

**A Welcome to Dragons Abreast Australia
(ACT and Region)**

Now that you are a member...



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THE PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE AND HOW TO USE IT

This guide is designed to give you some knowledge of Dragons Abreast and the sport of dragon boat racing.

It is anticipated that by providing you with some information you might feel at home as a new member. Whenever we start something new or join a group there is always a whole new vocabulary that we need to learn. People talk about unusual things and we can't always work out how they fit, the way things are done or if those things have a different meaning to what we are expecting.

Dragons Abreast involves more than Dragon Boat racing and it is about the participation of breast cancer survivors not only in a great sport but also in the promotion of breast cancer awareness and promoting the health and well-being of all women. Dragons Abreast works on many levels – local community, national and in the bigger picture – worldwide - providing a network of support, friendship and information to all its members.

Dragon Boat racing is one of the fastest growing sports in the world. It is exciting, fast, colourful and noisy and it one of the only sports where there is no elitism and everyone just loves paddling – yes we paddle, not row.....

It has a place for all ages, genders and levels of competition or participation.

There are chances for travel or just staying home, there are levels of competition for those so inclined, and there is a place for those who just want the casual paddle around the lake.

It is up to you what you want from your membership of Dragons Abreast and to what levels to want to go with dragon boat racing.

The index should give you easy access to find what you are looking for, however if the answer isn't here, or, you want more information – please ask, you now have a whole boat load of ladies willing and waiting to make you feel like you have always been part of the crew.



Chinese New Year 2008 Flowers on the Water, Darling Harbour, Sydney





THE DRAGONS ABREAST LOGO

The **yellow twisted loop** that ends in a dragon head—this represents the dragon spirit and its embrace of the women as it encircles them. The bright yellow colour represents life and hope.

The **pink ladies**—the grouping of the women together represents the strength we gain from each other and the fact that we are not alone on our journey with breast cancer. The **multiple pink ladies** are also an extension of the silhouette figures which are planted at the *Field of Women* and have gone on to become the current logo of the Breast Cancer Network Australia, of which Dragons Abreast is a member group.

The blue waves represent the boat and the water on which we paddle.

The origin of the design is a combination of a photograph, an antique bracelet found in an art book and lots of creativity and input from around Australia. When we began to develop our logo we asked for contributions and suggestions from paddlers. Melba Mensch, a founding member of the Newcastle group, forwarded a copy of a poster that was used in NSW as an advertisement for *Dragons Abreast*. The poster featured a photograph of paddlers within an antique bracelet.

Michelle Hanton took the poster to Vanessa Schultz, a wonderful young woman, who was a survivor of a brain tumour and a very clever graphic artist. Vanessa came up with three designs and various colour combinations. Michelle took these to Melbourne to the BCNA State Reps Think Tank, where those representatives who were paddlers all voted on their preferred choice—the result is the current logo.





Original Abreast In A Boat Team
with Dr. McKenzie

OUR HISTORY

Dr. Don McKenzie, a sports medicine physician at the University of British Columbia, launched *Abreast In A Boat* in 1996 to test the myth that repetitive upper-body exercise in women treated for breast cancer encourages lymphoedema.

Dr McKenzie believed that by following a special exercise and training program women could avoid lymphedema and enjoy active, full lives. As we followed his program, we were carefully monitored by a sports medicine physician, a physiotherapist and a nurse. Dr McKenzie's theory was proven correct. No new cases of lymphoedema occurred and none of the existing cases became worse.

From a medical study involving one boat of 25 women in 1996, the organization has now grown to include five boats based in Vancouver and has inspired many other teams to form.

Read articles about the medical history of *Abreast In A Boat* in the Canadian Medical Association Journal: August 1998 | October 1996.

WHY WE PADDLE

Through the strenuous demands of dragon boat paddling, we have learned that we can push the limits of our physical endurance and have fun doing it. We have grown stronger as individuals and as a group. We began as strangers with only our disease in common; now we are best friends and an emotional support network for each other, our friends, and our communities. Our dream is to continue to encourage all those living with breast cancer all over the world to live full and active lives.



Our dragon boat experience is helping our healing:

- it helps us regain control of our lives
- it shows our families and friends we can live our lives the way we choose
- it reminds us to make the most of every moment
- it creates a new state of wellness in each of us
- it demands the best of us both physically and mentally
- it helps us overcome the loneliness of cancer
- it creates a safety net in the event of a recurrence
- it gives us pride in our accomplishments
- it shows us we can undertake strenuous exercise without developing lymphoedema
- it enables us to move on with our lives
- it creates a new balance in our lives
- it encourages us to share our experience with others

PARTICIPATION

Everyone is welcome to participate as part of *Dragons Abreast* dragon boat crew regardless of fitness and age. We have members who want to be recreational paddlers and members who are interested in being more serious competitive sports paddlers. The level of participation is entirely up to you.

Everyone starts as a beginner and where you go to from that first paddle is up to you. There is no selection criteria for *Dragons Abreast* crews and if you wish to be part of a regatta you just need to nominate your interest and you are part of the crew. It is wise if you do some paddling to improve your fitness prior to a regatta rather than putting yourself at risk of injury.

If you are looking at improving your fitness, it is wise to attend a few regular sessions rather than being spasmodic. Dragon boating is a very good all body activity and a true team sport. There are no stars on a dragon boat—it is all about team effort. Training for dragon boating involves aspects of strength, endurance, aerobic development, coordination and team interaction.

When starting a new sport, it is wise to ease into it rather than going full bore and causing an injury; you can stop and start as you wish. Just do a little more each time to try and increase your ability. The dragon boat paddle stroke is not a thing you do naturally so you will be using your body in a new way and will find you have dragon boat muscles you didn't know you had.

The most important aspect of dragon boat is the timing. If we don't work together, it just doesn't work

Being on the water in such beautiful surroundings is just wonderful for your soul and is very therapeutic no matter what the weather, or the type of training you are doing. Being there and participating at the level you are happy with, or aiming for, is what it is about. There is a place for everyone.



ABOUT DRAGON BOAT RACING

The dragon boat race—a very special Chinese tradition

The Dragon has a very symbolic meaning for the Chinese. A classic dragon has the head of an ox, a deer's antlers, the mane of a horse, the body and scales of a snake, the claws of an eagle and the tail of a fish. With its strength and power the Dragon rides the clouds in the sky and commands the wind, mist and rain.

The Dragon Boat is deeply embedded in China's 'Dragon' culture, with each boat having an ornately carved dragon's head at the bow and a tail in the stern. The hull is painted with the Dragon's scales. The paddles symbolically represent the claws. In IDBF Sport Racing there are generally 18-20 paddlers per standard size Dragon Boat and 8-10 paddlers in the Small Boat, plus a drummer and a helm (Steerer or Sweep). In traditional festivals the boat designs and crew numbers can vary from 10 up to 50 or more paddlers, plus of course the drummer and sweep.

The races are a colourful spectacle, with at least two boats competing against each other over distances from 200 to 2000 metres and above. Not only are strength, endurance and skill important but teamwork and harmony of purpose. In ancient China the Dragon Boat was used for religious purposes as a way of appeasing the rain gods. Later Qu Yuan, the great warrior poet, committed suicide in the river Mi Lo, as a protest against the political corruption of the day. To commemorate this sacrifice the people began to organize Dragon Boat races in his memory. Since that time, over 2000 years ago, Dragon Boat racing has become a major part of Chinese culture, representing patriotism and group integrity.

Dragon boating today

A modern sport and recreation too—the IDBF way

In the 1970s the Hong Kong Tourist Association (now Tourist Board) decided to stage an International Dragon Boat Festival to promote Hong Kong. In 1976 the first Hong Kong International Races took place, an event recognised today, by dragon boaters world wide, as the start of the 'Modern Era' of Sport Dragon Boat Racing. The HKIR developed into an annual festival of enormous success and impressive press pictures of the Hong Kong Races went around the world. Until the International Dragon Boat Federation (IDBF) was formed in 1991, the HKIR were the 'unofficial club crew world championships' of the sport. Crews who competed in the HKIR then went home and started their own Dragon Boat Associations, then the EDBF (European), the IDBF and the ADBF (Asian) Federations'—three Federations who now govern Dragon Boating as practised in over 60 countries.

Since the formation of the IDBF, the sport has spread rapidly throughout the world. Today, 30 years after the first HKIR, the numbers show the truly impressive development of modern Dragon Boat Sport. With nearly 50 million participants in China; over 300,000 in the UK and Europe, including Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Russia; 90,000 in Canada and the USA and many thousands in



Australia and New Zealand and with the sport now spreading through the Caribbean, Africa and the Pacific Basin Dragon Boat Sport, under its governing bodies is a vibrant, effective and independent paddle sport.

Dragon boat Sport—people packed and exciting!

Dragon Boat competitions, under the IDBF and its Continental Federations (the ADBF and EDBF) have developed into a serious, high-performance, competitive sport, with many Dragon Boat Associations producing National Teams of elite dragon boat paddlers. IDBF World Championships, EDBF European Championships and ADBF Asian Championships are well established, as are Regional Championships in North America. Championship Medals are hard to come by and well deserved. A whole new ethos and different set of racing values has developed from the Hong Kong International Festival Races. There is no other paddle sport in which 22 people work together to create a team result rewarded through the efforts of the whole crew, rather than a few individual performances. This harmony of purpose can only be achieved through many hours of training in the boat, learning to be a complete crew and developing the team spirit and understanding necessary to work together, as one unit, for the common good.

Dragon boating—the mass participation paddle sport for all ages and abilities

As well as Sport Racing, Dragon Boat Associations have helped to develop the Festival Racing side of Dragon Boating too. Many Festival Races are successful due to the number of crews that enter just for the fun and excitement of the event. One of the advantages of Dragon Boating is that you can form a Festival Crew (or fun team, as they are sometimes known) and with little experience and knowledge, quickly become competitive in a Dragon Boat. A lot of Festival Crews come from the ‘corporate market’ and compete in Festival Dragon Boat Racing because it is also a social event and a team building activity in which the strengths and abilities of employees are soon apparent.

Dragon boat racing—the modern sport with ancient traditions.

Serious Sport but serious fun too!

Dragon Boating is the mass participation paddle sport of today, with an ancient past and a very bright future. Not yet an Olympic sport but heading that way fast, Dragon Boat Racing is a ‘team sport’; a very social sport and great fun too! Attractive to the corporate market and as a ‘community activity’ it is also a high performance sport for elite standard athletes. This ability range in a team sport full of tradition, culture and social interaction is highly desirable in today’s world. Dragon Boating is a sport and recreational activity that can be pursued by everyone and anyone of all abilities and at every level of competition. That is the greatness of Dragon Boating.



A Dragons Tale



If you would like to know more about the history and traditions of the Dragons Abreast boating movement in Australia, Dragons Abreast Australia published an interesting and detailed book in 2007. It's called *A Dragon's Tale* and is an inspirational read about women with breast cancer taking up the challenge of dragon boating (and winning their personal battles). It includes quite a lot about the ACT group of which you are now a member.

Ask the Coordinator for details on how it can be purchased or on our website at www.dragonsabreast.com.au/book_launch/index.htm

GoAnna

Our beautiful boat Goanna was the dream of our founder Anna Wellings Booth. She took a lot of hard work and hair pulling both before and after she arrived but we are all very proud of her. All team members are required to assist with maintenance from time to time and to assist with getting her into and out of the water and covered up after a training session. If she is used in a regatta, please look out for her. Her head and tail are also precious and we need to look after them.

You may wonder about her name well after much thought it came by accident. During a training session when we were showing off our individual performance we were shouting encouragement to each paddler when it came to Anna's turn. "Go Anna! Go Anna!" we called and of course it came out "GoAnna" and was immediately taken as the name of the boat. How proud we are of her!



The day Goanna arrived



BREAST CANCER ORGANISATIONS

The following gives descriptions and contact details about the various breast cancer organisations nationally and locally. We have several representatives of these key organisations in our group.

Breast Cancer Network Australia (BCNA)

www.bcna.org.au 1800 500 258

Breast Cancer Network Australia is the voice of ordinary Australians personally affected by breast cancer. Formed in 1998 by a core group of survivors, it works to make sure that women and their families are given the best possible treatment and care. Based in Melbourne, BCNA produces the *My Journey Kit* for those newly diagnosed with breast cancer and now the *Hope and Hurdles Pack* for women living with secondary disease. *The Beacon Magazine* is free for anyone interested in breast cancer issues. Breast Cancer Network Australia conducts the Field of Women annually to raise awareness of breast cancer.

Our local representatives are Elspeth Humphries and Kerrie Griffin

National Breast Cancer Centre (NBCC)

www.nbcc.org.au 1800 624 973

The National Breast Cancer Centre, based in Sydney, was established by the Federal Government in 1995. The Centre aims to improve breast cancer control through analysing, developing, disseminating and encouraging the adoption of clinical guidelines to improve the diagnosis, treatment and support of women with breast cancer.

National Breast Cancer Foundation (NBCF)

www.nbcf.org.au 1800 000 118

The National Breast Cancer Foundation (formerly known as the Kathleen Cuningham Foundation) funds peer-reviewed research in the pursuit of new knowledge into the prevention, detection and treatment for breast cancer. Since its formation in 1994 until 2007 the Foundation has provided over \$14 million to research projects across Australia. NBCF is based in Sydney.

The Otis Foundation:

The Otis Foundation was established in memory of Judy Burley to provide places for a retreat and to nurture those facing the challenges of breast cancer. The foundation is committed to funding several retreats so that women with breast cancer can stay free of charge. DA ACT has contributed funds towards the costs of the Otis retreat in the Snowy Mountains. For more information visit www.otisfoundation.org.au



CONTACT DETAILS

- DAA website: www.dragonsabreast.com.au
- DAA phone number: **1300 889 566**
- Regional Rep ACT and Region: ACTregion@dragonsabreast.com.au
- Canberra Coordinator canberra@dragonsabreast.com.au
- CDBA website: www.cdba.com.au
- AusDBF website: www.ausdbf.com.au
- IDBF website: www.idbf.org

YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Now that you have joined *Dragons Abreast*, you also automatically belong to:

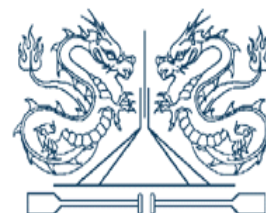
- Dragons Abreast ACT and Region (DA ACT)
- Dragons Abreast Australia (DAA)
- Canberra Dragon Boat Association (CDBA)
- Australian Dragon Boat Federation (AusDBF)
- IDBF



International Dragon Boat
Federation



Dragons Abreast



Canberra Dragon Boat
Association

CDBA

Canberra Dragon Boat Association is the ACT governing body for dragon boating in the ACT. All dragon boaters in the ACT belong not only to their club but are all members of the CDBA. Each state has a governing dragon boat body.

AusDBF

Australian Dragon Boat Federation is the governing body for Dragon Boating in Australia. Its members are the governing bodies from each state.

IDBF

International Dragon Boat Federation is the worldwide governing body for Dragon Boating.



Who determines membership fees?

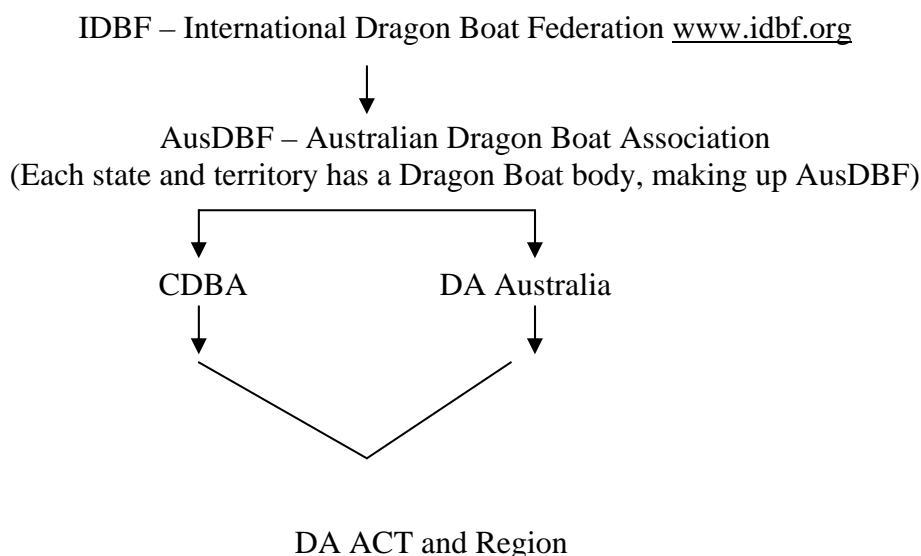
Your membership fees are determined by the Canberra Dragon Boat Association (CDBA), DA ACT and AusDBF.

The CDBA set their fees for the season and it includes an amount per person for membership to AusDBF. DA ACT adds an amount to this to cover:

- the team membership to DA Australia (our national body)
- costs involved in running DA ACT and maintaining GoAnna, our boat.

Who makes the rules?

All organisations have rules. Dragon boating is one of the fastest growing sports and so is constantly developing. This is a hierarchy starting at the top, which looks like this.



Regattas are mainly run under the IDBF race rules but each state body has its own set of rules that cover their particular circumstances. For example, in Victoria everyone has to wear a PFD all the time. In the ACT, we only have that rule in winter but in Victoria it is a maritime rule and must be complied with.

In major regattas you must have a legal paddle but in local regattas it is not obligatory. So you need to look at the rules of the regatta before you compete. Every regatta is slightly different depending on what type it is and where it is held.



Dragons Abreast ACT in 2007



EQUIPMENT

Paddles

What is a legal paddle?

All dragon boat paddles have to have a license number. They also have life expectancy. IDBF set out the specifications and regulations governing dragon boat racing, for all equipment, including paddles, boats seat paddling, gloves, crew composition—everything. They have a list of legal paddles and recognized paddle manufacturers. Regatta instructions will advise you of the requirements regarding paddles. So if you are racing in an AusDBF sanctioned race (major regatta), you need to make sure that your paddle has the correct license number. When buying a new paddle make sure it is made by an accepted manufacturer and meets the current requirements.

Paddles are made of wood, carbon fibre /wood mix or carbon fibre. They vary in cost: wood is the cheapest and the easiest to maintain and are around \$80; carbon fibre can cost anything from around the \$200 to \$300 mark. Carbon fibre is lighter but less flexible and not as durable as wooden paddles.

How do I determine the correct paddle length?

The correct paddle length depends on a lot of factors: the type of boat you are in, paddling style, where you sit in the boat, type of crew, and your body type. As a general rule:

1. In a fully loaded boat in your correct sitting position, let go of your top hand and extend your outside arm forward so it is parallel to the water/boat.
2. Now flip the paddle so that the T-handle is pointing down (you may want to adjust your outside hand).
3. Now the top of the T-handle should be near or almost touching the water—that will be the length.

How do I measure the length of the paddle?

The length of the paddle is measured from the tip of the blade to the top of the handle.

Paddle bags

A paddle bag is a very handy piece of equipment. It protects your paddle and normally has pockets for things you may want to carry with you. It is great for transporting all your gear when attending a regatta. They are available from Typhoon. Grab one when you see a stall at a regatta.



PFDs

What are they?

A PFD is a **Personal Flotation Device**. It is not a life jacket. However, it will bring you to the surface of the water and support your weight but it will not roll you onto your back in the event you are knocked unconscious.

When do I need to wear a PFD?

- We require that anyone who cannot swim 50 metres in their paddling clothes must wear a PFD at all times. (Remember you will not have time to take you clothes off and you will have shoes on your feet.)
- If the sweep and or captain determine that the weather or water conditions require it
- Everyone must wear a PFD once the water temperature drops in Lake Burley Griffin and until the temperature returns to a reasonable temperature (usually end of May to Aug/Sept).
- When paddling in the dark it is wise to wear one.
- You may request a PFD anytime you feel you want to wear one, regardless of what the rest of the crew are doing.

Boat mats or “sit-upons”

These are cheap non-slip pieces of rubberised fabric that help prevent you from slipping on the seats as you paddle. Usually, they come in a roll and we cut them to size. They come as place mats as well and are usually available at supermarkets or discount shops.

Clothing

DA ACT has a team shirt. On the back you will find the Goanna Logo.

Dragons Abreast Australia has an assortment of merchandise: for example, hats gloves, rashies, jackets etc on the DA website and can be ordered on line or via our merchandise person. Other dragon boat gear can be purchased through Typhoon when they have a stall at regattas or direct through them.

For training it is not essential to wear DA clothing or your team shirt and you can wear clothing that you are comfortable in and that you don't mind getting wet. It is also important to remember that you must be able to swim 50 metres in whatever you are wearing.

In summer it is important that you wear a hat, sunnies, sunscreen and that you carry water. Water bottles are available at sports stores, supermarkets or you can just buy a bottle of water and reuse the bottle. We try to carry extra water on really hot days.

Shoes

Footwear is a person thing and it needs to be something that we are prepared to walk in water in, so things like crocs, aqua socks, beach sandals etc mostly available from



supermarkets etc at varying costs. Something that dries quickly, protects your feet and is not slippery is the main criteria. In winter things like sneakers are good so your feet are kept warm. We try not to be in the water as water temperatures drop to painful levels in winter so loading from docks or the shore is the go.

Gloves

Some people like to wear paddling gloves to give them better grip on their paddle. These are available via DAA or sports and bicycle stores (and the Cancer Council shop).

In winter a lot of people wear warm or thermal gloves with long cuffed rubber kitchen gloves over the top. This keeps your hands warm and dry.

Hats

A hat is very important both summer and winter. A thermal hat in winter helps reduce the loss of heat.

WATER TEMPERATURE, HYPOTHERMIA AND PADDLING IN WINTER

The water temperature in Lake Burley Griffin drops to very low temperatures during winter. The top 12 inches of water are the warmest. *The temperature of the water surface falls to 6.5C (44F) in winter, and obviously it is even colder below the surface, so this can also be a hazard.*

It is very important that we practise very safe boating in winter as we do not want to end up in the water. Part of this practice is to stay closer to the shore so that, in the event of a capsize, we are able to get people to the shore quickly.

What to wear in winter

Thermal gear is best and clothing that does not become heavy with water if we capsize. Fabrics such as polar fleece are snuggly and warm but become very heavy when wet.

So what is good?

- Thermal fabrics will keep you warm if wet, are light and not restrictive.
- Spray jackets are good.
- A hat
- Spray jacket
- Gloves—warm gloves inside kitchen gloves are all the rage and a main item of clothing for winter dragon boat paddlers.
- A hand warmer in the pocket
- Bring a change of clothes and a towel.
- Shoes



Hydration

It is very important that you hydrate (drink water) all year round but most important in summer. By the time you get thirsty you are already dehydrating and this will affect you in many ways—you may get a headache, not think clearly, muscles don't work properly, and, if it is very hot, you may feel ill. Start drinking prior to training if you know you are going to train in hot weather.

It is also important to bring water on board with you in winter as well. So a water bottle is an important part of your equipment.



SKILL DEVELOPMENT

How do I become an official?

An official is a volunteer who helps at regattas. Regattas require a large army of manpower for an event to be run successfully. Everyone loves a well-run regatta. Official's courses are held periodically and notice is given that they are being held.

How do I become a sweep?

The sweep is responsible for the safety of both the crew and the boat. Anyone can become a sweep. Sweeping a dragon boat is not just about steering the boat, it is about **being in control** of the boat. That is manoeuvring the boat by use of not only the sweep oar but also by using the crew. It means being able to direct the crew to manage the boat in all conditions—in some cases the weather and water conditions are not dragon boat friendly. It's lots of fun, but a lot of hard work for the sweep.

AusDBF have a sweep accreditation scheme which sets out the basic responsibilities and requirements for sweeps. An apprentice sweep is mentored by an experienced sweep while he or she is learning.

Once a sweep has learnt to manage the boat with a full crew, the apprentice sweep can present for sweep accreditation. This involves both theory and practical tests. The theory is a multi-choice question sheet and the practical exam is a demonstration on water by the sweep that they are in control of both crew and the boat.

When sweeps pass both the theory and practical exams they are then provisionally accredited. When they sweep four sports teams over two regattas (without incident) they then become fully accredited and then can sweep social teams as well as sports teams in regattas. They must sweep four races per season.





How do I become an accredited coach?

AusDBF run an Accredited Level 1 Coaching Course—Dragon Boat specific, which is run by DBNSW (Dragon Boat NSW) several times through the year. The National Coaching Accreditation Scheme approves the course. The coaches must attend the course and meet the practical requirements.

The practical component involves planning and analysing a series of training sessions (20), and having five sessions assessed by another coach. A training schedule for a specific period must be produced and submitted along with the reviewed training sessions. A training schedule for a specific period must be produced and submitted along with the assessed training sessions.

First aid courses and other courses

It is important that we have a few people with a first aid certificate so from time to time these courses will be offered

From time to time, other courses become available and are offered to members. These are mainly on running the club, writing grant applications, speaking to the media etc. There are also sport specific courses offered through sport and Recreation. AusDBF also runs courses which club members are advised of.

Funding for skill development

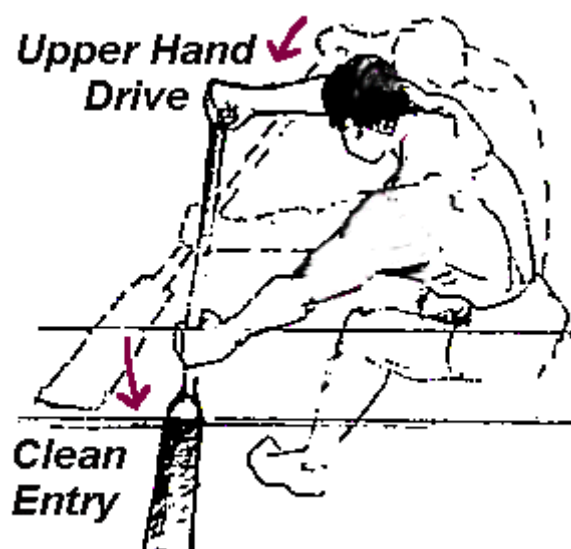
From time to time *Dragons Abreast ACT* will sponsor or contribute towards the costs of courses. It is anticipated that, if you are sponsored to do a skill development course, you use the talents obtained to assist in the growth and development of DA ACT.



PADDLING TECHNIQUE

What we try to achieve when paddling is the best result for the least amount of energy. To this end, we try to have people use a correct technique. Due to the different types of surgery, drugs and resulting physical ramifications together with our age, it may not be possible for all people to achieve this stroke but it is a basis of what we are instructing and provides a goal for people to aim for. We all have physical limitations, some of which will be improved by paddling but in some cases this will not be the case and people do the best they can. A physical limitation is one thing and a mental limitation is another so say: "I will try", and not "I can't ". Never defeat yourself before you give yourself a fair go. Read the following to learn about the recommended paddling technique.

The Catch



Few sounds on the water generate as much satisfaction as 20 paddles plunging into the water in time and without splash; except maybe that sound a high platform diver makes when they cut the water surface with nothing more than a ruffle of bubbles.

Burying the blade in the water is called the 'CATCH' and it should be well in front of your body critical to initiate a powerful stroke. This where most novice paddlers are the weakest and it is the point at which even veteran paddlers fail when they start losing power due to lack of conditioning. The most common problem is to lose length by catching the water too far back by not reaching far enough forward in the RECOVERY or start smacking the water with a misguided sense of aggression.

A good CATCH requires a deliberate and powerful drive downward by your top arm, which is made more effective when the wrist and elbow of your upper arm are above the inside shoulder making your forearm parallel to the water surface. Some teams utilize very high upper hands to emphasize a forceful



drive into the water, though good control as the blade enters the water is important to avoid splash.

Good paddle entry is executed in either a vertical 'spearing' of the water or can be combined with a slightly diagonal 'slice' as the blade carves into the water. The slice is found to be very effective by locking the blade in fast and deep with less of a vertical lunge, though requires a greater participation from the bottom hand in combination with the upper arm drive. Your bottom arm must be fully extended forward, but not locked at the elbow to help ANCHOR the paddle in the water quickly and cleanly to its full depth and correct location relative to the side of the boat, without any splash or horizontal movement.

A common problem is that 'work' is often applied too late after the CATCH as a paddler may be well into the first part of the STROKE phase before full power is exerted (wasted potential is a paddling sin). A good CATCH technique must transmit power into the STROKE phase within a fraction of a second. This is also important to unify CATCH in the boat in order to maximize POWER with each paddler transmitting power into the STROKE at the same time, which is not always apparent. Getting into the water at the same time is one thing; beginning to pull together is another and is vital to a fast boat.

Excess splash or cavitation in the water (trapped air and disturbed water) is an indication that you are applying power with the momentum of the vertical drive, before the paddle is fully buried (lost energy is another paddling sin). The paddle blade at entry should be moving forward at the same speed as the boat in order to avoid such splashing. Smacking the water too aggressively can result in broken paddles and can lead to tension when your teammate behind you receives an unwanted face full of water. This type of problem is often created by a misapplication of aggression and is usually an indication that a paddler is getting tired or is unable to keep up with the pace. The CATCH is not a power phase; it's how you get into the water. Keep it fast and keep it clean.

Another common mistake is to lunge too far forward with your upper body or to bend excessively at the waist which starts the boat bobbing up and down.

"You want to run a quiet boat. You want a smooth running boat. Every time the boat wiggles left or right or bobs up and down, you lose a little. This can play havoc with your speed and efficiency - be fast."

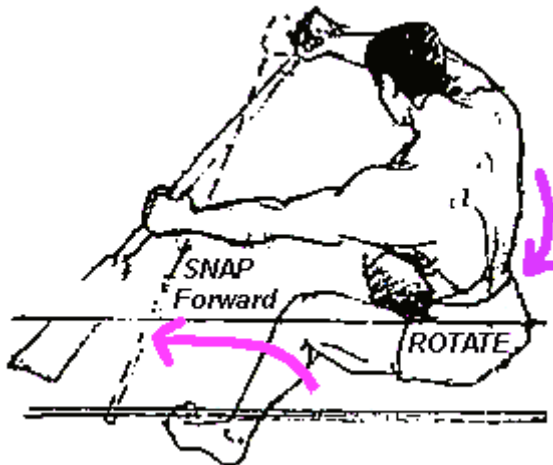
- Peter Heed

Remember that the length of 'the forward stroke' is controlled by a fully extended bottom arm and a rotated torso. You only need to bend far enough forward to bury the blade to its full depth at the CATCH.

Remember also, a powerful CATCH comes from a strong upper arm drive into the water at a forward position which is sharp, clean and instantly transmits power into the STROKE. Once the stroke rating increases to 90 plus, emphasis on the CATCH becomes more important in order to deliver power quickly.



Recovery



The RECOVERY is the key to the forward stroke technique as it sets up the CATCH well forward of the torso.

The most efficient RECOVERY is achieved by rotating the torso to push the outside shoulder straight forward while the inside shoulder is pulled to the back i.e. in reverse of the STROKE. The lower arm must punch forward to create a long 'reach' while the upper arm is pulled the opposite direction and thrown back over the head to open up the chest.

This must be a quick and snappy motion since it is effectively 'down time' - when energy is not spent moving the boat forward; i.e. the less time it takes 'get up front' the more time a paddler can spend pulling the boat. A fast recovery must be trained since it makes great demands on the Abdominal muscles, Deltoids and Traps, different from the efforts needed in the COMPRESSION phase. The key to a higher rating is a faster RECOVERY which allows stroke length to be maintained.

Precise timing in the boat is controlled by a coordinated RECOVERY where each paddler must execute a sharp and deliberate snap forward with the lower arm pushed from the shoulder.

“Don't keep your recovery the same speed as the power phase of the stroke. Watch the good paddlers - their recoveries are fast. The time your paddle spends swinging through the air isn't helping you at all. To go fast, you have to get that paddle back in the water where it will do some good. To increase your stroke rate, do it making quicker recoveries.”

- Peter Heed

Remember, a clean recovery is executed in a snap forward motion and is not achieved very well if the outside arm is carving great circles in the air. It is a relatively straight linear movement forward aligning with all other paddles in the team with outside elbows and paddle blades kept close to the gunwale.



A slight pause before the CATCH phase will mark both the end of the full stroke cycle and will help to synchronize the timing of the team; though at a high rating the 'pause' is more of a mental punctuation mark than any noticeable lapse in time

Though the movement forward should be kept 'bright and crisp', the paddle should be held lightly to relax forearm muscles. Very often paddlers exert too much power getting forward. The RECOVERY should be fast but light. Over time it will become effortless movement, but it takes a lot of work to achieve speed and should not be neglected as part of a training regime.

Boat speed in the RECOVERY phase will slow down obviously due to the break in paddling, though the rate of deceleration known as the Check can vary from team to team as a result of different technique. As paddlers move forward, their centre of gravity (CG) can also move forward causing the boat to decelerate more. Strangely enough the boat will actually accelerate slightly on its own at the end of the RECOVERY phase once the paddler's forward movement ceases. In this respect, you should focus on minimal movement of the CG in the RECOVERY, and confine that movement to a forward and backward line, not up and down or side to side.

One common problem is that the upper arm is allowed to drop too much resulting in a horizontal RECOVERY. In a tight boat, this will be problematic and will also begin to hamper efforts to increase rating.

Bending the upper arm also leads to excessive movement, which will limit performance at a higher rating and can cause the boat to jump around a lot. Neither the upper or lower arm needs to flex very much in the RECOVERY, or for any phase for that matter.

Variations in stroke technique

As previously mentioned, stroke technique will vary slightly from person to person due in a large part to differences in physiology and training background, and should be tolerated to a certain degree, particularly at a local race level. While it is important to have everyone paddling the same technique, it is more important to ensure that each paddler is contributing to his or her highest potential. Even the best teams in the world show a variation in individual technique yet they all pull a lot of water and win.

The critical issue is that each paddler hits each phase of the stroke with precise timing and that the movement front to back and side to side be consistent throughout the boat to maintain balance and smooth running. Even though paddlers may have slight differences in form, i.e. some rotating more or others with a slightly higher blade on recovery, if everyone is executing each phase correctly and in time, it is doubtful that efforts spent on minor adjustments for the sake of consistency make any significant difference in boat speed.

It is more important to focus on the smooth transition of power from one phase of the stroke to the next and that the delivery of power is timed perfectly for each paddler at every point in the stroke.



The basics of technique that establish consistency among team members are recapped as follows:

- the consistent location of the CATCH and FINISH
- minimal splash or lifting of water
- uniform speed of RECOVERY and STROKE (some people move faster than others)
- uniform depth of paddle in the water
- uniform angle of the paddle as it moves through each phase
- the precise timing at which each phase is initiated
- the alignment of paddles with the direction of travel
- the elimination of excessive movement (bobbing your head up and down or side to side will not improve performance and only waste energy)
- fluid and unbroken movement through each phase
- uniform breathing pattern

The nature of the boat can also affect the characteristic of stroke technique due to shorter seat spacing, higher gunwales, and the weight of the boat or the size of the paddles. It is imperative to 'test' out a race boat by varying stroke length and rating to find the most effective combination to make the particular craft move the fastest. For example, an eight-man colour boat responds much better to a longer stroke with a greater emphasis on a drawn out kicked finish, compared to a quicker dragonboat stroke.

Natural elements such as tide, wind or water conditions will impact on technique. Racing with a tailwind for instance should increase boat speed and allow for an increased stroke rating, whereas rating should decrease and a greater stroke length should be implemented when heading into a wind.

In choppy water it is important to have paddle blades higher on the recovery and to emphasize greater depth in the water to avoid going in too 'short' when a wave trough is encountered. Choppy water will also slow the boat down so it is important to be able to adjust stroke rating in order to suit the abilities of the crew to the particular conditions experience.

The above is taken from the *Hong Kong Dragon Boat Training Manual*





TRAVEL AND REGATTAS

All local regattas are free and are provided as part of your membership to CDBA.

If we travel to a regatta there are added costs to be considered.

Entry fees to regattas depend on each regatta and may be anything from \$15 for a day regatta to \$40 per day for a major regatta. Transport and accommodation must also be taken into account.

We do not have selected teams and it is up to all individuals to make sure they get their name in for the team in time to be included. There are deadlines for entry and once we have entered any costs that are already paid on in your behalf cannot be refunded.

Everybody is welcome to participate in any event.

DA ACT does not subsidize individual costs it is your own responsibility.

How regattas work

Each dragon boat body (e.g. CDBA, Aus DBF, DBNSW) decides on a regatta calendar at the beginning of each season.

Some regattas are just local events; others are from other states that send out invites to participate in their regatta. Then there are the major regattas like the Australian National Championships where you will meet competitors from all over Australia.

Some of the special regattas we have been to are Chinese New Year at Darling Harbour (everyone's favourite), Moomba in Victoria, Shellharbour festival regatta in Wollongong (a community event), the Australian Nationals (held each year in different states), and some overseas events to which some of our ladies have travelled — Rome, Canada, New Zealand etc.

Some of our ladies have been part of the ACT representative teams for the Australian Nationals and we have competed in the Australian Masters games.

All these events are huge social occasions and great fun.



The normal way things happen is...

Invitations by the organising body are distributed along with entry forms detailing the cost and details of entry and closing dates. Most areas have a regatta calendar on their website.

There is an entry fee set for most regattas: some are not very expensive and others cost a bit more. Chinese New Year is about \$25 pp and some other regattas charge by the team entry. So it varies. Local regattas in the ACT are free to CDBA clubs but visiting teams may pay an entry fee of, for example, \$15 pp.

Once you have your invitation it gives a deadline for entry of your team and then a list of the crew is sent in prior to the event. You can list 26 members giving us 20 paddlers, sweep, drummer and 4 reserves.

Once the team list goes in you cannot add or change names unless it is specified that you can. At the Nationals, names are checked off against team lists and you must use the same crew for the first race and the final.

You cannot compete for two different clubs in the one regatta.

Crew compositions are set so if you have a **mixed** crew you can have no more than 10 men in the crew. **Open** you can have whatever you like but mostly these crews are loaded with men. **Women's** crews must have female sweeps and drummers

Representative teams are usually selected from all the clubs of an area and anyone can nominate for selection in whatever categories are being offered. We usually only have rep. teams for the Nationals.

After we have a team list, the coach, captain or manager or all three will work out a boat plan; that is, where everyone should sit in the boat. You should review the seating plan and realise that you have been put into a seat that takes into consideration your preferences but also considers the balance of the boat and how people paddle and where the crew will perform the best.

Once all the teams have entered, then **the Draw** can be done. The draw is based on how many teams have entered and in what categories. Usually there are two heats and a final. So often the length of a regatta is dependant on the number of entries and the type of categories and distances entered. You may not have that draw until late in the week prior to the event.

Regattas do not always run to time. In some cases they are pushed ahead if inclement weather is approaching, so that all finals can be completed. When you are at a regatta, take the times of the races as a guide only and stay around so you can hear your team being marshalled.

Team marshalling is where you line up prior to your race. Usually a team is called one or two races prior to their own race. This is to make sure teams are altogether and ready to board their boat. You should line up in two lines with your partner. The sweep first and strokes and drummers last, as we should in practice (back of the boat first).

Race distances are 200 metres, 500 metres and 1k races.



Role of the team captain

- **Event draw** will be forwarded from coordinator to sweeps and team captain as soon as possible.
- **Event and lane number.** The team captain takes note of which event the team is in and the lane number. Be aware that events may change structure; for example, two heats may be combined for various reasons, without any announcement.
- **Boat plan.** Prepare a boat plan with the assistance/guidance of the experienced sweeps, paying consideration to size (for balance of the boat side to side, experience (don't put a newcomer as stroke), and if possible, preferred side.
- **The sweep** is in charge of the boat and the **team captain** is responsible, after consultation, for the boat plan, the orderly lining up, (getting the boat into the water) and loading the boat as per the agreed boat plan, and for encouraging the cooperation and best performance from the crew. The more orderly and disciplined we are as a crew, the greater our chances of paddling to our **full** potential. The important chats and hugs can be pursued outside the race start and finish areas, rather than when we are lining up and loading the boat.
- **Roll call.** Check off the team list as they arrive.
- **Line-up.** Line team up in boat plan order. Team members are to remember their own positions without the captain having to do this for them.
- **Warm-up.** Team captain to appoint someone to lead the warm-up. It is then the responsibility of all the team to complete these exercises without having to be told to — it's for your **own** benefit.
- **Briefing.** Sweeps and team captain to attend briefing held by event coordinator at designated place and time.
- **Debrief.** Pass on relevant information to team members.
- **Marshalling.** Marshal team to boat boarding position and assemble onto boat.
- **Safety.** Assist the sweep in ensuring the safety of the whole team.



Tickled Pink ACT at Nagambie Nationals in April 2006



Role of team members

- *Attendance.* If unable to attend regatta, advise team captain (if known), or a crewmember or sweep, or team coordinator.
- *Attention.* Listen to and comply with requests from sweeps and team captain.
- *Consideration.* Cooperate with the captain preparing the boat plan. Work together — we are meant to be a team. Remember your own boat position.
- *At the marshalling area.* Line up quickly in correct order and without questions. **Board the boat quickly and without fuss.**
- *Attention.* Pay attention to sweep and drummer when on the boat and especially at the start line.
- *Chatter.* **NO chatter** on the boat from the point of loading and **particularly at the start line** and all eyes in the boat (not looking around at the other crews).
- *Safety.* It is the responsibility of all team members to ensure the boat is returned to the boarding area safely. Paddlers must continue paddling and not be waving/posing for photos for friends along the shore — this can put everyone at risk, particularly in choppy conditions.
- **Listen to the sweeps instructions from the moment you board until the time of your bench disembarking from the boat.**
- *Show respect, courtesy, cooperation, consideration, and be attentive.*

Cooperation

- *Regatta outline.* This will be forwarded to **all** DA members leading up to the events. It is the responsibility of all members to read this and be aware of such things as date, venue and regatta start times.
- *Advice.* More experienced members may wish to offer advice to captains. It would be appreciated if this is done in a courteous **and respectful manner.** **There is one voice of command in the crew. That is the captain's on land and the sweep's on the water.**
- *Absenteeism.* Criticism of absentees is unnecessary and at times, unwarranted. We all have last minute issues that arise out of our control. All that can be asked of everyone is that you advise (if possible in advance), the team captain or someone on the crew as soon as possible.
- All members need to be aware that the team captains have probably been **asked** to fulfil this role and thereby it is common decency for all team participants to show respect and cooperation. Remember, your turn may be next.

As always, our mantra should be to offer support to each other and those around us, and to make events a pleasurable experience for all.





DA ACT stalwart Anna Wellings Booth beats the drum to welcome new boat *GoAnna* at the launch on 27 November 2006 *The Canberra Times*

Camaraderie

Regattas are tremendous social occasions where we mix with other teams. It is a time where you can test yourself and see if you are improving or just have the fun of racing. It's all good fun and should always be conducted in the spirit of good sportsmanship; respect for other teams and your own teammates. Good performances should always be acknowledged whether it is the winning team or a team of try hards. It is about being there and having a great time...and maybe winning!

GoAnna! GoAnna! GoAnna! GoAnna! GoAnna! GoAnna!

Practice is important and vital. So paddle well together all you different types and enjoy being part of the *Dragons Abreast* team because you all belong.



SAFETY

With 22 people aboard safety is a key issue.

Water safety precautions

The most likely time a capsize will occur is when paddlers are loading into or getting out of a dragon boat and the following guidelines should be observed:

- The back of the dragon boat should be in the water
- Two paddlers hold the front of the dragon boat steady
- Paddlers load and unload through the front of the dragon boat
- When loading and unloading, paddlers should avoid erratic movements
- Paddlers should keep their weight low when moving through the dragon boat
- Once seated, a paddler must sit on the seat in the middle of the dragon boat. Only when their paddling partner is about to sit down should they move to their paddling side
- The strokes (i.e. front row seat) and the drummer should be the last to enter and first to leave a dragon boat.
- All paddlers should know their buddy seated next to them. The drummer is looked after by row 1 and the sweep by row 10. Remember you and your buddy's safety is dependent on each other
- When paddlers are seated, they should have their paddles in the Paddles Flat position
- Once all paddlers are seated, the sweep must complete a head count. As mentioned previously, number 1 is the drummer, followed by number 2 right, number 3 left, number 4 right, number 5 left, etc. etc. The sweep is number 22.
- Finally, the sweep must ensure the dragon boat is balanced before leaving the shore. If after leaving the shore the dragon boat is still unbalanced, stop the dragon boat and make adjustments i.e. swap paddlers from left to right and vice versa.

Capsizing

If we do capsize, it is important:

- to be quiet
- to check and make sure your buddy is ok
- to listen to the sweep who will call for a headcount and to check if every one is ok
- if there is a safety boat, to wait till they give you instructions
- to know that the boat will not sink so you can use it as a pontoon but not attempt to upturn a capsized boat.



- If there is no safety boat, to know the sweep will indicate whether you will swim to shore or swim the boat to use using it as a pontoon to help support people.
- To stay with your buddy
- Not to worry about paddles and other equipment. It will generally float and can be retrieved later. The boat should float if you need to leave it.
- **Not to leave** the shore area until all crewmembers are accounted for.
- If it is cold, to huddle to keep warm till the count is done and then get changed into dry clothes and warm up – follow hypothermia directions.
- If you have to be in the water for a while and it is cold, to form a ring and the water in the middle will heat a bit. Any injured person should be placed in the middle of the ring.

Recovery of the boat

Once all crewmembers are accounted for and the boat is towed to shore:

- The boat may then be turned the right way up (still in the water) and bailing out of the water commenced. The boat **SHOULD NOT** be dragged out of the water unless there is only a small amount of water left in it, as this puts a considerable strain on the hull of the boat.
- Once the boat is almost empty of water, it may be lifted on to the bank and checked for damage and the boat's equipment accounted for; that is, Head, Tail, Drum, Drum Sticks, Paddles and Sweep Oar.

GROWTH IN THE SPORT

All paddlers are encouraged to develop to whatever level of dragon boat activity they want to. Some people never want to move past social paddling and that is great. For those that want more of competitive involvement we encourage you achieve whatever you are looking toward.

The CDBA has representative teams at the Nationals every year and these teams are made up of paddlers right across all CDBA crews. Usually people try out for the team and the crew is then selected. You are very welcome to try out for these teams.

As an example, Dragons Abreast Australia crewmembers have been in the Grandmasters women's Australian team at the World Championships in Sydney in 2007 – they are the world champions.

So there are no limits to where you can go, you just have to be prepared to make the commitment and go for it. Don't sell your self short if you want to go for broke. Do so, but do it in a controlled and progressive fashion.





ACT State Team 2007 Nationals

YOUR COMMITMENT TO THE TEAM

All team members are expected to contribute in some way to assist in the running, organizing and functioning of *Dragons Abreast*.

This may mean taking on tasks like:

- being on the committee
- helping with social events
- talking to groups such as Encore and media
- collecting names for regattas
- helping on rosters at regattas. All CDBA teams are on a roster for different tasks at regattas: set up BBQ (a fundraiser for the club doing the BBQ), marshalling, take down—so if you are not paddling this is a way you are supporting your team
- helping with boat maintenance

We think everyone has some talents or expertise that they can offer the group.



Group effort unloading the new boats 2005



WAYS YOU CAN MAKE TRAINING SESSIONS BETTER

- **Being on time**—we need to warm up and get the boat ready. You affect your other team members by not being on time
- **Be organized**—have a water bottle, hat, paddle
- Get a PFD if you need one
- Help organize the boat and get it in the water
- Line up with your buddy quickly and efficiently. The side you line up on is the side you will be sitting on in the boat—**organize this on land not when you get on the boat.**
- If the sweep needs you to move for balance, please do so as it is a safety factor
- Be aware of your own person; for example, if you are asthmatic please make sure you bring Ventalin. etc
- Read emails that are sent out as they contain information you will need.

On the boat

- Remember to keep you weight right up against the side of the boat
- Never shift your weight to the other side of the boat
- When changing sides Right side stands and left side slides. Do it together.
- The sweep is captain of the boat on the water and when they call a command regardless of what you are doing you should follow the command.
- We want a happy boat but a lot of chatter can be distracting to those around you and may disrupt any training or coaching that is happening.
- We do talk about people's weight or physical shape. This is because of the structure of the boat and the necessity to be balanced. People with long legs are not going to fit in the front or backbench and people with wider girths are also not going to physically fit in certain places on the boat. It is a fact and part of dragon boating.

Sweeps calls

All sweeps use basically the same calls but you need to be aware of them and do as you are directed by the sweep

- *Brace the boat*—paddles should be flat on the water and held out from the side of the boat whenever you are not paddling
- *Paddles back or backset*—put your paddle behind you to reverse the direction of the boat
- *Hold water*—paddles should be placed vertically in the water beside your hip or flat against the side of the boat (as directed by the sweep) to prevent the boat from drifting
- *Stop the boat*—this is an emergency or immediate action call. Drive your paddle in the same as in the hold water position. This may be followed immediately by the command to back paddle. This is usually an emergency situation like an imminent collision.
- *Let it run*—stop paddling and let the boat glide



- *Steady or stop paddling*—stop paddling and go to paddles flat unless advised otherwise
- *Draw water*—the paddle is held out from the boat and the blade face on to the side of the boat and the paddle is drawn toward the boat. This helps to move the boat sideways.
- *In maneuvering* —the sweep may use only part of the crew. Please listen and follow directions; for example front three right hand side paddle forward; back three left paddle back etc. Your listening is an important factor to the maneuvering of the boat and the sweep being able to accurately steer the boat

Warm up and cool down

Warming up and cooling down are important parts of the training session

Warm up

This helps to get you a bit more flexible, raise your heart rate a bit to get blood circulating which starts oxygenating your body, wakes you up, prepares your muscles for some work. Muscles that are not warmed up are more likely to get damaged. It also prepares us for lifting and launching the boat

Cool down

Is important to bring your heart rate and breathing back to normal levels and then stretch muscles after exercise. The cool down helps prevent muscles becoming sore and stiff. It is important to stretch all the major muscle groups that have been used during exercise. If you have paddled effectively, you have used everything from your feet to your head so remember that cool downs are very important.

HOUSEKEEPING

Subscribing to the group email

When you join you can subscribe to the group email system.

Follow the directions and you will be able subscribe and unsubscribe as necessary

Subscribing to the ACT Dragons list

To subscribe to the list, send a message to:

actdragons-subscribe@dragonsabreast.com.au

To remove your address from the list, just send a message to the address in the 'List-Unsubscribe' header of any list message. If you haven't changed addresses since subscribing, you can also send a message to:

actdragons-unsubscribe@dragonsabreast.com.au



CDBA database

CDBA has a secure self-managed database for their members. This database enables clubs to produce reports and lists without having to maintain the information themselves. Also when you attend regattas every paddler needs a photo ID tag and their member number.

Please go to www.cdba.com.au and log in to your personal details.

To log in you will need:

- Your member number (issued when our DA member adds you to the CDBA membership)
- Your surname
- Your year of birth.

In your own details, add your height and weight and any other information you can fill in. Once you have been paddling for a while, you can add which side of the boat you prefer and what area of the boat you prefer (e.g. 3rd bench, last bench)

You will also need to add in a passport type photo for your ID tag. If you cannot do this we can have one taken and one of our members will add it for you.

This database enables each paddler to only access to their own information and not anyone else's.

GLOSSARY

Look here to find dragon boating terms you may hear during training but not know the meaning of.

Bow: front of the boat

Drummer: person who sits on the bow on a high seat and drums the pace for the paddlers - mainly at a regatta, the drummer encourages the team during a race

Field of Women: Held in October (breast Cancer month) pink and white silhouettes are placed in different locations in memory of breast cancer survivors and those who have lost their battle with breast cancer. The silhouettes can be sponsored and have messages for a particular person.

Live Field of women: An event held in the middle of an AFL match. People representing those affected by breast cancer each year, wear pink ponchos and stand in the middle of the AFL ground in the shape of a pink lady. Very moving and visual event that gains a lot of media coverage and puts a face to the figures relating the numbers of men and women that are affected by breast cancer

Gunwale: (pronounced gunnel) sides or tops of the sides of the boat

Inboard: on the side that is towards the inside of the boat

Outboard: on the side that is towards the outside of the boat



Rashies: sun smart shirts having either long or short sleeves

Stern: back end of the boat where the sweep oar is

Supporter: DA Member who has not had breast cancer. Membership numbers are limited and occasionally closed for supporters. Usually a supporter is there 'supporting' a friend or family member who has breast cancer or because they support the purpose and goals of Dragons Abreast

Sweep: the person who steers the boat. The sweep is captain of the boat on the water.

Cox Vox: communication system for a dragon boat

Head and Tail: ornate dragonheads and tails that fit onto the boat – usually for regattas. The boat is said to be 'dressed' when the head and tails are fitted.

Doting of the eye ceremony: traditional custom. The dragon is said to travel with its eyes closed. Before a regatta, Buddhist monks perform a beautiful ceremony where they bless each boat for safe and successful racing. They eyes are dotted in each dragonhead so that the dragon can see. This can also be done at the launch of a new boat.

Flowers on the Water: very beautiful and moving ceremony where one or more boats are on the water and the crew drop flower petals on the water in memory of those affected by breast cancer. It is a time to reflect on wonderful lives, friendships and family



Boat wrangler: someone who holds a boat steady as the rest of the crew gets in.

Committee: DA ACT and Region has an active committee made up of a majority survivor members and the Coordinator is always a survivor. Under this main committee are sub committees e.g. financial, social etc.

DA ACT regatta: held in October. This regatta is for social teams and requires a great deal of organisation and all members need to assist in some way. It promotes breast cancer awareness through the spectacle of dragon boat racing, raises funds for breast cancer groups, and introduces many people to the sport of dragon boat racing.

