



Harrison Dragon Boat Regatta

July 27th, 2019 Village of Harrison Hot Springs, BC

Presented By: The Fraser Valley Paddling Club



General Safety for Dragon Boat Paddlers

Updated November, 2018

Before you get into the dragon boat and experience the thrill and fun of paddling, safety should be your number one priority.

Safety Plan

The buddy system is used in the event of a medical emergency or capsizing. Find your partner. Row 1 is to look out for the drummer. Row 10 is to look out for the steersperson.

The steersperson is in charge of and responsible for your boat at all times. His/her commands must be obeyed to insure everyone's safety.

Always listen to your steersperson for directions, even if you hear "hold the boat" and you are in the middle of a race.

Each team member is responsible for his or her own safety at all times while engaging in activities related to practicing and racing in dragon boats.

Before Boarding

Dress appropriately.

Take a bottle of water with you (if needed).

Apply proper sun protection, and/or wear a hat.

Two people on each team should have whistles attached to their life vests for use as a warning signal in case of emergency (encouraged).

The team should review the paddling commands with the steersperson.

The steersperson will communicate the safety and emergency procedures with team before leaving the shore.

Stretching and moderate exercise is advisable before paddling

Life Jackets

All paddlers must wear an approved lifejacket (DTC*, CCG*, DFO*) at all times while on the water (PFD – Personal Floatation Device). PFD's will be provided, or you may bring your own. Please note that at this time Vaikobi PFD's are not permitted. *Department of Transport Canada, Canadian Coast Guard and Department of Fishery and Oceans

After your race, please return borrowed PFD's to the area near the marshaling tent(s).





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Swimming Ability

If you are a non-swimmer, you should inform your team captain, and you or your Captain must inform the steersperson, drummer, and your buddy.

Loading Procedure

Your Captain should know the paddlers' approximate weights and balance the boat accordingly

Once loaded, the steersperson should remind the paddlers about the buddy system and ask them to identify their buddy

Loading procedure should be done row by row. The recommended process for a dock launch is back front and back rows first. Listen to the dock volunteers, dock marshals, and boat officials while getting in or out of the boat. Only one person should be getting in or out of the boat at a time.

For unloading repeat the loading procedure backwards. Please respect the dock and boat officials.

Boat Commands

To be able to control the boat and avoid collisions, all paddlers must know the paddling commands.

The commands should be reviewed with your steersperson at the dock/beach each time you go out

Sample Commands: Hold the boat (paddle in the water to stop the boat), let it ride (stop paddling and rest the paddle on your lap), and back paddle, etc.

Usually the drummer will give the commands, but commands from the steersperson need to be followed and take precedence at all times

Hydration

Maintain hydration by drinking fluids before getting into the boat and during those times when your boat stops for any reason

Exertion Level

Paddling at full speed for 500 meters (around 2 to 3 minutes) is not easy and can be exhausting. If you need to rest at any time, then do so.





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Noise Level

Paddlers should restrict talking in the boat. They need to pay attention to the directions given by the drummer and steersperson. The noise makes it difficult for other paddlers to hear the directions. In addition, the drummer and steersperson must be able to communicate effectively from the rear to the front of the boat.

If someone should be in need of medical assistance, it is imperative that everyone remains silent as the steersperson gives directions.

Boat Capsizing

Dragon boats can capsize.

Unless otherwise instructed, paddlers should stay with the boat, hold onto it, do not try to swim to shore, and wait until help comes.

You must follow the directions of the steersperson and rescue personnel. The steersperson will remain in charge of the team until rescue personnel arrive. Once the rescue boat has arrived, they are in charge.

Use a buddy system. Your buddy is the person sitting beside you in your row. The paddlers in the first row (row 1) of the boat are also buddies with the drummer, and the paddlers in the last row (row 10) are buddies with the steersperson.

If you find yourself under the boat, there will be an air pocket available for you to catch your breath and get your bearings. Feel your way to the side of the boat and then surface on the outside.

Locate or call out for your buddy and be sure he/she is safe.

If other paddlers are injured or have difficulty reaching the boat, give them assistance and make the rescue boat aware of the situation.

The Caller will take a head count.

If the boat capsizes, it may not right itself. The Caller will determine if anyone is trapped under the dragon boat, and act accordingly.

If the dragon boat is upside down after capsizing, the Caller may ask the team to help roll the boat to its upright position. Before that can be done, all paddlers must be accounted for. A strong swimmer may be asked to swim under the boat from one end to the other looking for paddlers.

People shouting and making noise will cause confusion. In the event of an emergency, every paddler has to be ready to follow instructions.

