

*HKDBF-NY 2023 Rules and Regulations*  
Hong Kong Dragon Boat Festival in New York - August 12 & 13, 2023  
Flushing Meadows Corona Park in Queens, New York

**RULES AND REGULATIONS  
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## **RULES AND REGULATIONS**

### **PART A - Introduction**

#### **1. Rule of Construction**

The following rules shall be read and interpreted consistently with each other and shall be read and interpreted to foster the purpose of fair competition and sportsmanship in a safe environment.

#### **2. Scope of Application**

These rules shall apply to all races in all divisions, including but not limited to the U.S. Dragon Boat Open Championship (Mixed, Women), Regular (Open and Mixed), and all invitational and special races. Each crew is entirely responsible for its own conduct and for complying with the rules provided herein.

#### **3. Situations not covered**

In the event the rules do not adequately cover a situation, race officials are empowered to make such decisions and instructions as are necessary to carry out their responsibilities and to affect the purpose of fair competition and sportsmanship in a safe environment.

#### **4. Violation of the Rules and Regulations**

Any crew member or team that fails to observe the Rules and Regulations herein may be disqualified or be assessed a penalty herein described in Rule J(6).

### **PART B - Definitions**

**For the purpose of these Rules and Regulations, the following terms will be used:**

1. "Event" shall mean the 31st Annual Hong Kong Dragon Boat Festival in New York, held on August 12th and 13th, 2023 in Flushing Meadow Corona Park.
2. "Event Organizer" shall mean the Hong Kong Dragon Boat Festival in New York, Inc.
3. "Dock Management Team" shall mean the race officials, appointed by the Event Organizer, who controls the conduct of teams, crew members and Event dock staff around the Crew Staging Area and the launching dock area.
4. "Race Officials" shall include the Chief Race Official, Umpires, Starter, Dockmaster, and the Race Controller, who are appointed by the Event Organizer.

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5. “Chief Race Official” shall mean the race official, appointed by the Event Organizer, who supervises and observes each race, records the order of finish at the finish line for each race, decides all valid protests regarding race conduct, and is the ultimate interpreter of the Rules and Regulations with the advice of the Race Controller whenever necessary.

6. “Umpire” shall mean the race official, appointed by the Event Organizer, who follows the boats down the racing course and records any violations of the Rules and Regulations during the course of the heat.

7. “Starter” shall mean the race official, appointed by the Event Organizer, who controls the conduct of teams and crew members at the start line, brings the teams to the start line, and calls the start of each heat.

8. “Race Controller” shall mean the race official, appointed by the Event Organizer, who hears all protests about race conduct and provides guidance to the Chief Race Official and other race officials whenever necessary.

9. “Materially Affects” shall mean situations when the order of finish of a race has been compromised or other conditions which affect the advancement of an aggrieved crew.

10. “Unsportsmanlike conduct” shall include, but not limited to, failure to heed the instructions of race officials, use of obscene language or gestures, delaying a race without valid justification, intentional or flagrant disregard of principles of safety and fairness, or abusive behavior toward any race official, crew member, Event Organizer and its employees, or spectator.

11. “Club” shall mean an organization that hosts, sponsors, or brands a crew or team. Many crews or teams may belong to the same club.

12. “Crew” shall mean any active group of paddlers, drummer, and steersperson, which has completed a team roster. The term “crew” is used interchangeably with the term “team” in the Rules and Regulations.

13. “Crew member” shall mean any properly registered person who has completed a mandatory waiver and is registered with a specific crew as a paddler, drummer or steersperson.

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14. “Drummer” shall mean a properly registered crew member whose specific task is to beat the drum, has completed a mandatory waiver, and is listed on a team roster.

15. “Steersperson” shall mean a properly registered crew member whose specific task is to steer and maneuver a boat with a steering oar, and who has completed a mandatory waiver and is listed on a team roster.

16. “Paddler” shall mean a properly registered crew member whose specific task is to propel a boat with a single bladed paddle while seated, and who has completed a mandatory waiver and is listed on a team roster.

17. “ID Check Area” shall mean the area immediately outside of the boat house by the main entrance.

18. “Crew Staging Area” shall mean the area on the docks beyond the ID Check gate and before Team Coordinator Gate.

19. “Crew Holding Area” (Old ID Check Area) shall mean the area for teams to exit the dock. Teams will stage in that area post race until judges declare the results are final.

20. “Launching Dock Area” shall mean the area where teams embark and disembark their appointed dragonboat.

21. “Starting Area” shall mean the area between the start line and 50 meters behind the start line.

22. “Cross Roster” shall mean the registration of a crew member (paddler and drummer) in more than one team. Exceptions and prohibitions are listed in Part D5.

**PART C – Safety and Fair Conditions**

**1. General**

The Event Organizer and race officials are committed to minimizing risks and maintaining a safe environment for practices and races for all crew members.

**2. Swimming Requirement**

Crew members must be able to swim at least 100 meters while wearing light clothing. It is the responsibility of the crew to ensure that all crew members comply with this rule.

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**3. Personal Flotation Device (PFD)**

PFDs will be provided to all crew members by Event Staff and must be worn in the proper manner at all times while in the dragon boat. Personal PFDs not issued by the Event Organizer will not be permitted to be worn.

**4. Jumping Off Boat**

At no time shall crew members jump off a boat. Such behavior shall result in disqualification of the offending crew.

**5. Rescue Procedure**

In the event of an accident while on the water, which results in submersion of the boat, affected crew members are required to stay close to the boat and wait for a rescue boat to arrive. No one should attempt to swim ashore. Crew members should attempt to keep the boat from capsizing but only if it could be done safely.

**6. Unsafe Weather Conditions**

In the event of lightning, all crews on the water must return to the launching dock area and follow the instructions of race officials and Event dock staff. If a race is in progress, the Starter or Umpires will sound the horn twice to signify the stoppage of the race and instruct all competing crews to return to the launching dock area.

**7. Waivers (Form C)**

(a) All crew members must properly fill out and sign a waiver stating that they have read the conditions of the waiver and are aware of the risks associated with dragon boat racing, and thus accept and waive any right or course of action they may have against the Event Organizer, sponsors, supporters or any organizations and persons connected with the Event for injury or death to person(s) or loss/damage to personal property.

(b) All crew members must sign and return a waiver to the Event Organizer prior to the start of their first practice session and then sign and return another waiver before their first race at the Event. It is the team manager's responsibility to ensure that at the time of registration, all crew member's waivers have been signed and submitted to the Event Organizer.

**8. Regulatory Preemption**

These rules concerning safety should not be construed as authority over and above requirements necessitated by regulatory agencies.

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**9. Liability**

Crew members are solely responsible for their own safety during official practice sessions and races. The Event Organizer, and organizations and persons connected directly or indirectly with the races, shall not accept responsibility for any death, injury, damage or loss incurred or borne by any individual(s).

**PART D – Team and Crew Member Registration**

**1. Credentials**

A limited number of wristbands will be issued to each team on race day. These are for the use of the crew members only and are not to be used by other persons. These credentials must be worn at all times during the Event.

**2. Registration Process**

Crews may register either by (i) completing the necessary forms, including providing photocopy of photo identification of all crew members, waiver and appropriate registration payment (if applicable), and mailing them to the Event Organizer or (ii) by completing Form A-1 online and supplementing it with Forms B-1, B-2, C, D, photocopy of photo identification of all crew members, and payment (if applicable) via mail. Form A 1 or A 2 must be received by the Event Organizer on or before practices can be scheduled and all other forms must be submitted to the Event Organizer prior to the team or crew member's first race at the Event. Out of town teams must register by July 25th, 2023. Late registration will be accepted at the discretion of the Event Organizer.

**3. Entry Fees**

The entry fees for the U.S. Dragon Boat Open Championship Mixed, and Women Divisions, and the Regular Open and Mixed are listed on the Event Organizer's website at <http://www.hkdbf-ny.org>. All invitational and special races are fee exempt. Checks shall be made payable to "The Hong Kong Dragon Boat Festival in New York, Inc." The entry fee is non-refundable should the crew decide to withdraw from the race or should the race be canceled for reasons beyond the Event Organizer's control.

**4. Cross-Roster**

(a) Each paddler shall only be registered under the name of one team and may not compete for any other team even if said teams are under the same Club in the Regular Open and Mixed divisions. Paddlers and drummers are not permitted to cross roster; a drummer registration status is the same as a paddler within the aforementioned divisions with the exception of the steersperson.

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(b) Each paddler shall only be registered under the name of one team and may not compete for any other team in the Regular Open or Regular Mixed divisions even if said teams are under the same Club. Paddlers and drummers are not permitted to cross roster; a drummer registration status is the same as a paddler within the aforementioned divisions with the exception of the steersperson.

**5. Exceptions to the Cross-Roster rule.**

(a) U.S. Dragon Boat Open Championship Divisions (Mixed), a paddler in these divisions may be registered under the name of another team within the same club. U.S. Dragon Boat Open Championship team members are not permitted to register for the Regular Open and Mixed Division.

(b) Invitational races allow paddlers/drummers to participate in multiple races and divisions. Teams must ensure that there are no conflicts between heats.

(c) A steersperson regardless of division may steer for more than one team but must submit a written request to the Event Organizer for an exemption at least 48 hours prior to the Event. The steersperson must ensure that there is no conflict between heats.

**6. Team Roster**

Each team shall submit a team roster (Form B-1, B-2) to the Event Organizer before its scheduled race. Only crew members listed on the team roster and corresponding seating chart shall be permitted to enter the crew staging area and race on the team. Team Manager is not permitted past the ID Check area on race day.

**7. Right of Refusal**

The Event Organizer reserves the right to refuse entry to any crew in the race at its sole discretion.

**PART E – Divisions and Crew Composition**

**1. Divisions**

(a) U.S. Dragon Boat Open Championship Mixed Division: Each boat may carry up to 20 paddlers and have a minimum of 18 paddlers. Each boat must also carry at least eight (8) and a maximum of ten (10) paddlers of each gender, one (1) drummer (male or

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female), and one (1) steersperson (male or female). Each crew member, including steersperson and drummer, must be at least 15 years of age as of January 1, 2023.

(b) U.S. Dragon Boat Open Championship Women Division: Each boat may carry up to 20 female paddlers and must have a minimum of 18 female paddlers. Each boat must also have one (1) drummer (female) and one (1) steersperson (male or female [please see note below]). Each crew member, including steersperson and drummer, must be at least 15 years of age as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023.

(b1) In order to obtain IDBF Race Circuit Points, if applied, you must have a female steer person. The festival however does not have it as a requirement to race.

(c) Regular Open: Each boat may carry up to 10 paddlers and have a minimum of 8 paddlers. Each boat must also carry one (1) drummer (male or female) and one (1) steersperson (male or female). Each crew member, including steersperson and drummer, must be at least 15 years of age as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023.

(d) Regular Mixed: Each boat may carry up to 10 paddlers and have a minimum of 8 paddlers. Each boat must also carry at least four (4) female paddlers, one (1) drummer (male or female), and one (1) steersperson (male or female). Each crew member, including steersperson and drummer, must be at least 15 years of age as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023.

(e) Invitational Races: All teams participating in the Special divisions are invited by the Event Organizer.

i. Corporate Youth Invitational: Each boat may carry up to 10 paddlers and have a minimum of 8 paddlers. Each boat must also carry at least four (4) female paddlers, one (1) drummer (male or female), and one (1) steersperson (male or female). Each paddler must be at least 15 years of age and under 18 years of age as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023. Drummers and steers persons must be at least 15 years of age as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023. Each team must be sponsored by a Festival sponsor.

ii. Sponsor's Challenge: Each boat may carry up to 10 paddlers and must have a minimum of 8 paddlers. Each boat must also carry at least four (4) female paddlers, one (1) drummer (male or female), and one (1) steersperson (male or female). Each crew member, including steersperson and drummer, must be at least 15 years of age as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023.

iii. Media Invitational: Each boat may carry up to 10 paddlers and must have a minimum of 8 paddlers. Each boat must also carry at least four (4) female

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paddlers, one (1) drummer (male or female), and one (1) steersperson (male or female).

Each crew member, including steersperson and drummer, must be at least 15 years of age as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023.

iv. Corporate Invitational: Each boat may carry up to 10 paddlers and must have a minimum of 8 paddlers. Each boat must also carry at least four (4) female paddlers, one (1) drummer (male or female), and one (1) steersperson (male or female). Each crew member, including steersperson and drummer, must be at least 15 years of age as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023. Paddlers must verify proof of employment with a corporate ID on race day at registration or through a corporate email sent to the Team Coordinator no later than the close of business (5:00 PM) on August 1st, 2023.

v. Charity Race: Each boat may carry up to 10 paddlers and must have a minimum of 8 paddlers. Each boat must also carry at least four (4) female paddlers, one (1) drummer (male or female), and one (1) steersperson (male or female). Each crew member, including steersperson and drummer, must be at least 15 years of age as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023. Each team must submit a \$3,000 registration fee payable to The Hong Kong Dragon Boat Festival In NY and select a certified 501-C3 organization. All of the registration fee payment will be pooled together and distributed to the organizations selected by the teams, of which the amount distributed will vary depending on the team's placement.

vi. Municipal Cup: Each boat may carry up to 10 paddlers and must have a minimum of 8 paddlers. Each boat must also carry at least four (4) female paddlers, one (1) drummer (male or female), and one (1) steersperson (male or female). Each crew member, including steersperson and drummer, must be at least 15 years of age as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023. Fifty percent of the paddlers must be employed by the sponsored municipal agency.

vii. Health Care Non-Profit: Each boat may carry up to 10 paddlers and must have a minimum of 8 paddlers. Each boat must also carry at least four (4) female paddlers, one (1) drummer (male or female), and one (1) steersperson (male or female). Each crew member, including steersperson and drummer, must be at least 15 years of age as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023. Fifty percent of the paddlers must be employed by the sponsored health care organization.

viii. HK Family Races: Each boat may carry up to 10 paddlers and must have a minimum of 8 paddlers. Each boat must also carry at least four (4) female paddlers, one (1) drummer (male or female), and one (1) steersperson (male or female).

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Each crew member, including steersperson and drummer, must be at least 15 years of age as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023.

ix. Women's Invitational: Each boat may carry up to 10 female paddlers and must have a minimum of 8 female paddlers. Each boat must also have one (1) drummer (female) and one (1) steersperson (male or female). Each crew member, including steersperson and drummer, must be at least 15 years of age as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023.

x. Seniors Invitational A: Each member is required to be 40 years of age by January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023. All other rules will follow Regular Mixed Races (Part E(d)).

xi. Seniors Invitational B: Each member is required to be 50 years of age by January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023. All other rules will follow Regular Mixed Races (Part E(d)).

xii. Agency Invitational: Each boat may carry up to 10 paddlers and must have a minimum of 8 paddlers. Each boat must also carry at least four (4) female paddlers, one (1) drummer (male or female), and one (1) steersperson (male or female). Each crew member, including steersperson and drummer, must be at least 15 years of age as of January 1, 2023.

xiii. Chinese Culture Invitational: Each boat may carry up to 10 paddlers and must have a minimum of 8 paddlers. Each boat must also carry at least four (4) female paddlers, one (1) drummer (male or female), and one (1) steersperson (male or female). Each crew member, including steersperson and drummer, must be at least 15 years of age as of January 1, 2023.

xvi. Utility Invitational: Each boat may carry up to 10 paddlers and must have a minimum of 8 paddlers. Each boat must also carry at least four (4) female paddlers, one (1) drummer (male or female), and one (1) steersperson (male or female). Each crew member, including steersperson and drummer, must be at least 15 years of age as of January 1, 2023. Fifty percent of the paddlers must be employed by the sponsored utility agency.

xv. Michael Lau Legacy Race: Each boat may carry up to 10 paddlers and must have a minimum of 8 paddlers. Each boat must also carry at least four (4) female paddlers, one (1) drummer (male or female), and one (1) steersperson (male or female). Each crew member, including steersperson and drummer, must be at least 15 years of age as of January 1, 2023.

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xvi. Hello Hong Kong Race: Each boat may carry up to 10 paddlers and must have a minimum of 8 paddlers. Each boat must also carry at least four (4) female paddlers, one (1) drummer (male or female), and one (1) steersperson (male or female). Each crew member, including steersperson and drummer, must be at least 15 years of age as of January 1, 2023.

xvii. 35th Hong Kong Associations Invitationals: Each boat may carry up to 10 paddlers and must have a minimum of 8 paddlers. Each boat must also carry at least four (4) female paddlers, one (1) drummer (male or female), and one (1) steersperson (male or female). Each crew member, including steersperson and drummer, must be at least 15 years of age as of January 1, 2023.

xviii. Public Official Invitationals: Each boat may carry up to 10 paddlers and must have a minimum of 8 paddlers. Each boat must also carry at least four (4) female paddlers, one (1) drummer (male or female), and one (1) steersperson (male or female). Each crew member, including steersperson and drummer, must be at least 15 years of age as of January 1, 2023. Fifty percent of the paddlers must be employed by the sponsored public official agency.

## **2. Locality Requirement**

With regards to the Regular Mixed, Open, and Women divisions, not less than two-thirds (2/3) of each boat shall comprise of crew members with a primary residence inside of one-hundred (100) mile radius from New York City, with CitiField as the center of measurement.

## **3. Violation of Racing Class Composition**

In the event of any violation of Rule E(1) Divisions and Crew composition, the Chief Race Official reserves the right to disqualify the offending crew members or crew and refuse the crew member or crew's entry in future races.

## **4. Team Manager**

Each team must have a Team Manager (a non-racing member of the team) be present in the ID Check Area or Crew Holding Area during the time that his or her crew is under the control of the race officials. The Team Manager will be responsible for liaising with race officials, providing proof of identity for his or her crew members, ensuring all crew members are familiar with the Rules and Regulations, marshaling his or her team to the ID Check Area at the appropriate time, verifying his or her team's registration materials,

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and representing the crew at ceremonies. Team Managers are not permitted within the boating complex (past the main gate or on the docks).

**5. Team Captain**

Each team must have a Team Captain. Once ID check is complete, the Team Captain assumes responsibilities of all matters until the team is cleared to exit the Crew Holding Area.

**6. Team Uniform**

It is recommended that crew members on a team wear identical clothing to differentiate themselves from crew members on other teams.

**PART F - Marshaling, Embarking, and Proceeding to Start**

**1. Reporting to the ID Check Area**

A crew must assemble in the ID Check Area and be ready to board 30 minutes prior to the time of its race. Government-issued identification is required to be verified at this time. Failure to be ready may lead to exclusion of the crew from the specific race. Crews must follow the directions of the race officials and Event dock staff from the time it is called to the ID Check Area.

**1a. ID Check - Checking In**

The team manager must check in at ID check and collect their team's wristbands at least one hour prior to their race, however, we encourage checking in shortly after arrival. The team captain or team manager must submit a list of participating crew members, team roster, waivers, and seating chart to the ID Check before each race. The Team Captain (or co-captain) must sign a seating chart to confirm that all team members have submitted the signed waivers.

**2. Reporting to Staging Area**

Once at the ID Check is complete, the ID check staff will call your team to the Crew Staging Area. When ready, the Team Coordinator will call your team to line up for boat and equipment assignment. From this point, your team will board the boat.

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A. CHIEF JUDGE AREA

C. CREW STAGING AREA

E. BOATHOUSE

G. ANNEX

B. I. D. CHECK AREA

D. MEDIA TENT

F. LAUNCHING DOCK

H. CREW HOLDING AREA

Legend:  
X - Barricade



*Diagram 1.*

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### **3. Lane Assignments**

The Dockmaster or other race official shall provide the lane assignment for each team prior to a race. Teams may not request changes to lane assignments.

### **4. Boarding Procedures**

(a) A crew must board the boat in accordance with instructions given by the Dockmaster and Event dock staff.

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(b) A crew is not permitted to choose which boat to use and must use the boat assigned by the Team Coordinator authorized by the upper/lower dock supervisor.

(c) Each boat is assigned to a lane in which it is to race. A crew must race in the assigned lane. The lane assignment placard shall be affixed to the back of each drummer seat and placed on the back of the steersperson's life jacket, prior to boarding the boat, both of which must be returned to the team coordinator or event staff after each race.

**5. Crew Responsibility**

Each crew shall be responsible to check paddles (refer to Part K), oars, drums, drum sticks, water bailers, steering accessories, and overall quality of the boat before its assigned race to ensure that all equipment are fully functional and acceptable for racing conditions. The Event Organizer cannot be held responsible for any boat or equipment failure once a crew has embarked and left the launching dock area. (Read together with Rules F(6), G(10) and J(4)).

**6. Equipment Breakage**

(a) At the starting area, a boat with less than three inches of water is acceptable to race by race officials.

(b) In the event of damage to a boat or equipment on the way to the starting area, the affected crew shall alert the Starter or Umpires, and the Starter or Umpire shall have the discretion to (i) send the boat back to the launching dock area, (ii) have the crew repair the damage on the water, or (iii) have the crew continue to race with the damaged boat or equipment.

(c) Race Officials shall note any abuse of Rule F(6) by a crew so as to gain an unfair advantage and are empowered to assign a time penalty (up to 5 seconds), disqualify the offending crew from the race or future races, or a penalty described in Rule J(6).

**7. Embarking**

After a crew has boarded a boat, it must leave the launching dock area and proceed directly to the starting area and must refrain from crossing or traveling in the racing lanes, obstructing the path of competing crews or accompanying launches, causing a wash, or otherwise interfering with a race in progress or about to progress.

**8. Approaching the Start; Warm-up on the Course**

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(a) No crew shall enter the starting area until the previous race has cleared and unless explicitly permitted to do so by the Starter or Umpires.

(b) No crew shall practice on the course during the time when racing is in progress without permission of the Starter or Umpires.

**9. Substitutions of Crew Member**

Once a boat has embarked and the seating chart has been submitted, no substitutions or changes to the crew roster may be permitted for the assigned race.

**PART G - Starting Procedure**

**1. General**

Crews in the starting area must obey the instructions of the Starter, Umpires, and other race officials under the control of the Starter.

**2. Starting Area Conduct**

Crews shall enter and remain in the starting area for their assigned race unless for safety reasons or instructed to do so by the Starter or Umpires.

**3. Crew Responsibility**

Crews must take up their correct positions in the starting area in accordance to their lane assignments. It is the responsibility of the crew and not the Starter, umpires, or other race officials to maintain its correct position before the start. It is the responsibility of the drummer to watch the Starter and Umpire and to instruct the crew to follow the directions of the Starter and Umpire. It is the responsibility of each team captain to make sure that each crew member is familiar with the starting procedure before the start of all races.

**4. Starting Line**

The starting line will be marked by buoys on the water. Crews should look at the lane numbers marked on the left buoy in order to determine its lane position. The buoy closest to the launching dock area (east side of the lake) is marked as "0" and the buoy farthest from the launching dock area (west side of the lake) is marked as "8." Thus, by way of example, lane 4 would be in between buoys 3 and 4, with buoy 3 on the right (east) and buoy 4 on the left (west). (See Diagram 2).

**4a. Held Start for Races\*\***

Pontoons will be placed behind the start line affixed with a designated lane number. Teams will approach their assigned lane pontoon slowly from behind and position their boat to the left of the pontoon. Event staff will hold the boat near the rear while waiting for the race to start. Starter may request alignment, at which point teams

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must align boat according to starter requests. Teams are expected to follow the commands of the starter, as described in Rule G(5).

In the event of strong winds, Event staff may hold the boat from the middle to prevent the boat from drifting too much until starter gives the command to slowly shift the boats forward; it is up to the team to lightly paddle the boat forward per starter instructions.





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*Diagram 2. Map not drawn to scale*

## **5. Alignment**

(a) Before the start, the Starter shall cause the bows of all boats to be aligned with the plane of the starting line.

(b) If wind or other conditions make alignment difficult, the Starter shall use his or her best judgment to determine when alignment is as correct as possible under the circumstances.

(c) When the Starter is satisfied that the crews are correctly aligned, the Starter will alert all crews by giving the verbal warning *"All boats hold. We have alignment. Are you ready?, Attention, please!"* - (horn)

(d) At the call of *"Are you ready?"* all movement of paddles in the water must stop. Then at the sound of the horn or dropping of the flag, all crews may commence paddling.

(1) If a crew is observed by the Starter or the Umpire to have moved paddles after *"Are you ready?"* has been called and before the sounding of the horn or dropping of the flag, the Starter shall raise a *red flag*, and shall sound the horn *twice*, at which point, all crews must stop paddling and return to the start line for realignment. The offending crew shall be given a warning for jumping the start.

Note: The phrase *"Are you ready?"*, is signaling your team to get ready for the horn. It is not intended for you to notify the starter that your team is not ready to paddle. Any issues should be brought up before the boats are aligned.

## **6. Quick Start**

If weather or other conditions prevent use of the normal starting procedure without inordinate delay, the Starter shall announce to the crews that a quick start will be used. The Starter shall count down in regular cadence: *"5-4-3-2-1,"* and sound the horn to signify the start of the race. It is the sole responsibility of the crews to point their boats while the countdown is in progress.

## **7. Crew Signals**

If a crew is not ready when the Starter warns, *"Are you ready?"* the drummer and steersperson must fully extend and wave both arms above the drummer's head to attract the Starter's attention except when a Quick Start has been called. No crew shall be

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permitted to take such action in any other circumstance. This is only to be used for equipment trouble related to held start pontoon issues, buoy(s), dragon head/tail, or drum.

**8. Failure to Start**

If a crew fails to leave the starting line after the starting commands have been given, the Starter shall stop the race. If the crew's failure to start is not justified, the Starter may impose a penalty as described in Rule J(6).

**9. False Start**

(a) A crew commits a false start when its bow crosses the plane of starting line before the Starter's horn sounds. More than one crew may be assessed a false start at the same time.

(b) In the event of a false start, the Starter shall sound the horn twice and raise a red flag. Umpires shall intercept the boats and instruct them to return to the starting line. Any crew that fails to immediately return to the starting line after the Starter has called a false start shall be (i) given a warning, (ii) excluded from competing in the re-race, or (iii) assessed a time penalty of five (5) seconds by the Chief Race Official to be added to the offending crew's finishing time for the re-race.

(c) Once the crews have returned, the Starter shall announce the identity of the crew(s) that committed the false start and assess a warning upon the offending crew(s).

(d) A crew that receives two warnings, including false starts, applicable to the same race shall be excluded from the re-race.

**10. Equipment Failure after Start**

(a) Within 50 meters - If a crew experiences equipment failure that is not covered by Rule F(5) after the race has started and up to fifty (50) meters from the start line, the race shall be restarted provided that the affected crew stops paddling immediately and both the paddlers and the drummer fully extend their arms above their heads. The Starter or Umpire shall then raise a *red flag* and sound the horn *twice*, at which point, all crews must return to the Start line for realignment. If the equipment failure is deemed to have been the result of failure to inspect the equipment and boat as is required by Rule F(5), the offending crew will be assessed a warning.

(b) Beyond 50 meters - In the event that unforeseen circumstances materially affect the outcome of a race, the Chief Race Official, Starter, or Umpires may interrupt

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the race and order a re-race, order a timed run with only the crews affected, or take such action as is necessary to restore the aggrieved crew's fair opportunity of winning.

(1) EXCEPTION – As provided in Rules F(5) and F(6), in instances where equipment failure was foreseeable, and the equipment failure could have been prevented but for the crew's failure to reasonably inspect its equipment or boat, the Chief Race Official, Starter or Umpires shall not take any remedial measures.

**11. Unfair Advantage; Unsportsmanlike Conduct**

Any conduct that gives a crew a material advantage, which in the opinion of the race officials violates the purpose of the Rules and Regulations, may be assessed a time penalty of two (2) to five (5) seconds or a penalty described in Rule J(6).

**PART H - Race Conduct**

**1. A Crew's Water**

The proper course for each boat is a straight line from its starting position to a corresponding point on the finish line with at least two (2) meters of clear water between itself and the adjacent boat(s). Clear water will be measured by the distance between the paddles of adjacent boats. Each boat must remain in its allocated lane and must not interfere with other boats. Each crew is responsible for its own steering.

(a) Impedance - Crews shall be assessed a two (2) – five (5) second penalty, disqualified, or a penalty described in Rule J(6) if they deviate from their racing lanes or impede other racing crews on the water which materially affects the results of the race. The Chief Race Official may also take such action as is necessary to restore the aggrieved crew's fair opportunity of winning.

(b) Collision - In the event a lane violation results in a collision between two or more boats and it materially affects the result of the race, the Chief Race Official, Starter, or Umpire may order one or more boats to re-race the race, with or without the offending crew. If, in the opinion of the umpire, a crew could have avoided the collision by following the umpire's instructions to alter its path (within its assigned lane) or a crew initiated a collision by steering into a boat veering off its path, the Chief Race Official may disqualify the offending crew(s), assess a time penalty on the offending crew(s), or assess a penalty described in Rule J(6). The Chief Race Official may also take such action as is necessary to restore the aggrieved crew's fair opportunity of winning.

**2. Umpires' Instructions**

Umpires shall follow racing crews and warn crews that are not in its assigned racing lane or is impeding the course of another racing crew. Crews shall obey the umpires'

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instructions at the risk of penalty or disqualification. If a crew fails to respond to instructions, the Umpires may identify and order the offending crew to stop paddling. Umpires may instruct a non-offending crew to stop paddling if it is necessary to prevent a collision.

**3. Interference**

Interference shall consist of physical contact with another crew (including clashing of paddles), washing another crew, or failing to observe two meters of clear water between boats. It shall not be interference if a crew is washed or obstructed while paddling outside its own water. A crew that leaves its own water does so at its own risk.

**4. Deliberate Swamping or Capsizing**

If, in the opinion of the race officials, a boat has been swamped or capsized deliberately by the crew, the Event Organizer reserves the right to disqualify and refuse such crew's entry in the Event and future Events. A penalty of \$500 will also be imposed on the team.

**5. Deliberate Destruction of Boat**

If, in the opinion of the race officials, a boat is damaged deliberately by the crew, the Event Organizer reserves the right to impose a penalty of \$5,000 on the offending crew. The Event Organizer also reserves the right to require the offending crew to pay for the costs of repairs to the damaged boat and the right to disqualify the offending crew from this year's Event and future Events.

**6. Wake Riding/Hang Washing**

Any instance of a crew riding the bow wave created by another boat in order to gain an unfair advantage in the 250-meter or 500-meter race will result in a time penalty of two (2) to five (5) seconds penalty, or a penalty described in Rule J(6).

**7. Overtaking**

When a crew is overtaking a crew ahead of it, the overtaking crew must provide two (2) meters of clear water between itself and the adjacent boats. When a crew is being overtaken by an advancing boat, it must not block or interfere with the path of the overtaking crew.

**8. Drumming**

Drummers must be seated in the drum seat at all times during the course of a race. Drumming is an essential part of dragon boat racing. Once beyond 50 meters from the starting line, drummers must continuously beat the drum (leathered top of the drum) with their drumsticks until the end of the race.

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**9. Paddling Technique**

Only a seated paddling technique is permitted during the course of a race. No paddler is permitted to paddle while standing or kneeling.

**10. Unsportsmanlike Conduct**

A crew that engages in unsportsmanlike conduct on the water may be assessed by a race official with one of the penalties described in Rule J(6). The Chief Race Official may take appropriate action if the outcome of the race was materially affected.

**PART I - The Finish**

**1. Finish Line**

Like the starting line, the finish line will be marked by buoys on the water. (Refer to Rule G(4) for further details.)

**2. Order of Finish**

(a) A crew has finished the race when the foremost part of its dragon head touches the plane of the finish line. It is recommended that all crews paddle beyond the finish line.

(b) The finishing order of a race and the time taken by each boat will be determined by the Chief Race Official whose decision shall be final unless a protest has been filed. In the event a team would like to file a protest they may only do so in accordance with the procedure stated in Part (J).

(c) Dead Heats - In the rare event of a dead heat, that is, when the Chief Race Official determines that two or more boats finish the race simultaneously, the Chief Race Official shall order a re-race with the crews involved in the dead heat. If a crew refuses to re-race, the Chief Race Official shall award the higher place being contested to the other crew and may exclude the refusing crew from re-racing the course. If a re-race is not possible due to the racing schedule, the Chief Race Official may allow crews involved in the dead heat to advance in the heat.

**3. Disembarking**

(a) Once crews have passed the finish line, all crews must return immediately and directly to the launching dock area and disembark promptly.

(b) Each crew on the water must wait near the launching dock area until Event Dock Staff signals the crew and assigns a launching birth to disembark.

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(c) Once disembarked, teams must wait in the Crew Holding Area. Teams will be released once judges declare the results final. Team Managers may wait outside the Crew Holding Area to assist the teams if needed.

**4. Point Scoring System**

(a) To determine the overall Event placements for the U.S. Dragon Boat Open Championship (Mixed), Regular Mixed and Open, the following point system will control:

First Place	10 points
Second Place	3 points
Third Place	2 points
Fourth Place	1 point

(b) In the event of a tie in points, the following tie-breaker will control:

First Priority	500m
Second Priority	250m

(c) Crews in the U.S. Dragon Boat Open Championship (Mixed, and Women) divisions must race in all heats within a distance in order to qualify for points for that distance.

(d) In the event of cancellation due to unsafe weather conditions, the winners will be determined by the total number of points already attained.

**PART J – Protests and Penalties**

**1. Matters Subject to Protest**

Only matters that materially affect the outcome of a race in the paid divisions (USDBOC Mixed and Regular Mixed and Open) which the aggrieved crew participated shall be subject to official protest. Invitational/unpaid divisions shall not be subject to official protest.

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**2. Standing (Right to Protest)**

Crews may make a deposit of \$100 check per team to the order of “The Hong Kong Dragon Boat Festival in New York, Inc.” in order to reserve the Right to Protest. The Right to Protest check must be submitted no later than the close of business (5:00 PM) on Tuesday, August 1, 2023. Only crews participating in the following divisions; (USDBOC Mixed and Regular Mixed/ Open) that have submitted the deposit and have been materially affected by the conduct of another crew or the race results, shall have standing to lodge a protest. Crews requesting to lodge an official protest in any other divisions including any invitationals will not be permitted.

**3. Lodging a Protest**

(a) A crew wishing to lodge a protest against another crew or the race results must signal to the Umpires immediately after finishing the race by having its drummer raise both arms above his or her head until the attention of the Umpires have been gained. The consulting Umpire thereupon shall raise a red flag and instruct the crew to return to the launching dock area.

(b) Once the protesting crew returns to the launching dock area, it has the opportunity to confer with its Team Captain or Team Manager. While teams are in the Crew Holding Area, the Team Captain must immediately describe the nature of the protest to the Lower Dock Supervisor. Once the judges have declared the results final and

the teams are released from the Crew Holding Area, the Team Captain or Team Manager will have five (5) minutes to lodge a protest with the ID Check Supervisor. After five (5) minutes, all protests for that heat will be invalid. If there is a protest, the respective supervisor will inform the Race Controller in the Chief Race Official area at the finish line.

(c) The protest, together with the reports of the Starter, Umpires, and other race officials will be considered by at least two members of the Jury, which shall be comprised of the Chief Race Official and another race official.

**4. Equipment Failure**

Protests regarding equipment failure will be heard but will unlikely result in an overturning of the race result because crews have the ultimate responsibility to check the quality and the integrity of all equipment before embarking.

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**5. Conditions for Refunding the Deposit**

Deposits will be refunded if (1) no protest was filed or (2) the race officials agreed with the merits of protest. In all other cases, the money will be forfeited to the Event Organizer.

**6. Types of Penalties**

(a) Warning – A crew that receives two warnings applying to the same race shall be disqualified from the race. A false start shall have the same effect as a warning. Warnings applicable to the original race shall apply to a re-race.

(b) Disqualification – A crew that is disqualified shall be removed from the race, which may or may not affect the crew's ability to advance. Disqualifications may apply to individual crew members as well.

(c) Time Penalties – A crew that is assessed a time penalty shall have time added to its race result. Time penalties can range from 2 seconds to 5 seconds, and apply to race only.

**7. Restoring Opportunity of Winning**

If the Chief Race Official, after consultation with the race officials, finds that a crew has been deprived of its fair opportunity of winning, placing, or advancing, he or she shall take such measures as are necessary to restore that opportunity. Such measures may include assessing a penalty as described in Rule J(6) on the offending crew, re-racing a race with all or some of its original participants, or advancing the aggrieved crew into an extra lane in a final.

**PART K - Equipment**

**1. Allocation of Equipment**

All boats, paddles, oars, drums, drumsticks, water bailers, and PFDs used by crew members shall be provided by the Event Organizer. The allocation of boats, paddles, oars, water bailers, and PFDs to crews and its crew members shall be made by the Event Organizer, Dockmaster, and the Event dock staff.

**2. Modifications or Alterations**

No modifications or additions to the boat or equipment may be made by any crew.

**3. Returning Equipment**

All boats, paddles, drums, PFDs, and any other equipment used during the practice sessions and races must be returned to the Event Organizer intact and in full.

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**4. Drumming Equipment**

Only the drum and drum sticks provided shall be used to signal the stroke rate. Whistles, rattles, air horns, or any other noise-making devices are prohibited from use in practice or races.

**5. Paddles**

Each team is allowed one extra paddle per boat. Do not remove or take paddles from other boats.

(a) All Teams in the USDBOC Divisions can use their own IDBF 202a spec-approved paddle with the approved IDBF stamp on the paddle. This exception is all paddlers must use or no paddlers will use their own paddles per registered team. There will be no exception to the rule. The extra paddle on the boat must also be your own. You will not be allowed to use the festival paddle for the extra paddle.

(b) If the paddler(s) are discovered using anything other than IDBF 202a spec-approved paddle, the entire team will be required to use the paddles provided by the festival. If the team insists on using the paddle they will be automatically disqualified.

(c) Paddlers found to be using paddles that do not conform to the published 'paddle' regulations, will be given a 2 – 5 second time penalty and if the warning is ignored they will face disqualification from the competition concerned.

**6. Water Bailers**

The Event Organizer will provide each boat two (2) hand-held bailers with which water within a boat can be removed. No other equipment for removing water from the boat, including but not limited to pumps and foreign bailers, is permitted.

**7. Electrical Devices**

No electrical, electronic, or radio amplifying equipment of any kind is permitted in the boat.

**8. Seating Pads and Knee Pads**

Seating pads and knee pads are permitted on a boat provided that they are no more than a quarter inch (0.25 inches) thick.

**9. Gloves, Tape, and Wax**

Crew members may wear gloves. Tape and wax are permitted but must not be affixed to or leave a residue on the paddles.

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**10. Foreign Substances**

Except provided above, no external devices shall be used during the race other than the equipment provided by the Event Organizer.

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**Divisions and Point Scoring**

Requirement	USDBOC		Regular		Women's Invitational	Other Invitational / Special
	Mixed	N/A	Mixed	Open		
Paddlers	18-20		8-10	8-10	8-10	8-10
Drummer	1		1	1	1	1
Steer Person	1		1	1	1	1
Min. Practice	N/A		1	1	1	1
Min. Female Paddlers	8 with a max of 10	All paddlers must be women	4	N/A	All paddlers must be women	4
Distances:						
250M	Required		Optional		Mandatory	Mandatory
500M	Required		Optional		N/A	N/A
Entry Fee (Non-refun dable)	See Registration Forms				Free**	
Winner Trophies	Yes					
Prize *	N/A				N/A	

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