed to the form will have a (0.25) second Time Penalty assessed to their crew's time for all races for which the crew member participated without a completed waiver and risks the disqualification of their crew from the race or the entire event should the form not be signed/agreed to upon discovery of the missing form.

17.5 At all events, crews are responsible and liable for all damage to boats and other equipment that is deemed to have been caused by the intentional or negligent acts or inaction of a crew. GWN is entitled to full reimbursement from the crew for the costs of repairs or replacement, as determined by GWN.

17.6 Drones are not allowed at Major League Dragon Boat events unless the owner/operator meets the following criteria:

1. Provides proof of proper insurance and certification from aviation authority.
2. Is associated with media, sponsor, vendor, or relevant party.
3. Is granted permission from GWN in advance.

If permission is granted, at no time is the drone to be flown within 50 feet of a person, vehicle, boat, or tent and at no time can it be flown over any of those.

GWN reserves the right to grant, withhold or revoke permission at any time for any reason. Unauthorized use at Major League Dragon Boat events can lead to disqualification from the event for the entire team.