

First and foremost:

Our mission is to build fitness and fun through dragon boat racing, provide competitive opportunities for teams, to promote community spirit while bridging communities and cultures, and to give service by generating funds for charity.



**General information:**

Races will take place on Lake Meridian at Lake Meridian Park. For a map, please consult <http://www.seattledragonboatraces.com/maps>. Teams will assemble at Lake Meridian Park on the east bank of Lake Meridian. Parking is available in several lots just a short distance from the park. Please consult [www.seattledragonboatraces.com/maps](http://www.seattledragonboatraces.com/maps) for directions to the parking/shuttle areas. Out of consideration for the volunteers and Lake Meridian Park personnel, all teams are requested to leave their tent areas clean and orderly.

Eight fiberglass, BuK Dragon Boats will be used, with four boats in a typical heat. While one set of four boats is racing, the other set will be unloading and loading at the dock. Lane 1 is the southernmost lane, closest to Kent-Kangley. Lane 4 is the northernmost lane, farthest from Kent-Kangley. The race course is approximately 500 meters long (as established by the race director and described in the captain's meeting), and the start and finish lines will be marked with buoys on the outsides/insides of lanes 1 through 4. A buoy between lanes 2 and 3, and buoys on the outsides of lanes 1 & 4 will mark the halfway point of the race.

The Kent Cornucopia Dragon Boat Race will provide lifejackets and paddles to participants who do not bring their own. Paddlers will be allowed to apply wax or other grip-assisting substances to their personally-owned paddles but should not apply wax or other substances to festival-owned paddles (this includes applying wax to the hands before using a festival-owned paddle). Personal paddles must be IDBF-approved and fit into a paddle template. Wood and carbon fiber paddles are acceptable. Please no butt pads or water bottles in the boats during racing.

**Regulations:****Team composition:**

The name and signature of every individual rostered with a registered team shall appear on a dated Kent Cornucopia Days Race Waiver Form. No paddler may be present on more than one roster. All teams may have a maximum of 24 paddlers on their roster, plus 1 caller and 1 tiller. All teams are required to have at least 18 paddlers on a boat during a race and may not have more than 20 paddlers. There will be two racing divisions: Mixed & Women. Mixed boats must have a minimum of 8 female paddlers regardless of the number of male paddlers. Women's boats may not have any male paddlers. Paddlers in the Mixed and Women's division must be at least 14 years of age. Paddlers in the High School division must be between 12 and 18 years of age, inclusive. All callers and tillers must be at least 14 years of age, but need not meet other age or sex requirements of the division. Every Dragon Boat on the water must have a caller.

**Bracketing and double rostering:**

Mixed teams will be assigned to a bracket based on their performance in the morning races. Seeds 1-12 will be Mixed A, seeds 13-24 will be Mixed B, and seeds 25-36 will be Mixed C. Seeds are an estimate at this time. A, B and C are proportionally based upon how many mixed teams we have participating. Women's team bracketing and seeding will be done the same way as the Mixed. There will only be an A & B seed in the Women's division at this time. Seeding will be based on place of finish with time as a tie breaker. Before brackets are determined, a paddler rostered on any registered team may paddle with any other team. After brackets are determined, individuals may paddle for other teams in the same or in a higher level but may not paddle for a team in a lower bracket. The Head Dock Marshal will have a copy of each team's final roster and will actively check team composition to ensure that no one is unfairly "stacking" a lower-bracket boat. Teams attempting to cheat by stacking may at the discretion of the Race Director be disqualified immediately and not allowed to race. Please be advised that this is your only warning!

All paddlers rostered with a Women's team may paddle for any Mixed team but not for any other Women's team. All women rostered with a Mixed team may paddle for any Women's team. All paddlers rostered with a High School team may paddle for any other High School team or for any Mixed or Women's team. All paddlers rostered with a Mixed or Women's team who are 18 years or younger may paddle for any High School team.

### Lane assignments:

Starting order for the first round of heats will be determined prior to the races, with lane assignments determined by random draw. After the first round of heats, heat composition will be assigned based on the results of previous heats in such a way that teams will not be consistently racing with the same teams. Lane assignment will be based on the teams' earlier performances: the highest-ranked team will race in lane 2, the second-highest in lane 3, the third-highest in lane 1, and the fourth-highest in lane 4.

### Unsportsmanlike conduct:

Unsportsmanlike conduct or behavior will include failure to heed an instruction from a Race Official or volunteer; use of obscene language or gestures; delaying the start of a race without just cause; disregard for the Kent Cornucopia Days principles of fairness or safety; illegally "stacking" a boat as described above; or abusive behavior towards any official, competitor, or spectator. The team captain is responsible for the conduct and behavior of his or her team. At the discretion of the Race Director, unsportsmanlike conduct or behavior by a team or a rostered team member may result in a time penalty, disqualification from a heat, or disqualification from the regatta.

Race Officials include: Race Director, Starter, Course Marshal, Timekeeper, Finish Line Judges, Head Dock Marshal, Dock Marshal, and Chief Marshal.

### Safety on the water

The tiller is responsible for the Dragon Boat and the safety of the team while on the water. This includes making sure every person on the boat is wearing a United States or Canadian Coast Guard Certified personal flotation device (PFD) and that one extra PFD and two extra paddles are on the boat, before the team leaves the dock. Individuals or teams deemed unsafe by the Race Director will not be permitted to continue racing.

### Racing:

#### On the shore:

Races will commence as scheduled by the Race Director, at approximately 8:00 on Saturday. Please note that times are subject to change, and that no race will wait for teams that are not ready to start on time. Teams should be ready to marshal 30 minutes prior to their scheduled race time. The Chief Marshal will organize the marshaling process. Teams and individuals must yield to the requests of the Chief Marshal. During marshaling, the Head Dock Marshal will observe team composition and may at any time call for a roster-check. Any "stacking" behavior will be considered unsportsmanlike and penalized accordingly.

On the dock, teams must follow the instructions of the Dock Marshal and volunteers. Before a boat leaves the dock, the tiller must ensure that the team has all the equipment it needs and that 1 extra PFD and 2 extra paddles are on the boat. After leaving the dock, the boat should proceed towards the start line without interfering with any ongoing race.

On the water:

Boats should turn around and align themselves with their assigned lane well behind the start line; they will later be instructed to pull forward. The Starter will communicate only with the callers and tillers. If any team is not ready to start, that caller or tiller must hold his or her hand clearly in the air. The following commands will be given:

- **“Please approach the start line.”**  
At this command, callers must instruct their boats to pull forward towards the start line, and to “hold” when so instructed by the Starter.
- **“We have alignment”**  
Before issuing this command, the Starter must make sure that no caller or tiller has his or her hand in the air.
- **“Paddlers prepare to start”**
- **“Attention, please”**
- A long **horn** blast will announce the commencement of the race.

Upon hearing the starting horn, each team shall proceed to the finish line 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. After a fair start, the Course Marshal will follow the Dragon Boats down the course, and if necessary and where possible, direct tillers to maintain the middle of their lanes. 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 Course Marshal, in the Course Marshal’s discretion, may either stop that Dragon Boat, or any or all other Dragon Boats, so as to avoid possible collisions. If progress of a Dragon Boat is affected by another Dragon Boat, the Course Marshal will either halt the race and issue a restart, or offer the offended team the opportunity to run the course again in a later heat. Chase boats will be instructed to avoid following the Dragon Boats so closely that they cause wakes that interfere with the race.

After each start, the Starter will raise a flag of one of three colors. A white flag indicates that the start was good. A red flag (accompanied by three blasts of the horn) indicates that the boats should stop paddling and return to the start line; it is the callers’ duty to watch for red flags and instruct their teams accordingly. Failure to do so may result in penalties; ignorance of the rules will in no case reduce any penalties incurred. A black flag indicates that one or more teams have been disqualified but that all teams should continue racing. All callers must be familiar with these signals!

### False starts and equipment failure:

Where one or more teams begin paddling after the “Attention, please,” call and before the sounding of the horn, a “false start” will be declared. This will be announced by the raising of the red flag and three consecutive blasts of the horn. Callers must be alert to these signals and command their boat to return to the start line. The first false start by a team in a given heat will be a warning; the second false start by the same team in the same heat will result in a 10 second penalty to be added to the offending team’s time on that heat. If more than one team false-starts, the team that began paddling first will be the one penalized.

If a false start was caused by an error by the Starter, the Starter should immediately raise the red flag and sound the horn three times and re-start the race. No penalties will be assessed in this case. The Starter is urged to remember that next to safety, fairness is the highest priority of this race. The Starter should also raise the red flag and sound the horn blasts if unforeseen wind or waves gave one team a significant unfair advantage off the start. The Starter should in all cases inform all boats of the reason for the re-start.

In the case of an equipment failure (E.g., the till breaks, the drum falls off) within the first part of the race (ca. 50 meters) the caller or tiller of any team may halt the race by raising both hands above the head. The Starter must watch for this signal from all teams. The heat will be re-run immediately after the equipment failure is addressed.

Man overboard: in the case that an individual falls off the Dragon Boat, that team must stop paddling and retrieve their teammate. All boats must cross the finish line with everyone they began the race with. The heat will not be re-run but no time penalty will be assessed in addition to the time lost in the retrieval.

Only the drum and drum sticks provided or team members’ voices may be used to signal the stroke rate. Noises making devices (such as horns/whistles) as well as voice magnification systems are prohibited from use in the Dragon Boat. The Course Marshal may assess penalties for failing to abide by this rule.

All paddlers must remain seated for the duration of the race. Callers may sit or stand as they desire; see above rules regarding “man overboard.”

All penalties incurred on the water should be reported by the Starter or Course Marshall to the Race Director.

### Lanes

Lanes will be marked as established by the Race Director and communicated to the teams at the pre-race team briefing. In the case of a collision, the team responsible for the collision will be penalized by the Course Marshal. The penalty will be determined in each case based on: the severity of the collision, whether it had any material effect on race outcome, and any extenuating circumstances.

### Returning to the dock:

Each team should bail the boat out as they approach the dock: upon arrival at the dock, each Dragon Boat must be substantially free of water and be ready for the next race. Teams should approach the docks at a dead slow pace so as to avoid collision damage.

### **The protest procedure**

If a team wishes to lodge a protest, the Team Captain must provide the Race Director with the written protest less than 30 minutes after the team reaches the dock after the disputed heat. The cost of lodging a protest is \$25, which must be paid to the Race Director in cash at the time of lodging the protest. Protest forms will be available at the Control Tent.

When a protest is lodged, the Race Director will summon the Race Committee, consisting of: the Starter, the Course Marshal, the Timekeeper, and the Finish Line Judge(s). Team captains and members will not be present during any deliberations.

This committee will obtain all pertinent information, including any official video footage, and render a decision. If the Race Committee requires a clarification of the rules, the Rules Committee may be consulted. Due to perspective (frame-of-reference) bias, no unsolicited video footage will be considered.

If the protest is successful, the protest fee will be returned to the captain of the protesting team.

If another team feels a Race Committee decision was made on the basis of incomplete information, that team may submit an appeal within 20 minutes of the Race Committee's decision. The cost of lodging an appeal is \$25, which must be paid to the Race Director in cash at the time of lodging the appeal. Appeal forms will be available at the Control Tent. If an appeal is lodged, the Race Committee will reconvene and consider any new information and render a decision. If the appeal is successful, the appeal fee will be returned to the captain of the appealing team.

### **General Sanctions:**

At its complete discretion, the Race Director may penalize, dismiss, or disqualify any team or individual at any time from further races for:

- Violating safety principals or procedures
- Participating or attempting to participate in on-water activities while inebriated or while carrying alcohol
- Violating rules
- Demonstrating poor sportsmanship, conduct, or behavior
- Willfully, recklessly, or negligently damaging or losing equipment
- Disobeying reasonable requests or instructions made by officials or their designates

When equipment is damaged or lost through the willful, reckless, or negligent actions of a person or team, then that person or team will be responsible for financially reimbursing the Kent Cornucopia Days Dragon Boat Race.

### **Emergency Procedures**

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

- The tiller will retain charge of the team until rescue personnel arrive.
- The tiller will immediately determine if any persons are trapped in the Dragon Boat, and act accordingly.
- Each team member must ensure that the team members immediately in front, behind, and beside, are not trapped in the Dragon Boat.
- Each team member must follow directions given by the tiller, until such time as rescue personnel arrive, after which each team member must follow directions given by rescue personnel.
- The crew must hold onto the Dragon Boat. Individuals must not swim to shore unless instructed to do so by rescue personnel.
- Upon ensuring that no persons are in distress, the rescue personnel may direct the team to swim the Dragon Boat to shore, with or without towing assistance by the rescue personnel.