



NEW TEAM

MANUAL



FORWARD

Welcome to the exciting world of Dragon Boating

The purpose of the manual is to provide information guidelines to assist people new to the sport of Dragon Boating.

This manual is a working document. It is expected that amendments will be made as needs change. You are invited to suggest improvements to the work.

Should you wish to make changes, or have ideas, photocopy the relevant pages and make your amendments on that. Submit your ideas to the Chairperson of DragonBoatSA who will then bring it up for discussion at the next Executive meeting.

A table of contents is located at the beginning of the manual. Contents are divided into section areas for ease of use.

I wish to thank Julie Clinch, Duncan Bee, Steve Clinch and Tim Monson for their input and advice with writing and editing the manuscript and Jennifer Bould for compiling the notes and formatting the manual.

John Holland

Chairperson

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HISTORY

The legend of Qu Yuan

In China, the history of Dragon Boat racing dates back to the 4th century BC. At that time, in the Kingdom of Chu, there was a minister by the name of Qu Yuan.



Although much loved by the people, his King thought him foolish and had him expelled from his high position in the court. Unhappy and dejected, he wandered about the countryside writing poems about his love of his country and its people. Qu Yuan committed suicide by drowning himself in the Mi Luo River perhaps in a final protest against the injustice and corruption.

Legend has it that local fishermen raced out with their boats in a vain attempt to save him. To prevent his body from being eaten by fish, they beat the waters furiously with their paddles, beating drums to drive off evil spirits and threw rice dumplings into the river as a sacrifice to his spirit.

The death of Qu Yuan is commemorated on the fifth day of the fifth lunar month, when the Dragon Boat Festival is celebrated. This was the season when the ancient Chinese paid their respects to Dragons, who were believed to control rain and rule the water.

Since the time of Qu Yuan's death, this exciting and spectacular recreational activity has been a part of Chinese sporting culture. In comparison Dragon Boating is in the embryonic stage in Australia, only having been introduced to our culture about twenty years ago. In that short time however, Dragon Boating has attracted a multitude of sporting enthusiasts from all walks of life.

Dragon Boating is a major sport within the Asian arena, and is building as a major team sport in Australia and overseas. Today, Dragon Boat racing is undertaken in over fifty countries around the globe – including such diverse climates as South Africa, New Zealand, Europe, Britain, North America and

Canada – with thousands of people competing and many more taking part as spectators. Dragon Boating is now recognized as being perhaps the fastest growing water sport on the planet.

Dragon Boating in South Australia

Since 1985, the DragonBoatSA has had more than a dozen teams competing in regular competitions, with many more competing on a part time or social level.

The DragonBoatSA Executive is made of one delegate from each of the sports teams plus the executive positions of Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer (all positions are voluntary and elected).

DragonBoatSA provides

- › Dragon boats and associated equipment
- › Paddles for social, school and corporate teams
- › Buoyancy vests for paddlers (weak swimmers) and school teams
- › Organises the race calendar
- › Organises race set up
- › Runs corporate events
- › Coaching assistance
- › Sweeps for social, school and corporate teams
- › Team liaison
- › Dragon boat networks – through affiliations in Australia (AusDBF) and International (IDBF)
- › Interstate contacts for interstate racing for sports teams
- › Overseas contact for international racing for sports teams

EQUIPMENT – Dragon boats

The dragon boats are 12 metres in length by a metre width adorned with a fearsome dragonhead and a tail at the stern. The Australian made dragon

boats comply with national and international standards. The 10's dragon boats are half the size of a standard dragon boat. The rest of the equipment includes the rudder/oar and the drum.

Care of

At the end of a training sessions or race days the dragon boats are rinsed off with clean water and excess water is removed from inside the dragon boats before they are stored in the boat shed. No wax is to be used on the paddles or in the dragon boat. If a dragon boat is damaged at any time please notify DragonBoatSA Executive.

At training sessions

The teams are expected to unload and store the dragon boats. There is a trolley available to transport the dragon boat to the water. Usually the dragonhead and tail are not used. There needs to be sufficient people to handle the dragon boat to prevent manual handling injuries – a minimum of 10 people.

On race days

At the DragonBoatSA Executive meeting teams are designated to set up or store the dragon boats for race days prior to the event. The team need to check with their DragonBoatSA representative so as to make allowance for this duty.

Maintenance

The dragon boats undergo maintenance during the off-season. If any team notices a maintenance problem please draw it to the attention of DragonBoatSA Executive so that repairs can be undertaken.

BENEFITS

- Σ Dragon Boating is an inexpensive sport that is easy to learn technically.
- Σ Improves fitness.
- Σ It is a true team sport that caters for a broad range of fitness levels and age-groups, enabling people to all do the same thing at the same time.
- Σ The social and corporate teams have the chance to experience the teamwork and dedication required to successfully paddle one of these heavy and demanding boats.

RACES

In Australia, races are generally conducted over a distance of either 250 metres (normally only for 10's races) or 500 metres, with occasional distances of 1000 metres or more.

The DragonBoatSA season runs from November to April, being divided into 5 or 6 competition rounds plus additional events. Each round consists of heats, with points awarded for each placing. The points accumulate over the day's racing to give a winner of each round. The points are then added to previous round results to decide the State Champions in each category at the season's end.

Race categories

Open 20s & 10s

Mixed 20's & 10s

For 20's team – minimum 8 female paddlers

For 10's team – minimum 4 female paddlers

Women's

Masters

Social

Corporate

School

Race rules and conduct

All racing comes under the rules set by IDBF, AusDBF and DragonBoatSA.

All dragon boats must have drummers for race days. Failure to do so will result in disqualification.

Any dragon boat crew or competitor who attempts to win a race by other than honourable means, or who deliberately breaks the racing rules shall face disqualification.

Crews must comply with all instructions given to them. Once in the dragon boat paddlers must obey the commands of the Sweep.

Crews will act in a polite and respectful manner towards each other, race officials and the public at all times.

Crews who engage in dangerous, unruly or offensive behaviour will be disqualified.

Alcohol impairs judgement and can increase the risk of hypothermia. Crews that have been drinking excessively will not be allowed to race.

DRUG ABUSE, in any competition the use of performance enhancing drugs, chemical compounds etc. is strictly forbidden.

Keep to the left hand side of the waterway on race days at West Lakes. Usual water protocol is for dragon boats to keep to the right.

Be aware of other boats on the waterway.

Make sure the waterway is clear before you turn the dragon boat.

Race starts

The following start types are used in South Australia

Standing start – the starting area will commence from a point 50 metres behind the starting line. The crews will assemble there in their correct lanes and the Starter will slowly bring the boats down to the start line and start the race.

Toggle start – the toggle must be held by the Sweep until the start horn is sounded at which point the toggle is released.

Paddles up start – immediately following the “ready” command from the Starter they will call “paddles up”. At this command all paddlers will hold their paddles vertically above their head with the handle of the paddle no higher than shoulder height. The paddles may not enter the water or drop below that height until the start horn is sounded.

PERSONNEL

In a typical dragon boat team there are up to 22 people on a boat at the one time. The team members comprise of

- **PADDLER:** (20 in all or 10 for social/ school teams) No special requirements. Age, sex, athletic ability, previous paddling experience are not issues. Ability to swim 50 metres in full race uniform is favourable. For those weak swimmers buoyancy vests can be supplied by DASA.
- **SWEEP:** An important position as this person steers the boat. Where possible train 2 people for the position. Should have a loud and confident voice. The Sweep is in charge of the team during training, racing and in an emergency situation. The Sweep needs to check that the steering equipment is secure and functional before paddling. Steering a dragon boat is not easy, especially during a race. When steering the Sweep will need to look ahead and anticipate the change of direction of the boat. For social, school and corporate teams DASA supplies Sweeps.

Sweep must demonstrate certain skills

Steering in a straight line.

Balancing a dragon boat when steering.

Moving the dragon boat up to a start line.

Maintaining a dragon boat on a start line.

Stopping the boat quickly.

Use a standard set of calls: which are

Stopping – **jam stop**

Paddles up – **paddles up**

Start paddling - **go**

Paddles going backwards – **paddles behind you**

Brace stroke – **paddles flat**

- **DRUMMER:** This person beats a drum to assist with timing and pace of the paddlers. Should have a sense of rhythm and a loud voice and be not afraid to use it to encourage team-mates. Part of their job is to watch the Sweep and convey instructions to crew. In the event of a capsize the Drummer is the person second-in-charge to the Sweep.

Other support staff include

- **TEAM CAPTAIN:** The leader and spokesperson. Elected or appointed, they should have the support of the team members. Before a race must complete a team sheets to give to race officials and attend the captain's meeting.
- **COACH:** Key person. Must recognize the special issues for the team. For social and school teams coaching is provided by DASA.
- **MANAGER:** This person responsible for the organization of the team. Capable of acting as an assistant coach when the coach can't attend. They may also serve as the DASA representative at the Executive meetings.

Individual requirements

Cost

SCHOOL TEAMS

For a school team the cost is \$5 per person per race day.

This entitles the team to train once a week.

SOCIAL TEAMS

For a social team the cost is \$10 per person per race day

This entitles the team to train once a week.

SPORTS TEAMS

For a sports team the season fees are set by DragonBoatSA. Please contact DragonBoatSA for the current fee structure.

This entitles the team to full membership of DragonBoatSA, a team representative on the DragonBoatSA Executive, voting rights and unlimited boat usage for training purposes.

INSURANCE

There is an additional cost involved for paddlers' personal injury insurance.

Paddles

Paddles must comply with the standards set by AusDBF.

For social, school and corporate teams paddles are supplied by DragonBoatSA.

The sports dragon boat teams are encouraged to purchase their own high performance racing paddles. Contact DragonBoatSA Executive for details.

Training

The right approach to training will increase your enjoyment of the sport, it will enhance your performance and it will improve the overall safety. A training program is fundamental to success. The coach and the team need to establish the level of commitment, how and when to train.

The dragon boats are stored at West Lakes. There are shower and toilet facilities and car parking on site. (see Appendix A)

For social, school and corporate coaching can be initially supplied by DragonBoatSA.

The six current dragon boat clubs have their specific training times as listed below:

- ADELAIDE SEA DRAGONS
Monday & Wednesday 6.30pm, Saturday 3pm, Sunday 9am
- SUBSONIX (Subbies)
Tuesday & Thursday 6pm, Sunday 9 am
- POWERBLADES
Monday & Wednesday 6.15pm, Saturday 8am
- SA VIPERS/SA DRAGONS ABREAST
Tuesday & Thursday 6pm, Saturday 10.30am
- WATER WARRIORS (Warriors)
Monday, Wednesday & Friday 6pm, Sunday 10am
- BLACK DRAGONS
Tuesday & Thursday 6pm, Sunday 9am

Team uniform

Participants must be adequately dressed for the conditions. Sponsorship advertising on crew uniforms is permitted subject to any conditions established by DragonBoatSA.

Typically paddlers should wear or have the following items:-

- T-shirt or vest and shorts.
- Suitable light footwear ie. Trainers, wetsuit boots.
- Waterproof top & trousers when conditions require it.
- Hat and sunscreen (30+) for sunny days - **BE SUNSMART.**
- Wear sunglasses to protect your eyes.
- Towel.
- A spare set of clothing to change into after dragon boating.

Buoyancy vests

Buoyancy vests are available for weak swimmers and all School teams.

Buoyancy vests must be worn when directed by the Race Organiser and where local regulations require them. They must be worn at all times while in the dragon boats and on the water.

Helpful hints

Food- race day preparation only

It is important to top up on fuel stores. The meal should be high in carbohydrates and low in fat, protein and fibre. Eat at least 2 – 3 hours before participating. On dragon boat race days it is important to have regular carbohydrate snacks to top up fuel levels and help delay the onset of fatigue.

For further information visit www.smartplay.net

Warm ups -

Are important prior to dragon boating to increase heat throughout the body and reduce the risk of tearing or straining muscles. It just takes a 2 – 3 minute jog to raise a light sweat.

For further information visit www.smartplay.net

Stretching -

Stretching increases flexibility, reduces muscle tension and reduces the risk of muscle and tendon injuries. A stretching routine should take 15 – 20 minutes.

For further information visit www.smartplay.net

Cool downs –

Are important following dragon boating to help remove muscle waste products, reduce muscle soreness and it enables you to compete again at the same level within a short period of time. Cool downs should include a 2 – 3 minute light jog and 5 – 10 minutes of stretching.

For further information visit www.smartplay.net

Beat the heat –

The dragon boat season usually occurs in the summer months. To avoid dehydration and heat stress DO NOT WAIT TO FEEL THIRSTY BEFORE YOU DRINK.

Drink plenty of water as your body will benefit from keeping up fluid levels. Have a fluid replacement routine in place before, during and after participating in dragon boating.

Follow the appropriate clothing and sunscreen guidelines- **BE SUNSMART.**

For further information visit www.smartplay.net

Massage -

It is helpful after race days and hard training sessions to have a massage. The benefits being improved circulation and flexibility to muscles, ligaments and tendons. Massage reduces the risk of injury, as the build up of lactic acid can cause damage to soft tissue. Stripping the muscles of these wastes will improve recovery and endurance.

For further information visit www.aboutmassage.com

SAFETY

The Team Captain should ensure that his/her team has read the safety and training notes prior to attending sessions. **Safety on the water is the concern of every crew member.**

Swimming

Crew members should be able to swim 50 metres in full team uniform.

For those weak swimmers buoyancy vests can be supplied by DragonBoatSA.

Before you paddle: safety procedure

- **Know your number**

When the full team is in the boat (including the Drummer and Sweep) the Sweep will call for a 'Head Count' starting the Drummer then the front left hand paddler (the Stroke) then number down the boat. Ensure everyone know their number.

- **Know your buddy**

Your buddy is the person sitting next to you in the boat. Always remember who they are. You need to look out for them if you happen to capsize. Your buddy's personal safety depends on you. The first pair in the boat are responsible for the Drummer and the last pair for the Sweep.

- **Know your safety drill procedure**

Each of you will need to take part in a practice safety drill as part of your initial training in dragon boating. You will need to know this drill because you will be using it if your boat capsizes.

Safety Strokes

The emergency stop: **“Check” or “Jam stop”**

When the Sweep calls “check” or ‘jam stop’ all paddlers place their paddles into the water and hold them steady against the current. The vertical paddle acts as a brake stopping the boat. The team should practice this procedure during training. (see Appendix B)

The support stroke: “ **Brace**”

Also known as “**easy oar**” and “**paddles on**”.

The brace stroke stabilises the boat and prevents capsizes. You should use this stroke at all times when not paddling.

To brace you should hold the paddle with the blade flat on the water.

Practice hitting the water with the paddle and feel the paddle supporting your weight.

You need to use the brace stroke

- When people are getting into and out of the dragon boat or when moving around within the boat.
- After a race, a sprint or a practice set.
- At all times when not paddling. (see Appendix B)

Getting into a Dragon Boat

- Be alert and ready to help others.
- Two people (the Strokes) hold the bow of the boat and make it steady as the rest of the team enters the boat.
- Know the seating position before getting into the boat. It is advisable to line up on-shore in the correct position. The Sweep gets in first followed by two paddlers at a time holding their paddles.
- As soon as you are seated, put the paddles in the water (brace position).
- Strokes and Drummer push off and enter the boat last.
- Before paddling carry out the ‘Head Count’ and the Sweep ensures that the dragon boat is well balanced. That is, paddlers are paired together are of similar weight and or height. Generally, the heavier pairs are usually seated in the dragon boat’s middle section. Avoid placing taller crew into the bow or stern of the dragon boat as the risk of back injury increases for them.

Paddling a dragon boat

Team discipline is an essential element in any team sport. A training program is fundamental to success. There is a wealth of experience and advice that can be gained from one of the sports dragon boat clubs in S.A.

Getting out of a Dragon boat

- › Stay seated in the dragon boat until told to unload.
- › Unload as directed by the Sweep.
- › Ensure the boat is emptied of any accumulated water.

Capsized boats

Capsizes do happen occasionally for example when a boat leaves the allocated race lane thus causing a collision or when teams do not use the 'brace' stroke or adverse weather conditions.

1. During a race

On race days rescue boats are present.

If a dragon boat capsizes remain calm and look for your buddy. This ensures that no one is trapped under the overturned hull, or lost.

IF THEY ARE NOT FOUND, INFORM THE SWEEP.

The crew should stay quietly and calmly in the water with the boat.

Paddlers should (move around the boat not swim underneath) to spread themselves out evenly along each side of the boat to stop the boat rolling over.

The Sweep will shout the words 'Head Count' twice in a loud voice the Drummer will start with "1" and each paddler will number off until reaching the Sweep. Repeat the 'Head Count'.

When the rescue boat arrives the Sweep identify themselves and convey the result of the head count and the state of the team.

The rescue boats once on the scene are in charge.

If the rescue boat is to tow the capsized boat and they order it to be righted then its OK otherwise leave the dragon boat capsized – there is much less chance of injury.

If the crew are required to swim the dragon boat to shore it is to be left in the inverted position. It is very much lighter as there is no water in the dragon boat.

When the team is on-shore, the Sweep should call 'Head Count'.

2. During training

During training sessions rescue boats are not present.

It is strongly recommended that teams train in pairs. A second dragon boat may provide assistance if any difficulty occur. The second boat role is to help with communication - IT IS NOT A RESCUE BOAT.

3. If another dragon boat is near

Follow the normal safety drill.

The sweep should call for assistance, and tell the other team if all members are accounted for.

If there is a team member missing the second team must raise the alarm and inform the authorities.

The second boat - Only the Sweep should communicate with the other team and all of the second boat team should remain in the boat.

The first team should swim the boat to the nearest accessible bank

Once on-shore perform another 'Head Count'.

4. If there is no other dragon boat in sight

Follow the normal safety drill.

Swim the boat to the shore and repeat the 'Head Count'.

If any of the team is missing raise the alarm. Ring 000.

Other risks

Waterborne infections

The water may carry serious disease such as hepatitis, gastro-enteritis etc.

DASA continually monitors the water quality and condition. If there is a health risk involved DASA will notify the team representative.

To minimize the risk of contracting an illness with suspect water

- Do not drink or swallow the water.
- Avoid deliberately splashing water on your face, in your eyes, nose or mouth.

- Avoid swimming or wading in the water.
- Cover all cuts and grazes with waterproof dressings.
- Wear footwear to avoid hurting your feet.
- Wash or shower as soon as possible after dragon boating, before eating or preparing food.
- If you fall ill after dragon boating, seek medical assistance.

Needle stick injury

It is advisable for team members to wear shoes at all times in the event of a needle stick injury caused by used syringes on the ground or in the sand. If a used syringe is found in the area where dragon boating occurs dispose of the syringe safely and report it to the local authorities.

If a needle stick injury occurs seek medical aid.

Heat stress and dehydration

Refer to the section in this manual on – beat the heat.

Hypothermia

When training or racing consider the possibility of hypothermia if the weather is cold and wet or windy and especially if all three conditions apply following immersion. Seek a warm, dry place. Lie down and avoid excess activity or movement. Remove wet clothing. Use blankets/towels to provide warmth. Cover your head to maintain body heat. Have warm drinks (but not alcohol). If the person is unconscious or the hypothermia is severe - seek medical aid.

First Aid

Team Captains should be aware of any crew that have medical conditions that may affect their ability to race ie. Heart problems, blood pressure problems, back problems, epilepsy, diabetes and asthma.

For people who have asthma they are required to carry their puffers and self-administer as required.

A first aid kit is stored in the boat shed.

It is advisable that at least one team member have a current first aid certificate.

On race days such as the Dragon Boat Festival - St Johns Ambulance are present to give first aid.

Security

It is advisable that during training sessions that a person is available to look after belongings while the team is out on the water ie. The Manager Ensure that all motor vehicles are locked.

Alternatively the belongings can be stored at the back near the lockers and the shed locked.

Useful resources and contacts

1. Your team representative
2. Dragon boat websites – www.ausdbf.com.au; www.fcrcc.com; www.paddlezap.com ; www.dragonboat.org.za; www.pendragonboat.com
3. The DragonBoatSA newsletter – DRAGON'S BREATH
4. For further information on dragon boating contact DragonBoatSA by one of the following mediums

Write to GPO Box 684, Adelaide, SA 5000

Telephone 8172 1133

Email info@dragonboatsa.com

Web site www.dragonboatsa.com

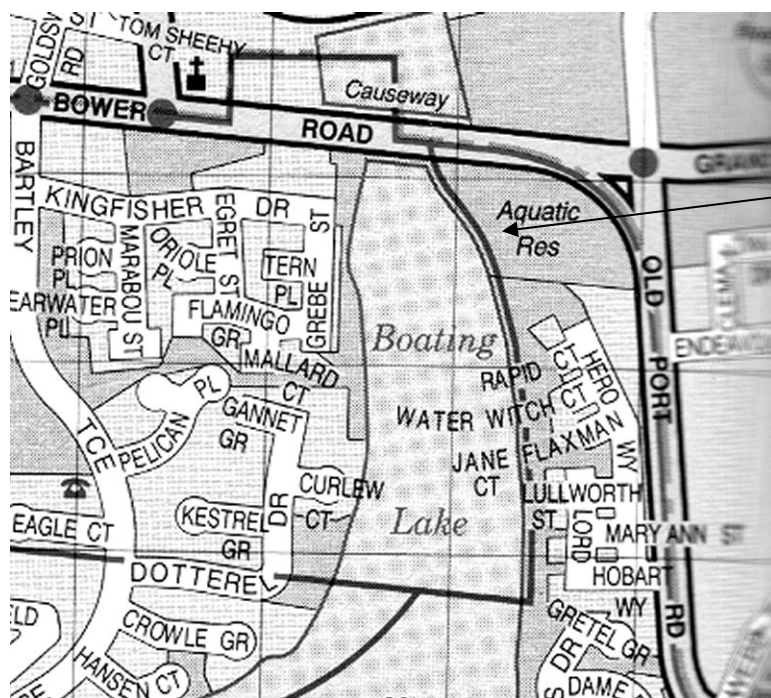
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APPENDIX A. Map of West Lakes training site



Training site
West Lakes
Canoe Club

FACILITIES AVAILABLE

- Storage for dragon boats and associated equipment
- Toilets – for both genders
- Shower and change room facilities – for both genders
- Car parking facilities

APPENDIX B. Safety Strokes

