

Montana Dragon Boat Festival Summarized Race Rules 2018

These rules are based upon International Dragon Boat Federation (IDBF) rules of racing and have been simplified to provide fairness and fun for a community festival.

Safety will always be the first priority for all racing operations, decisions, and management of teams. Universal rules for all paddlers will require:

- Signing all applicable waivers as requested by the festival
- Wearing approved PFD's by USA/CAN authorities at all times while on water
- Avoiding collisions or dangerous behaviors like standing or rocking of the boat
- Responding to all directions given by race officials on the water and also while loading/unloading
- Please refrain from over consumption of alcoholic beverages as any noticeable impairment will deem immediate disqualification of team.

*Adjustments to the race course, times, race schedule, rules and the cancellation of race heats, may occur due to a number of circumstances including weather, insufficient daylight, water conditions, wind, safety, etc. These adjustments are at the discretion of the Event Coordinators and Race Officials.

Divisions:

All divisions will allow up to 20 paddlers per boat/race with one steersperson and one drummer. You may have more people on your team roster (i.e. 23, 27) and rotate who is paddling each race.

Women – all paddlers must be female; with the steersperson and drummer being any gender.

Mixed – Typically 8-12 of each gender with no minimums necessary (i.e. 3 males, 17 women) however a maximum of 12 males will be allowed into the boat for fairness in this division.

Open – This allows for any gender/age composition of teams. (i.e. 17 males, 3 women) and is traditionally the most competitive.

Survivor – all paddlers would have been diagnosed with breast cancer with exceptions allowed for steerspersons and drummers.

Team Composition:

A complete roster of all your paddlers with signed waivers is required to be eligible for racing. **See Sharing of Paddlers below.** Please keep your registration to one team only to ensure fair racing.

Adult teams may paddle with anyone age 15 and older. Paddlers smaller than 90lbs will be required to bring their own proper-fitting sized lifejackets/PFDS before getting in to the boat.

Please ensure you have one manager/captain for the main point of contact and to help provide communication of important information prior to the weekend and during the weekend.

Sharing of Paddlers

In the spirit of supporting maximum participation for a recreational event and also preventing "stacking" of teams creating unfair racing, we are allowing a maximum of four paddlers to be shared for any given team to help them fill the boat for races. Race categories must still be followed (Mixed Category: maximum of 12 men, women's, etc.)

Any sharing of more than four paddlers will require race director approval for unique circumstances.

If these rules are not followed, teams will risk disqualification or being excluded from final placing and medals.

Equipment:

IDBF certified dragon boats, paddles and universal sized Personal Flotation Devices (PFDS) will be provided for all participants to use.

- Paddlers are permitted to use their own paddles provided they conform to the IDBF PS202a Racing Paddle specification (carbon fiber paddles will be allowed).
- Paddlers are permitted to use their own PFDs provided they are approved by the Department of Transport (DOT), Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) or Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO), except for "self inflating jackets". U.S. citizens may also use U.S. Coast Guard approved PFDs, except for "self inflating jackets".
- Butt Pads are allowed as long as they do not damage the boat and are of reasonable size
- Cameras, cox vox, and GPS watches are allowed but no communications equipment or noise makers (whistles, radios)
- All festival equipment (paddles, PDF's) must remain in the dock/marshalling area, please do not bring any equipment back to team tents or other areas.

Race Marshalling:

Posted race times are for race starting on water (i.e. Race #7 10:20am)

There will be a general marshalling area for all teams to meet in their lanes where a coordinator will then designate which dock/boat you will go to. You will also be fitted for PFDS and paddles in this area.

Please marshal for your race 45 minutes prior to the posted race time or if delays occur marshal 3 races early. (i.e. race #12 on water means Race #15 should be heading to marshalling area)

This allows for getting a proper bench order, fitting equipment, loading/unloading of boats, and team strategy with steerspersons, etc.

Racing on Water:

1. Please proceed to the start line and avoid crossing the course as races may be in progress.
2. Teams must start the race in the lane assigned as indicated on the race schedule and remain in the assigned lane for the entire race, unless otherwise directed by the Course Marshall.
3. Starter will announce **"Boats to the start line"**. Boats will proceed to the start line. The race may start without your team if you delay.
4. Starter will confirm team names and lane assignments.
5. Starter will ask specific boats, by Lane # to **"Move Forward one bench"**, **"Hold/Check Boat"** or **"Back Paddle"** to get boats positioned as evenly as possible prior to the start.
6. Starter will start the race when all boats are relatively lined up (in the Starter's opinion, under the best possible conditions for a fair start). No running starts will be permitted.

The start commands will be:

"WE HAVE ALIGNMENT"

"PADDLERS, ARE YOU READY" (if the team is NOT READY, the Drummer must immediately raise a hand to signal they are not ready)

"ATTENTION PLEASE"

Air horn blast (from 1-5 seconds after "Attention")

Any paddle movement after the "Attention" command may result in a time penalty. Paddle movement means: taking strokes, moving your paddle in the water and sculling the paddle.

During the Race, officials may call out to boats to adjust their course in order to avoid collisions or stay within their lanes. i.e. "Lane 2 move to your left!", "Boat 1 move to your right!"

Multiple blasts of the air horn signify all boats to stop the race for injuries, weather, or false starts.

All steerspersons must be looking in front, to each side, and behind during the race to keep safety as their priority and leave calls to their boat for the drummers or as a secondary priority.

Please avoid encroaching upon other boats lanes of travel by keeping at least 2 meters apart at all times.

If teams do not respond to the official's directions penalties may be assessed

Teams will be required to finish in their lanes with all the paddlers/steerspersons/drummers that they began the race with. Finishing is determined by the first part of the boat crossing the line.

After finishing, all boats should head back to the docks where they loaded from ASAP to help keep the festival on time.

If any teams have any concerns about the race (being cutoff by another boat, etc) the manager/captain only should immediately tell the water official or the dock official upon their return so that we may hold results while the concern is investigate. Equipment will then be exchanged to an awaiting team or back to volunteers in the marshalling area.

Medical Emergencies, Collisions or Capsizing:

- In the unlikely event of a medical emergency or injury the boat should stop immediately and paddles crossed like an X in the air without waving to signal race officials.

If boats collide:

- Steerspersons/drummers will assess if the paddlers or boats are damaged enough to stop and/or call for help. If a paddler goes overboard the boat must stop immediately and place paddles in a crossed X to call for help from officials.

If a boat capsizes:

- All paddlers should stay with the boat as it will float.
- Steersperson and drummer will do immediate head counts and look under the boat if necessary for missing paddlers.
- Paddlers should check for their bench mate, assess any injuries, confirm PFDS on and working
- Paddlers will await for instruction from the safety boats while staying with boat and reassuring other paddlers.
- First Aid maybe administered on the water or transported to the shore if necessary.
- To avoid mass confusion and further jeopardize the safety of all, other boats in the area may approach but must await commands from safety boats regarding rescue assistance.
- Paddlers will be rescued in priority of injured, non-swimmers, etc.
- Equipment will be gathered and brought back to shore after all paddlers are taken care of.

Race Officials

All of these rules are meant to provide guidance to teams and establish fair and safe racing for all. Race Officials have the authority to assess sanctions for infractions at their discretion including but not limited to time penalties, re-running races, and disqualification. All decisions by Race Officials are final and binding.

We reserve the right to adjust rules or make exceptions in the spirit of everyone having fun, maximizing participation, and always staying safe.

Rules provided by Elemental Dragon Boat, Race Director for MDBF.