

Official Rules and Regulations The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival

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ADMINISTRATION

1. Eligibility

- 1.1 Racing divisions will be determined from the combined times of the morning and afternoon races. The teams will be ranked according to combined times and then grouped into three competitive divisions with an equal number of teams in each division. The four fastest teams in each division will have the opportunity to race each other for their division championship.
- 1.2 Each Team must compete with a minimum of eight women paddlers per boat per race. If any Team is short the required 8 women, it shall race shorthanded to correspond to such deficiency. Each Team must race with a minimum of 16 paddlers per boat.
- 1.3 Each Team must race with a drummer.

2. Registration

- 2.1. The registration fee is \$800 per team. Each team must register and pay a non-refundable deposit fee of \$100, with the balance of the non-refundable registration fee due by June 1 of the current year.
- 2.2. Final team rosters shall be submitted to The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival by June 15 of the current year. The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival may accept late registrations or late changes to team rosters at its discretion.
- 2.3. Failure to pay fees on time or file requisite documents or information on time shall result in termination of registration subject to the discretion of The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival.
- 2.4. Teams withdrawing from the event after registering must submit notice in writing prior to June 15 of the current year. All registration fees and deposits are non-refundable notwithstanding termination of team registration, team cancellation or disqualification, race cancellation, race re-scheduling, or any other reason.

3. Waivers

- 3.1 All team members must sign waivers stating that they have read and understand the conditions of the waiver and are aware of and accept all risks associated with the event, and wave all rights to take legal action against any of the sponsors, their volunteers and employees, The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival, its volunteers and employees, The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival organizing committee, its volunteers and employees, and any other person, partnership, corporation or association in any way associated with The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival, for injury or death, or for loss or damage to property, howsoever caused. For participants less than 18 years of age, parents or guardians must also read, understand and sign the waivers.
- 3.2 Team Managers must submit to The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival properly signed and dated waivers for all team members by June 15 of the current year. The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival may accept late submission of waivers at its discretion, however, waivers must be read, understood and signed well in advance of any on-water activity.

4. Dragon Boats and Equipment

- 4.1 The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival shall provide Dragon Boats, paddles, drums, and life jackets.
- 4.2 All equipment shall be returned in good condition immediately following practices and races. In the event that The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival determines negligence, replacement or repair costs shall be charged to the team responsible.
- 4.3 Any teams or members wishing to use paddles or personal flotation devices not provided by The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival must first have these items approved by The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival at its discretion.
- 4.4 Only the drum and drumsticks provided by The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival shall be used to signal the stroke rate in addition to non-electrically assisted voice commands.

5. Teams

- 5.1 A person shall be a registered team member of only one team. At its discretion, The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival may permit a person to change teams.
- 5.2 All team members must be registered.
- 5.3 A registered team member must be 14 years old prior to the first practice session.
- 5.4 A registered team member must be listed on the team roster by the Team Manager, must have read, understood, signed and dated, and must have had such waiver filed by the Team Manager with The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival.
- 5.5 Teams are allowed a maximum of 25 registered members, comprising of:
 - 1 Drummer
 - 1 The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival Qualified Steers-persons
 - 20 Paddlers
 - 3 SparesOf any of the above, one person must be registered as the Team Manager. Of the Paddlers and Spares, one shall be designated as an alternate Steers-person, and must be qualified as such by The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival.
- 5.6 Each team must compete with a minimum of 8 women paddlers per Dragon Boat per race. If a team is short the required 8 women, it shall race shorthanded accordingly. Each team must race with a minimum of 16 Paddlers per Dragon Boat, plus one Drummer, plus one Steers-person.
- 5.7 Each team must race with a Drummer who shall weigh no more than 150 pounds.
- 5.8 The Steers-person will be provided by the Festival unless the team has an experienced Steers-person who has competed in a previous Dragon Boat Race. At its discretion, The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival may at any time replace any team's Steers-person at with another Steers-person, despite that replacement not being a registered member of that team. At its discretion, The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival may at any time direct that a team not participate further in on-water activity due to its Steers-person not being capable.
- 5.9 At its discretion, The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival may at any time require a check of crew members against their team rosters.

- 5.10. Team Managers shall ensure that only registered team members participate in on-water activities. Any team permitting a non-registered person to participate in any on-water activity shall be subject to disqualification and be prohibited from further on-water participation, subject to the discretion of The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival.
- 5.11. At its discretion, The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival may disqualify and prohibit from further participation any team member or team if such a team member or team displays poor conduct.
- 5.12. Each team and each team member is required to follow these rules.
- 5.13. The Team Manager shall be responsible for:
 - Team Conduct
 - Communication and Distribution of Information to the Team
 - Communication with The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival.
 - Collection and filing of all requisite information and forms with The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival
 - Liaison with race officials
 - Attendance at the Team Managers' meeting. The meeting will be held at 5:00 p.m. on the Friday immediately before the races. All team managers from Southeastern Wisconsin should attend this meeting. Information will be mailed to teams from out of town.

SAFETY PROCEDURES, EMERGENCY PROCEDURES AND GENERAL SANCTIONS

1. Application

Safety Procedures, Emergency Procedures, and General Sanctions apply throughout The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival, including but not limited to practices and races.

2. Safety Procedures

- 2.1 The Steers-person is responsible for the Dragon Boat and the team.
- 2.2 The Steers-person shall communicate the safety procedure and emergency procedure to each team member before each practice session and before each race.
- 2.3 Dragon Boats shall give way to each other and must give way to all other persons and vessels.
- 2.4 Each team member shall wear a personal flotation device during all on-water activities, including all practices and races.
- 2.5 Each team member shall be capable of swimming 50 meters while wearing a personal flotation device. The Team Manager shall ensure that all team members are capable of complying with this rule.
- 2.6 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.

- 2.7 Individuals or teams deemed unsafe by The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival or its designate shall not be permitted to continue on-water activities, including all practices or races.
- 2.8 It is an unsafe practice for team members to jump out of the Dragon Boat and into the water. This activity will result in a team being disqualified from competition.

3. Emergency Procedures

In the event of a Dragon Boat swamping or capsizing, the following shall apply.

- 3.1 The Steers-person shall retain charge of the team until rescue personnel arrive.
- 3.2 The Steers-person shall immediately determine if any persons are trapped in the Dragon Boat, and act accordingly.
- 3.3 Each team member must ensure that the team members immediately in front, behind, and beside, are not trapped in the Dragon Boat.
- 3.4 Each team member must follow directions given by the Steers-person, until such time as rescue personnel arrive, after which each team member must follow directions given by rescue personnel.
- 3.5 The crew must hold onto the Dragon Boat. Individuals must not swim to shore.
- 3.6 Upon ensuring that no persons are in distress, the rescue personnel shall direct the team to swim the Dragon Boat to shore, with or without towing assistance by the rescue personnel.

4 General Sanctions

- 4.1 At its complete discretion, The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival may dismiss at any time, including but not limited to any practices or races, any person or team from further practices or races for:
 - 4.1.1 Violating safety principals or procedures;
 - 4.1.2 Participating or attempting to participate in on water activities while inebriated or while carrying alcohol;
 - 4.1.3 Violating rules;
 - 4.1.4 Demonstrating poor conduct or behavior;
 - 4.1.5 Willfully, recklessly, or negligently damaging or losing equipment;
 - 4.1.6 Disobeying reasonable requests or instructions made by officials or their designates.
- 4.2 When equipment is damaged or lost through the willfully, reckless, or negligent actions of a person or team, then that person or team shall be responsible for financially reimbursing The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival

PRACTICES

1. Location

Practices will take place on the Root River.

2. Schedule

- 2.1 As part of the registration fee, each team shall be granted two practice sessions during the evenings or weekends of the weeks immediately preceding the race. Additional sessions may be available for a further fee, as scheduling and staffing may permit. Arrangements for scheduling practice sessions or extra practice sessions shall be made through The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival Team Training Coordinator or such persons as The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival shall otherwise designate.
- 2.2 All practices shall be one and one half hours long. They will include twenty minutes of land orientation/instruction and 50-minutes on the water. Teams shall assemble at their scheduled practice start time.
- 2.3 All practices shall be coordinated by The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival or such persons or organizations as it may designate, and team members and teams shall follow the directions given by The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival or such persons or organizations as it may designate.
- 2.4 By the completion of its final practice, each team's manager shall either inform The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival of which two members on its roster it have been qualified as Steers-persons by The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival, or shall make arrangements with The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival for The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival to provide a Steers-person for the race.
- 2.5 Teams assembling with less than sixteen Paddlers plus Drummer may forfeit their practice without right to rescheduling.
- 2.6 Teams having a majority of their members that have not practiced in the current year may be disqualified.

RACES

1 Location

Races will take place in the waters south of Samuel Meyer Park. Teams shall assemble at the designated areas noted on maps provided in the team packet.

2 Race Scheduling

- 2.1 The starting order for all races will be determined prior to race day by The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival, and be issued to Team Managers. The starting order will also be posted at the marshalling area.
- 2.2 Each race will start as soon as possible following the race preceding it. Although the order of races shall remain constant, the start times shall be approximate. Each team must be prepared to race significantly before it's estimated race time. Team Managers are responsible for monitoring the progression of the races and ensuring that their team is ready to race when called upon, regardless of the estimated start time. In its discretion, The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival shall not wait for teams which are not ready to start prior to their estimated race times.

3 Pre-race Procedure

- 3.1 Teams shall report to the marshalling area at least 45 minutes prior to the estimated start time of their race. Team Managers are responsible for reporting in.

- 3.2 Teams members shall board in accordance with the instructions of the Chief Marshall.
- 3.3 Teams shall board the Dragon Boat designated to them and will proceed to the start area on instructions from the Chief Marshall.
- 3.4 No more than two spare paddles may be boarded.
- 3.5 When proceeding to the start area, teams shall paddle beside the breakwater, without entering into the racing lanes, regardless of whether the racing lanes are in use or not, so that collisions can be avoided and so that congestion from turning Dragon Boats in the start area can be avoided.
- 3.6 Once in the start area, the teams shall hold in the start area, well back from the start, line facing down their lanes. Unless otherwise directed, teams shall not venture into the bay above the start area.
- 3.7 In the event of maneuvering difficulty caused by wind, the referee may direct teams to assemble in the bay above the start area, and then direct the teams to approach the start area as a group.

4 Race Procedure

- 4.1 The Referee shall have control of the race prior to the start. Only Steers-persons may communicate with the Referee, and such communication shall be kept to an absolute minimum.
- 4.2 In the Referee's discretion, without waiting for stragglers or waiting for teams, which have ventured into the bay above the start area, the referee shall ask the teams to "Please approach the start line." All teams shall immediately do so, lining up in the middle of their designated lanes, facing straight down the course, not crossing the start line, and holding in position approximately one-half Dragon Boat length from the starting line.
- 4.3 If, in the referee's opinion, a Steers-person is not capable, the referee shall direct that that team withdraw from the race.
- 4.4 Once satisfied, the Referee will transfer control of the race to the Starter with the command: "Mr./Mdme. Starter, the race is yours."
- 4.5 The Starter shall assume control of the race with the reply: "Thank you, Mr./Mdme. Referee."
- 4.6 The starter will ask each crew to bring their Dragon Boat up to, but not over the start line.
- 4.7 The starter will instruct each team as to how to position itself.
- 4.8 Once all teams are in the middle of their lanes, facing straight down the course, not moving forward, and not having crossed the start line, the Starter shall call: "Attention please!" and within two seconds sound the start horn.
- 4.9 Upon hearing the starting horn, each team shall proceed to the finish directly along the middle of its racing lane, without crossing out of its racing lane, without encroaching on the side of its racing lane, and without riding the wake of another Dragon Boat.

- 4.10 A false start shall be indicated by the Starter sounding the start horn a second time. The Referee shall assist the starter in communicating a false start by sounding the megaphone siren. Steers-persons and Drummers are responsible for noticing if a false start has been called.
- 4.11 After a fair start, the Referee shall resume control of the race.
- 4.12 The Referee shall follow the Dragon Boats down the course, and if necessary and where possible, direct Steers-persons to maintain the middle of their lanes.
- 4.13 If a Dragon Boat appears to be losing directional control, is crossing out of its lane, is encroaching on the side of its lane, or is riding the wake of another Dragon Boat, the Referee, in the Referee's discretion, may either stop that Dragon Boat, or any or all other Dragon Boats, so as to avoid possible collisions.
- 4.14 If progress of a Dragon Boat is affected by another Dragon Boat, the referee shall halt the race and issue a re-start.
- 4.15 If, for any reason, circumstances arise such that the Referee, in the Referee's discretion, determines that a race should be halted, then the Referee shall halt the race and issue a re-start.
- 4.16 If a Dragon Boat is not steering straight down the course, its crew shall immediately hold the Dragon Boat (jamb their paddles into the water and stop the Dragon Boat) so as to prevent the Dragon Boat from crossing out of its lane or spinning out.
- 4.17 Restarts may take place immediately, or may be held later in the day, at the discretion of the Referee.
- 4.18 At the finish, the Referee will signal a clean race with a white flag, and a penalty with a red flag.
Penalties shall be reported by the Referee to the Chief Official.

4A Rough Water Conditions

- 4A.1 The Race Director, in consultation with other Race Officials, may declare "Rough Water Conditions" if in his/her opinion conditions so warrant.
- 4A.2 Upon such declaration any or all of the following procedures MAY be ordered by the Race Director:
 - 4A.2.1 Heads and tails removed from the boats.
 - 4A.2.2 Teams to race without a drummer.
 - 4A.2.3 Teams to compete with a maximum of 16 paddlers, including a minimum of 6 women paddlers per Dragon Boat per race. If a team is short the required 6 women, it shall race shorthanded accordingly. Each team must race with a minimum of 14 Paddlers per Dragon Boat plus one Steers-person.
 - 4A.2.4 Alterations to the normal starting procedures.

4A.2.5 A shortened racecourse.

4A.2.6 Adjustments to race times to compensate for changed conditions.

5 Post-race Procedure

- 5.1 Upon crossing the finish line, all teams shall proceed along the shoreline back to the docks, being very careful to not turn broadside into Dragon Boats still finishing.
- 5.2 Paddlers with access to bailing buckets shall bail continuously from the finish until back at the dock. Paddlers shall not splash or otherwise deliberately bring water into the Dragon Boat. Upon arrival at the dock, each Dragon Boat shall be substantially free of water and be ready for the next race.
- 5.3 Teams shall approach the docks at a dead slow pace so as to avoid collision damage.

6 Race Penalties

- 6.1 Teams missing the start of their race shall be disqualified from that race. Neither the Marshall, the Referee, nor the Starter are obliged to wait for tawdry teams.
- 6.2 Any Dragon Boat false starting will be penalized 5 seconds. Any Dragon Boat false starting for the second time in the same race will be penalized an additional 10 seconds.
- 6.3 Any Dragon Boat affecting the progress of another Dragon Boat will be penalized 20 seconds.
- 6.4 Any Dragon Boat crossing out of its lane but not affecting the progress of another Dragon Boat will be penalized 5 seconds.
- 6.5 Any Dragon Boat not obeying instructions from the Referee shall be disqualified at the discretion of the Referee. The onus is on the team, particularly the Drummer and Steers-person, to keep alert to such instructions, particularly while progressing down the course.
- 6.6 General sanctions continue to apply in addition to race penalties.

7 Protests

- 7.1 Any protest must be lodged by the Team Manager with the Race Director within fifteen minutes of the conclusion of the protested race. The cost of lodging a protest is \$100, payable in cash at the time of the lodging of the protest.
- 7.2 The Race Director shall summon the Race Committee. The Race Committee shall render a decision on a majority basis.
- 7.3 There is no appeal of the Race Committee's decision.
- 7.4 If the application is successful, the \$100 protest fee shall be returned to the Team Manager.

8 Voice Commands

- 8.1 The following voice commands will be used by The Great Midwest Dragon Boat Festival provided Steers-persons:
- 8.2 **Attention** – Used to get all paddlers’ undivided attention.
- 8.3 **SIT Up** – When paddlers hear this command it is the signal to sit upright, have their paddles across their laps and to be ready for the next command.
- 8.4 **Paddles Up** – The signal for paddlers to instantly assume the paddling position (paddles raised above the water, bodies in position to paddle). They will hold this position until the next command is issued.
- 8.5 **Take It Away** – or **Go** or a sound device, such as an air horn – This is the signal, issued with considerable gusto, to commence paddling. Should be preceded by instructions as to whether this is a racing start, a slow and easy effort to get the boat moving, or even just a given number of strokes for maneuvering purposes, for example, “five easy strokes forward.”
- 8.6 **Let It Run** – The command to stop paddling immediately.
- 8.7 **Left side pull** – Paddlers on the left side of the boat lean out and paddle sideways to move the boat to the left. The same command can be given to the right side of the boat to move it in the opposite direction. Other variations for boat maneuvering include calling on the left front, right front, left rear or right rear paddlers to sidepaddle.
- 8.8 **Back paddle** – All paddlers stroke in reverse to move the boat backwards.
- 8.9 **Stop the boat** – Paddlers thrust blades vertically into water and dig in to bringing boat to a halt.
- 8.10 **Hold water** – Paddlers use variety of strokes (above) to maintain the position of the boat on the water despite wind, current etc. Typically used during pre-race positioning.
- 8.11 **Steady the Boat** – Paddles horizontal with flat blades resting on top of the water to stabilize the boat.