

MUDGEEREGION DRAGON BOAT CLUB

Members' Booklet

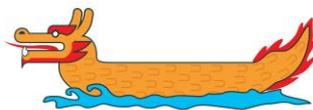
Revised February 2017

Contact us by email paddling@muddragons.com.au

or find us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/MudgeeRegionMuddragons/>

Our Club is affiliated to Dragon Boats NSW Inc. (DBNSW) dbnsw.org.au



We would like to thank our Sponsors:

Lawson Park Hotel

Moolarben Coal

Genesys Wealth Advisers

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When and Where?

Training will take place every Sunday morning at Windamere Dam Camping Area. Times vary during the year.

Please keep your eye on the website in case there are any changes, i.e., regattas, different paddling locations and times.

What do I bring?

- A water bottle and morning tea
- A change of clothes
- A towel
- A hat and sunscreen
- Boat shoes – joggers, crocs but NO Thongs until the boat is in the water!

You're going to get splashed whilst training, so don't wear your best clothes! You will get wet, thirsty and depending on the weather, you may be cold at the start of training. Wear a t-shirt or rash vest, wet-suit shorts or boardies or paddling pants. If it is cold, wear a spray jacket or thermal clothing!

FundRaising

The Committee appreciates any help. At present, we are selling raffle tickets at the Lawson Park Hotel every Friday night from about 6.30 pm. It would be appreciated if all members could help with the raffles as this is our only source of fundraising.

All enquiries to Jill McNickle castlelea1@bigpond.com

Please take the time to read the following safety precautions.

SAFETY PROCEDURES

Dragon Boating - Safety

Safety is of primary importance. Whilst rare, accidents can and do happen in Dragon Boat training or racing - and in many water sports. If you are new to the sport, please familiarise yourself with the details so when a situation arises, you will be prepared.

As in any water sport, there is always an element of danger. In adverse weather conditions and when there are strong winds, Dragon Boats can be swamped with water and have been known to capsize, especially when turning sideways on to the prevailing wind or wave pattern.

In all water conditions, good or bad, the key to safety is the application of good old **COMMON SENSE** by all those taking part in the activity. Playing around in a Dragon Boat and deliberately capsizing it, even in warm and sunny conditions, can be dangerous to both the crew and other water users alike. In certain circumstances it could be lethal; a Dragon Boat moving at speed through the water cannot easily be stopped and another crew in the water from a capsized boat cannot easily be seen!

Paddlers must always ensure when lifting and carrying a dragon boat they use safe techniques, such as bending at the knees when lifting and not bending their back. Always ensure there are enough paddlers to lift and carry a dragon boat - a **minimum** of 12 paddlers are required to lift and carry a dragon boat.

When lowering a dragon boat ensure it is put down slowly with paddlers bending at the knees.

A dragon boat must not be pushed into the water whilst paddlers are standing. If a dragon boat is to be moved advise those standing to be seated and only then move the dragon boat.

Paddlers should wear suitable footwear in a dragon boat. When manoeuvring the boat on land covered shoes should be worn.

Paddlers unable to swim 50 metres fully clothed must wear a life jacket (PFD).

If paddlers are feeling unwell, those around them need to let the sweep and the coach know immediately.

If paddlers cannot keep up for any reason, they are advised to 'pull' their paddle and 'rock' with the boat.

Swimming – Ideally, all members in a dragon boat crew should be able to swim at least 50 metres, but as a minimum, they must be water competent in cold and moving water and when dressed in light clothing, that is, racing dress (shorts and vest) plus waterproof top and

trousers and light footwear (trainers, flip flops or similar footwear). (A persons swimming ability should be confirmed by testing, where possible, during training).

The Buddy System:

The crew should number off from the front of the dragon boat (usually by the sweep) and be made aware that they are each responsible for the person they are paired with (across the dragon boat) and that, in the event of a capsize, their first responsibility is to ensure that their partner (or buddy) is accounted for and safe while following the capsizing guidelines. This is called the "buddy system" and it gives each person in the dragon boat a specific responsibility for another. If there is a drummer on board, the first two paddlers are responsible for this person and the rear paddlers have responsibility for the sweep.

On the Water

Boat Balance: Before leaving the embarking area, the Sweep should ensure that the boat is well balanced. That is, that each pair of paddlers are of similar weight or height and that, generally, the heavier pairs are seated in the boat's middle section. The Sweep must know the number of people in the boat, when the crew is embarked by performing the head count procedure.

Steadying the Boat: A boat will feel 'tippy' especially if the crew is out of balance or moving about in an uncoordinated manner. To steady the boat in such circumstances (and when sideways on to the wind or wave pattern) the crew should be instructed by the Sweep to slightly lean out over the side of the boat and place their paddle blades flat on the water, at arms length.

With all of the paddles on the water in this manner (10 either side) the boat is effectively stabilised. This is called a paddle brace and the Sweep's command should be '**Paddles Flat**' or 'Brace the Boat'.

Stopping the Boat: When manoeuvring, turning or in a race it may be necessary to stop the boat suddenly, say to avoid a collision with another vessel. It is important that the crew reacts quickly but safely. An unbalanced crew over-reacting can capsize their own boat! The initial command should be 'Dig It In' (or what the Sweep's instructions are) if the boat is unstable and there is no immediate danger of a collision.

Roles of Responsibility

The broad areas of responsibility for safety are:-

The Crew Members.

It is the responsibility of the crew members to ensure that when they are on the water that they are adequately dressed for the weather conditions and comply with all instructions given to them.

Dragon Boating is a social sport too, but don't put the safety of the whole crew in jeopardy through alcohol, thoughtlessness or excessive horseplay.

It is also your responsibility to wear a PFD if you are unable to swim 50m.

The Coach.

The coach is in charge of training the crew members and will give instructions to the crew about paddling techniques and routines to be carried out.

The coach should check that the sweep is ready before signalling to the crew to start paddling.

The Sweep (Boat Steerer).

The Sweep is in charge of the boat at all times on the water and paddlers should listen for and carry out sweep instructions above all others.

It is the Sweep's responsibility to make the final check to ensure that that the boat is water worthy and that all crew members are correctly briefed on boat handling and capsize drills.

The Sweep should also check that crew members are suitably dressed for the weather conditions and not wearing anything that may impede their ability to exit the boat or swim in the event of a capsize or boat swamping.

When on the water the Sweep shall ensure that collisions with other craft are avoided. In the event of a boat swamping or capsize, the Sweep shall ensure that the capsize drills are correctly carried out.

2.24 Calls from the Sweep

Call	Action
Back 2/3/4 rows	Only the paddlers in the designated rows paddle under the sweeps instruction. Other paddlers have their paddles out of the water. This can be used to manoeuvre to the start position.
Crew (refers to all on board)	This refers to all paddlers in the boat. This call should be used after instructions have been given to part of the crew for manoeuvring.
Pod / Cell / Front / Back (sub-groups of the crew)	Commands may be issued to a specific group of paddlers within the boat. Sub-groups of the crew may be selected for training purposes, or used to affect a manoeuvre. The group needs to be identified so it performs an action when required.
Numbering from the front (Head Count)	At the beginning before leaving the bank, beach or pontoon, the crew will call their number commencing with the drummer as 1 then, proceeding from the front left side, right side (seat 1 left is 2, seat 1 right is 3) through the boat to the steerer (on a full boat the steerer will be 22). If there is no drummer then numbering commences from the first occupied seat left 1, right 2 continuing through the boat to the steerer.
Change Sides (from the front)	The paddlers change sides as instructed by the steerer. The paddlers should avoid sudden movements and transfer their weight uniformly to maintain the boat balance. This should be executed one row at a time. The row behind should not start changing until the row in front has completely finished swapping.
Draw front left or right (specific seat numbers may be called to draw)	Is used by the nominated seats to pull the front of the dragon boat in line. The opposite side should hold their paddles flat. Some seats may be directed to hold water to minimise drift.
Draw back left or right (specific seat numbers may be called to draw)	Is used by the nominated seats to pull the back of the dragon boat in line. The opposite side should hold their paddles flat. Some seats may be directed to hold water to minimise drift.
Paddles behind, or Paddles back	Paddles are placed in a backward position for paddling backwards, awaiting the sweeps call "GO" to initiate reversing by pushing the blade forward in time with crew mates.
Paddles Up	Move paddle to the start position (paddles up). Paddles can be placed in the water (not moving) ready to take the first stroke.
Paddles Flat	Paddlers press the blade of the paddle flat on the water to stabilise the dragon boat (also known as "Bracing" the boat)
Paddles Out, Let it Run, Take the Run Off, Easy	Paddles come out of the water, allowing the dragon boat to glide (run) through the water, gradually slowing down to a stop. (same as 'Slow the boat'). Easy is an outrigger term.
Hold Water	This is when paddlers hold their paddles still in the water to halt the dragon boat motion and to keep the boat stationary.
Dig it in / Stop the boat / Brake the boat	Paddlers stop the dragon boat quickly by holding the paddle vertically in the water.
Set Yourself	Crew members lean forward with arms straight, resting on the gunwales and with the paddle at a 90 degree angle, nearly touching the paddler in front of them.

GO	Start paddling.
Rest/Relax	Crew members must remain seated where they are but can relax, drink, re-apply wax to paddle shafts and chat with others around them.
As you were	This cancels a call started but not completed. The response from the crew is to resume their former position.

TIP: Use language that is appropriate to the crew. Remember that Corporate, Community & Social Crews may need greater guidance and/or explanations of the commands issued.

2.25 Calls from the Starter

Call	Action
All boats hold	The paddlers hold their paddles still in the water to halt the boats motion and to keep the dragon boat stationary.
Are you ready	The crew moves their paddles to the start position with the paddle fully immersed. If the crew is not ready the drummer must immediately raise a hand above head height. The drummer is forbidden to take such action prior to this call. All movement of paddles to align the boat must stop.
Attention	The command to GO or the starting signal is imminent, and in any case shall not exceed 5 seconds. The crew should ready themselves to take the first stroke.
'GO' Alternatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gun shot • Electronic start signal • Other distinct sound as specified. 	Commence Racing.
STOP STOP STOP Alternatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeating the start signal • Using the alternative start signal as specified. 	There has been a false start. Boats are to return to the start line.

Capsize Drill *What to Do:*

In the event of a Dragon Boat capsizing the Sweep should immediately ensure that all the crew are accounted for by a head count as outlined below. The crew must initially stay with the boat and leave it in the capsized position. When a boat has over-turned never swim underneath it but in such circumstances, it can be used as a floating platform, provided the crew space themselves evenly around the boat.

Alternatively, under the instructions of the Sweep the boat may be rolled back to the upright position and used to support the crew. In all situations the Sweep should remain in control of the crew and, in a race situation, await the arrival of the rescue boats. The crew should, if their paddles are within easy reach, attempt to retrieve them, but remember that paddles are able to be replaced, people are not.

CAPSIZE HEAD COUNT PROCEDURE

Reasons for amending the procedure

The size, shape and length of a capsized (overturned) dragon boat acts as a visual and acoustic barrier, thereby preventing or limiting clear communications between paddlers floating in the water. Direct sight and sound lines between paddlers can be reduced or completely obstructed, making effective communication between paddlers difficult.

For example, a paddler in the water located at a front right position may not see or hear paddlers on the left (opposite) side or towards the back of the boat, resulting in a breakdown in communication and errors when a head count or other instructions are issued (by the sweep).

The following is thought to be a simpler, more realistic and practical (post-capsize) head count procedure that most people will be more likely to understand and follow instinctively ('automatically'), even without much training, as the sequence of progression is more natural and consequently more effective.

1. The sweep should move to a position at the centre stern of the boat so they can view paddlers on both sides of the vessel.
2. The sweep will call calmly and loudly for quiet and initiate the head count as soon as possible.
3. START WITH THE PERSON CLOSEST TO THE SWEEP being #1. The sweep may indicate (point) or touch the person chosen (tap on shoulder) to start the count to avoid confusion.
4. CONTINUE the head count from person #1 to the next ADJACENT person (and so on) along one side of the boat from the back to the front (Stern to Bow); until all on the first side (A) is counted.
5. CONTINUE THE NUMBER SEQUENCE after CROSSING to the other side at the front of the boat, then continue along the second side (B) from front to back (Bow to Stern), until all persons have numbered off in succession, with the Sweep being the LAST PERSON to count off. *(Figure 4)*

6. If needed, each paddler should account for their buddy/s. Call out to the opposite side of the boat if necessary. When your buddy check is complete (buddy found and acknowledged), remain quiet and await further instructions from the sweep.
 - For general consistency, it is suggested that counting proceed in a CLOCKWISE direction (left side first, then right side), though counting in a counter-clockwise direction would be equally appropriate.
 - If required (and safe to do so), a paddler may tap the next person in sequence after they have counted off, to let the next person know that they should number off. This may help to prevent a breakdown or interruption of the count if a paddler is unresponsive or confused.

Counting in sequence allows paddlers ADJACENT to each other to hear the count better & continue on from one person to the next in a CIRCULAR pattern around the boat, so nobody is missed.

This procedure is to be REPEATED up to three (3) times (but at least once) to CONFIRM paddler responses (and total number accounted for), so the sweep is able to relay the number to rescue boat(s) and confirm with confidence that all crew members are accounted for ASAP.

If the head count is not successfully conducted, the sweep, or a nominated person, is to organise themselves into an elevated position (as high as possible) to 'manually' conduct a head count themselves.

If any paddler is missing &/or injured, advise rescue or emergency personnel of the situation ASAP.

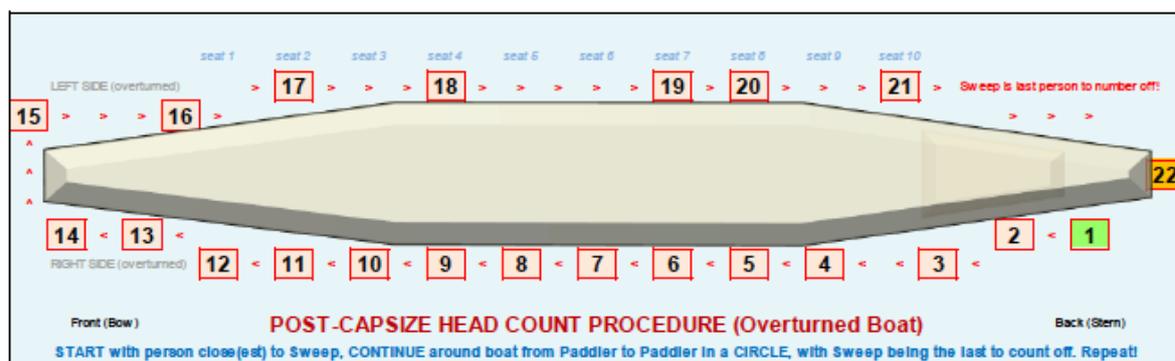


Figure 4

During competition, sports crews do not always conduct a head count when leaving shore, adding to the confusion / ignorance of a person's number. This tends to be the case when a standard 20's boat is completely full - i.e. 22 crew members are known to be on board (& sweeps are complacent).

When a boat is not full a head count should always be conducted, so the sweep (and all crew members) are aware of how many people are on board at the time (and can be relayed to Safety / Rescue personnel), who may otherwise presume that a standard boat had 22 people on board.

In conclusion, safety is the concern of every crew member and is largely a matter of **COMMON SENSE - USE IT!**

Whilst the overall responsibility for the crew is the Sweep it is every paddler's responsibility to ensure that Dragon Boat paddling is conducted as SAFELY AS POSSIBLE.

A Little about Dragon Boating – the Ultimate Sport

Dragon boating is not new – people have participated in this sport for over 2,000 years. It has a long illustrious history.

Australian entered the dragon boat arena in 1980. The Western Australia Surf Life Saving Association was invited by the Penang Tourist Development Corporation to the Penang Festival. From there a flurry of invitations were sent to teams around the country including Western Australia and New South Wales who participated in the unofficial world championships on Hong Kong Harbour.

Four years later, Sydney hosted the inaugural Sydney Dragon Boat Festival at Farm Cove and in 1985, the first stage dragon boat body formed in Western Australia.

The International Dragon Boat Federation was formalised in 1991 and has been responsible for assisting countries to establish at the club level, develop and implement rules and regulations, and managing the growth of the sport worldwide.

Races are held around the world from Canada to Asia to New Zealand. One of the most exciting events for Australia was winning the right to host the World Dragon Boat Championships in Sydney in 2007..

There are over 50 million people worldwide who regularly hop into a dragon boat. it is a sport for all ages and crosses all cultural divides bringing people together around the globe.

The dragon plays the most venerated role within the Chinese mythological tradition. For example, of the 12 animals of the Chinese Zodiac the only mythical creature is the dragon. Dragons are traditionally believed to be the rulers of rivers and seas and dominate the clouds and the rains of heaven. There are earth dragons, mountain dragons and sky or celestial dragons (Tian Long) in Chinese tradition.