



Race Rules

INTRODUCTION

Corporate & Club teams compete in the Wellington Dragon Boat Festival at the invitation of the Festival Organisers.

The organisers aim to provide fair and honest racing and a level playing field for all participants, corporate teams and club teams in the Wellington Dragon Boat Festival events.

The organisers reserve the right to refuse to invite or indeed to decline entry to any team (Club or Corporate) or individual for any reason that they see fit.

SQUAD AND CREW COMPOSITION

1. Crews and Squads must consist of paddlers meeting the crew and squad composition requirements laid down by the Festival Committee.

“Crews” are defined as “people in a dragon boat at any one time, paddling, steering or drumming”. A crew consists of 20 paddlers, 1 sweep and 1 drummer. 22 people in total.

A “squad” is defined as a group of 25 (including drummer and sweep). A list of all 25 members must be presented to the Festival Committee ten days prior to participation in each event.

2. Your on-the-day race crew must be selected from your “squad”, with three members of your squad used as reserves who may be taken in or out of the race crew at your leisure. A squad list of all 25 members must be presented to the Festival Committee at least ten days prior to each Festival. Any changes to this must be notified, in writing, at least one hour prior to the first race.
3. All crews must consist of at least eight male and eight female paddlers.
4. In the event of Rules 1, 2 or 3 being contravened, the Race Director, at his sole discretion, reserves the right to refuse any crew entry in a race, races or division, or to disqualify that crew from a race, races or indeed the entire Festival.



5. The Race Director may from time to time allow, or even enforce, variations to the above, for reasons of safety or at his discretion, should exceptional circumstances exist.

RACING DIVISIONS

Corporate Division

This division has been designed to cater for “company based” or “organisation based” teams who are entering Dragon Boat Festivals for the purpose of team building and company exposure. Rules for this division are based around fun and a level playing field for business’ or organisations and their employees, rather than specialist athletes and/or teams.

6. Teams will be restricted to training in Festival Boats at supervised Festival training times. The number of allowed training sessions will be restricted on an annual basis and will be circulated by your Festival organiser early in the season.
7. Corporate Division entry is open to business organisations only and crews must consist of at least eight male and eight female paddlers.
8. At least 15 squad members must be employees of the same company or a subsidiary or be full or part-time contractors to that company.
9. The employee status of a corporate squad should be confirmed along with the squad list which is furnished ten days prior to event participation as in Rule 1, and signed off by a senior executive of the company.

An “employee” is defined, as a person employed by a company for no less than 15 hours per week.

10. Any squad member paddling in the Corporate Division may not paddle in Open Division at the same Festival. Squad members may paddle in one division only but may be on the squad list for more than one team in the same division.
11. Crew names are subject to approval by the Festival Committee.
12. Some exceptions to the above may be approved by the National Director. An example of this are the “Busting with Life” and “Abreast in a Boat” teams.



Open Division

This division has been designed to cater for Club teams or for the more serious company based teams who are predominantly competitive Dragon Boaters or outrigger paddlers. Rules for this division are based around serious competition for competitive athletes and teams.

13. Open Division entry is open to any organisation or group and crews must consist of at least eight male and eight female paddlers.
14. A squad list must be presented to the Festival Committee at least ten days prior to the Festival, and signed off by a senior club or company official.
15. Any squad member paddling in the Open Division may not paddle in Corporate Division at the same Festival. Squad members may paddle in one division only but may be on the squad list for more than one team in the same division.
16. Crew names are subject to approval by the Festival Committee.

General

17. The fact of crew entry in any particular championship shall entitle the Festival Committee to assume compliance with the Race Rules.
18. The Festival Committee reserves the right to re-categorise any crew from Corporate to Open or vice-versa should they feel that the team is in conflict with the spirit of the division rules and/or the team has contravened any of the rules of the division.

RACE EQUIPMENT

19. If so designated, boats must race with a drum supplied by the Festival Committee on board. Actual use of the drum is optional.
20. Boats must race with flags, dragon-heads and any decorations supplied by the Festival Committee. Exceptions are at the discretion of the Race Directors.



21. Crews must race in Festival approved boats only and in the condition in which they are supplied by the Festival Committee.
22. Only paddles approved by the Festival Committee can be used. No paddles shall be structurally modified in any way. Paddles are subject to inspection by the Race Directors.
23. Paddle breakage is the responsibility of the crew and in no way constitutes grounds for an adjustment to results. The Race Director will hear appeals on the grounds of major equipment failure (e.g. boat, sweep oar).
24. Crews may race in any clothing they choose, provided water safety is taken into account.

SAFETY REGULATIONS

25. **Each competitor must be able to swim (around 50 metres in light clothing is suggested). It is the responsibility of the person entering a crew or the team manager, to ensure that members of the crew comply with this rule.**
26. Personal flotation equipment may be worn by competitors but this does not relieve the competitor, or the manager entering the crew, from complying with Rule 25 and Rule 29.
27. Crews may race in any clothing they choose, provided water safety is taken into account.
28. The Festival Organisers, The Race Directors or their designated officials, have the authority to disqualify a crew member and/or a team on the grounds of consumption of alcohol prior to racing. Alcohol and Dragon Boat Racing, for obvious safety reasons, do not mix.
29. Each competitor is solely responsible for their own safety during official practice sessions and during races.
30. The Festival Committee or Festival Organisers as well as any other individuals or organisations connected directly or indirectly with the Wellington Dragon Boat Festivals, will accept no responsibility for any injury, damage or loss incurred by competitors or members of a team.



CREW ASSEMBLY AND CREW LOADING

31. Each crew must report to the crew assembly area 20 minutes before their official race time.
32. Crews will be directed to Crew Loading prior to their race and will be allocated boats by crew loading officials, who cannot guarantee the allocation of particular boats. Every endeavour will be made to ensure crews race in their own sponsored boats.
33. Crews shall use the boat allocated to them and must use the lane as per the race draw.
34. Non compliance with Crew Loading Officials' requests may result in disqualification by the Race Directors.
35. After crews have embarked from Crew Loading they must proceed directly to the starting area and report to the Starter.
36. Crews proceeding to the starting area must keep clear of the course and must not interfere with a race that is in progress.

STARTING PROCEDURE

37. All crews in the starting area will obey the instructions of the Starter and other officials under the Starter's control.
38. Each crew will take up its position in the starting area in the correct lane allocated to it.
39. Starting procedure and method will be at the discretion of the Race Starter who will report to the Race Director. The Starter will be positioned on the starting line.
40. To start a race the Starter will first line all boats up so that the nose of all boats is on the start line. After due warning, the starter will call "paddles ready" and between one and four seconds after this call, a hooter or gun will sound signalling the race start.
41. In the event of a false start, a second gun or hooter will be sounded immediately. All crews will then return to the starting line and the race will be restarted. The Starter will issue a warning to any crew that causes a false start.



42. Any crew that fails to return to the starting line after a false start, or that causes two false starts, or by way of its behaviour causes delays for the start, may be disqualified by Race Directors in consultation with the Starter.

RACE CONDUCT

43. The correct course for each boat is a straight line from its starting position to the finish. Each boat must remain in its correct lane and must not interfere with the other boats in the race.
44. A crew which leaves its lane and is in danger of interfering with another crew, **must stop their boat to avoid a collision.**
45. The Race Directors may disqualify any crew deliberately moving to the side of its lane, and drafting off the wake of another boat. A warning to this end would generally be given at the team managers meeting prior to the Festival.
46. Should crews change lanes, collide or interfere with other crews any action to be taken will be at the discretion of the Race Directors. Action may take the form of relegation or disqualification for offending crews, or elevation and opportunities to re-race for affected crews. In extreme circumstances a race may be re-run.
47. It is the responsibility of the Crew Loading Chief Official to substitute boats, if in his/her opinion, the original boat allocation will adversely affect fair and equal competition.
48. If in the opinion of the Festival Committee a boat is damaged deliberately by the crew, the Committee reserves the right to impose a penalty of up to \$500 on the organisation entering the crew. The Committee also reserves the right to call on such an organisation to pay the cost of the repairs.

FINISH LINE

49. The finish line will be from the Judges' location to the finishing line buoy or marker. To assist competitors, buoys will be laid as close as possible to the actual finish line.
50. In the event of a tie for first place, during any race other than finals, both crews proceed through to the next round.
51. In the event of a tie for first place in a final, those crews involved may be required to re-paddle a sudden death decider, at a time to be determined by the Race Director, but before the end of the event.



52. In the event of equal points being accumulated by two crews after the final race of a points system series of races, the crew finishing ahead in the actual final race will be designated the place. Should the final race also involve a tie, a count back system will apply.
53. The Judges shall decide the finishing order of the race and their decision shall be final and conclusive. The judges report to the Race Director.

PROTESTS

54. In the event of a crew wishing to lodge a protest the Crew Captain or Manager must lodge the protest in writing with the Race Directors. A protest must be lodged within 30 minutes of the official race result being announced. Crews should announce their intention to protest immediately after the race. The decision of the Race Director will be final.
55. Crews shall abide by any rules or instructions for the conduct of the races that may be issued by the Race Director. Any crews that fail to abide by these rules may be disqualified.

CREW CAPTAIN / TEAM MANAGER RESPONSIBILITIES

56. The Crew Captain / Team Manager only shall represent the crew and shall speak on behalf of, or make any representation concerning the crew.
57. **It is the responsibility of the Crew Captain / Manager to ensure all members of the squad can swim. Should the Captain ascertain members of the squad cannot swim, those members must be withdrawn. Failure to enforce this requirement could mean immediate disqualification of the squad concerned.**
58. In the event of a capsize, it is the responsibility of the Crew Captain to ensure the crew remains with the dragon boat until rescued.

OTHER FESTIVALS / REGATTAS

59. Crews travelling to other Festivals/Regattas within New Zealand do so by invitation from the race or event organisers only, and entirely at their own expense.
60. Crews in receipt of invitations to compete in overseas festivals passed on by the Festival Committee will abide by any conditions placed on those invitations by the Festival Committee.