



OARTOBERFEST DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL 2025

White Beach Boracay Island, Malay, Aklan , Philippines

Nov 7 to 9, 2025

RULES OF RACING

EVENTS

Two hundred meters (200m) straight course

- Premier Mixed Standard Boat
- Premier Open Small Boat
- Premier Women's Small Boat
- Under 24 Mixed Small Boat

RACE OFFICIALS

Boracay Dragon Boat Association (BDBA) race officials and volunteers, assisted by IDBF-certified race officials from the Philippine Dragon Boat Federation (PDBF)

CONDUCT OF CREWS

All crews must follow the directions of the race officials at all times during the duration of the races.

All competitors must comply in an honorable way with the rules. Drummers must be seated for the entire duration of the race. The race officials and the organizing committee have the discretion to disqualify or sanction any team that does not follow the rules and instructions of the race officials.

Crews cannot receive outside help during a race.

Violent behavior, verbal abuse, and disrespect toward race officials, race organizers, competitors, spectators, and media are bases for disqualification from the competition. Each participating crew will be entirely responsible for its conduct and compliance with the race rules.

SAFETY

For safety, each crew member must be able to swim at least 100 meters and shall be solely responsible for his /her own safety during practice and racing.

Members of the organizing committee, race officials, hosts, and other individuals connected directly or indirectly with the races will not be liable for any incident such as death, injury, damage, or loss incurred during the race.

A personal life jacket/flotation device (PFD) MUST BE worn by any racing crew member. Belt-type and arm worn PFDs are not allowed. Rescue/umpire boats shall be on the water for each race.

The organizing committee, race officials and all event partners will not be responsible for any failure of equipment during the race. Each crew is advised to carefully check the boat, steering paddle, seats, drum, and drummer seat. Maximum of two spare paddles will be allowed to be brought by a team during the race.

In the event a dragon boat capsizes or gets swamped, each pair of paddlers should account for each other (buddy). The boat captain must immediately ensure that all crew members are accounted for by calling out their names and noting the response.

EQUIPMENT

All boats and steering oars will be provided by the organizing committee. The allocation of the boats to the teams shall be at the sole discretion of the organizing committee. The organizing committee will not be responsible for any failure of equipment during a race, and each crew is advised to carefully check the boat and steering paddle allocated to them before racing.

Participants must use paddles that are IDBF-compliant (202a) or at least has the same specifications. No IDBF-compliant paddles will be provided by the organizers.

Crews may not make any modification or put additional equipment on the race boat. In particular:

- Any sitting pad or device for the paddlers must be foldable and made of soft material, not beyond 2cm x 50cm x 30cm.
- A plastic water bailer may be brought inside the boat. Additional pumps or devices for removing water from the boat are prohibited.
- Electronic devices, mechanical devices, loudspeakers, and telecommunication devices that can disrupt sound signals during the races are prohibited in the boat. Go Pro and similar cameras are allowed. Use of whistle for the commands is not allowed.

CREW COMPOSITION

For standard boat events, maximum of 20 paddlers, four reserve, one drummer and one helm must be included in the line up. Minimum of nine pairs and maximum of 10 pairs, excluding the drummer and helm, shall be allowed to load the boat. For small boat events, minimum of four and maximum of five pairs are required to load plus one pair of reserve players, one drummer and one helm shall be allowed. This notwithstanding, the organizers and race officials at their discretion, may allow lower number of paddlers if the water and weather conditions become dangerous. Additionally, a coach or captain , if playing, must be included in the crew list as paddler, drummer or helm.

Checkers at the marshalling may refer the crew back to the Secretariat if there appears to be a discrepancy between the player loading the boat and the one listed on the crew gallery / list.

No gender restriction with respect to the Open category for all crew members. Women paddlers can participate in the open crew. Men cannot participate in a women’s category, except as a steersperson. For the Women Small Boat, the drummer and all paddlers including reserve must be biologically female. No gender restriction with respect to helm. For the mixed category, apart from the minimum number of paddlers (nine pairs), the crew must be composed of a maximum of fifty percent (50%) of one gender. For clarity, acceptable crew combinations in Mixed Standard are as follows:

MIXED STANDARD		MIXED SMALL BOAT	
MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE
10	10	5	5
10	9	5	4
10	8	4	5
9	9	4	4
9	10		
8	10		

The team manager cannot load/participate/join inside the boat during the race. The main function of a team manager is to manage and supervise the team OFF the boat. The team manager must accompany the crews to the assembly area for roll calls and other administrative matters. The team manager will be responsible for liaising with race officials up to the awarding/closing of the competition.

Any change in the crew list may be done before the start of the first race of the day. A maximum of four (4) persons per standard boat crew and maximum of two (2) persons for small boat crew may be allowed to be changed. After the first race has begun, no further change in the crew list will be allowed, except the replacement of a drummer by another person included in the approved crew list. To replace a crew member, report any requested crew change to the secretariat within the period allowed.

All crew members must wear their respective team uniform or at least the same shirt color during the races.

A steersperson can be allowed to steer for another team as long as it will not cause delay in the races and the steersperson is registered with another team. If not registered in any team, steersmen must be approved by the race organizers. Steerspersons are not allowed to paddle, pry, or make any motion to help propel the dragon boat that they are steering during the race. The paddling style is sitting only (fully-seated). Standing /kneeling/squatting are not allowed. The organizer reserves the right to disallow a steersperson from participating in the race, even if designated by the team, if the organizers believe that the steersman is not competent to handle the steering and ensure safety of the team.

MARSHALLING

All crews must assemble at the crew assembly area 20 minutes before the time of their race.

Crew identity checks will be carried out by race officials in the crew assembly area, with reference to the crew list and gallery. Once the crew has been checked, no member of the competing crew will be allowed to leave the tents. Any task that needs to be carried out must be undertaken by the team manager, non-competing crew or support crew.

All crews must embark according to the boat marshals' instructions. All crews must use the boat and lane allocated by the organizing committee. None of the crews will be permitted to choose which boat to use and must race in the lane allocated to their boat.

After a crew has embarked, the boat must leave the loading immediately and proceed to the starting area.

All crews proceeding to the starting area must keep clear of the race course and must not interfere with any race that is in progress.

STARTING PROCEDURE

All crews must be positioned in the allocated lane at least three (3) minutes before the start of each race. This may be adjusted by the race officials accordingly.

All crews in the starting area must follow the instructions of the aligner/starter. The dragon boats must be positioned in the starting line with the foremost part of the competing boats (which may or may not include the dragon head) aligned.

Ropes that can be held on to by the drummer may be provided at the starting line. Use these to comply with the alignment instructions. In case these ropes will later on be unavailable, races may be running starts. Teams are advised to make a slow approach at least 20 meters before the starting line, as may be instructed by the starter. Once the starter/aligner sees that the boats are more or less aligned, he will alert the crews to hold their position by saying "All boats hold/stop." All movement of paddles in the water must stop or paddles must be used to stop the boat's movement. At this point, a red flag will be raised signaling that the race is about to start.

Starter's Commands. When the starter / aligner is satisfied that all the boats are correctly aligned, the starter/ aligner shall alert the crews by saying '**Are you ready.**' If the crew is **NOT READY** then the drummer must immediately raise a hand above head height to indicate the situation to the starter. The drummer is forbidden to take such action prior to this instruction, especially in crews under starters orders, when moving to the start line.

When the starter announces the start, the red flag will be lowered and a white flag will be hoisted by the starter and/or umpire. The starting commands are (1) "ARE YOU READY?" (2) "ATTENTION," and then the starting signal (3) "GO" or the sound of an air horn. After the command "GO" or the air horn, the white flag will be lowered quickly and the paddlers must immediately start paddling. The time interval between "ATTENTION" and the starting horn will not exceed five (5) seconds.

Paddlers may move their paddles at are you ready position between the calls, "ARE YOU READY" and "ATTENTION" with the paddle blades submerged (wet start), half-submerged, or above the water (dry start). However, after the word "ATTENTION," no further movement by the paddlers is allowed.

False Start. If any of the crew pulls a paddle in the water or starts paddling after the word "ATTENTION" and before the command/signal for "GO" or the starting horn is sounded, the crew has committed a false start. The aligner/starter shall indicate a false start by raising a RED FLAG again. The starter shall immediately recall the crews by shouting "STOP, STOP, STOP." The Course Umpire will also assist in this task. A warning will be given to the crew that committed the false start. Any crew that fails to return to the start line immediately after a False Start may also be excluded from the race or alternatively awarded a five (5) seconds 'Time Penalty' at the Starter's discretion.

Once all the crews have returned to the start, the Starter will identify the crew or crews responsible for the false start, and warn them of the offense. If a second false start is committed by any crew within the same race, the crew who commits the second false start will be disqualified from that race outright. In case of a false start in the finals heat, the team disqualified will automatically be the last finisher for that specific heat. In case of a second false start, the race will not be stopped. The crew concerned will be notified that they are the offending crew and has been disqualified from that race because of second false start through the team manager.

It is the drummer's task to watch the aligner and the umpire and to instruct the crew to STOP when a false start has been called.

Jumping the Start. When a crew 'jumps the start,' which for the purpose of the Rules of Racing, means that a crew has anticipated the Starters word of Command GO to the extent that a 'False Start' cannot be called but in the opinion of the Starter a material advantage has been gained by the crew or crews, concerned over the others, the Starter may award 'Time Penalties' from two (2) up to a maximum of five (5) seconds against the crew or crews in question. (Lifted *verbatim* from R.13 of 2020 IDBF Rules of Racing)

Damage to boats at the start. While at the start area and before being called forward to the starting line, a crew that indicates to the aligner that it has suffered damage to its boat or equipment, the starter may delay the race for a maximum of five (5) minutes to allow the crew time to remedy/repair the same.

Equipment failure off the start. In the event of a crew experiencing equipment failure, for example a broken drummer's seat or steering oar (but not a paddle), off the start and up to 50 meters after it, the race will be restarted, provided the crew concerned stops immediately and both the paddlers and the drummer raise their arms fully in the air. In this case, the starter will carry out the same procedures as for a false start. In addition, the course umpire's boat will proceed quickly down the course and stop any crews that may not have heard the recall signal.

The course umpire may interrupt a correctly started race if unforeseen circumstances occur. Examples of these circumstances include, but are not limited to, adverse conditions in one or more racing lanes resulting in boats being inadvertently swamped, or a collision between two boats caused by the water conditions, or the breakage of a steering oar, that materially affect the whole race. This shall be done in the same manner as for a false start (even if the competing boats are more than 50 meters from the start line). In such circumstances, the Chief Official may order a rerun of the race.

It is the responsibility of the team manager or the captain to explain clearly to their crew members about this starting procedure.

RACE CONDUCT

Drummers must be seated for the entire duration of the race. For the first 50 meters, drumming is optional. Beyond the 50-meter mark, active drumming is required.

R7, Part 2 of the IDBF Rules of Racing, Edition 8.0 and IDBF Bye Law 3.4, states that "the object of Dragon Boat Racing is to race crews over a defined course in the shortest possible time. Crews who in the opinion of the Chief Official do not race their defined course in the shortest (fastest) possible time, will face disciplinary action and may be disqualified from the Competition Class in question or from any other Competition class."

To this end, teams are prohibited from intentionally finishing second to maneuver the teams' lane assignment in the succeeding round. Any team that intentionally finishes second to fourth place in a particular race shall be given an official warning to disqualification as may be deemed appropriate by the chief official, upon recommendation of other race officials concerned.

For each race, umpire boats will follow the racing boats to monitor race conduct. Any boat that fails to remain on its course will be warned by the umpire. Crews that ignore the umpire's warning or do not finish in their own lane risk disqualification or a time penalty of three (3) seconds, depending on the situation and as may be determined by the chief official, upon recommendation of the umpire.

Collision

In the event of a collision between two (2) or more boats, the umpire must report the circumstances to the chief official who may disqualify the offending boat(s) if the collision was found to be intentional, or if the result of the race has been materially affected, order one or more boats to re-race before the next round of the competition. If a re-run is not possible due to time constraints, the chief official, upon recommendation of the umpire, may impose a time penalty of one (1) to three (3) seconds to the offending crew (if still able to finish the race) and award a similar time bonus of one (1)

to three (3) seconds to the affected crew(s). When in the opinion of the chief official one or more of the crews involved could have avoided the collision by taking corrective action, for example, to stop paddling, but did not do so, then the crew or crews concerned will be disqualified from the competition class concerned and may face disqualification from the whole competition.

In case there is no collision but there is swamping of boats with one boat entering the wrong lane, and as a result, another boat in the correct lane had to slow down, affected crews may be ordered to do a re-run. If a re-run is not possible, a time penalty of one (1) to three (3) seconds may be imposed on the offending crew and similar time of one (1) to three (3) seconds time bonus may be awarded on the affected crew, at the discretion of the chief official, upon recommendation of the umpire. If the chief official is convinced that there is clear water and the performance of the affected crew has not been affected, the chief official may opt not to impose time penalty and time bonus.

During the race, if any accident affects the progress of the race, the chief/course umpire has the right to stop the race by waving a RED FLAG. The organizing committee has the right to decide whether or not a restart of the race will be conducted.

Distress signal. If a crew is in distress, for example, a crew member lost overboard then the drummer or helm shall alert the rescue boats and umpires by waving vigorously, above the head height. The arms shall be placed in the outstretched position (horizontal to the sides of the body) and then raised to the vertical position crossing above the head and returning to the horizontal position, repeated until the rescue boats respond.

If crews have a whistle, any crew member may use the same to call for water rescue. A distress signal given by a crew without just cause will result in action being taken against the crew under the Disciplinary Code.

After each race, all crews must return immediately to the disembarkation area and return all equipment to the boat marshals. Fines may be imposed on the offender or a crew that intentionally damages a boat or equipment. The organizing committee reserves the right to require the offenders to pay the cost of the repairs.

If the course umpire discovers that a crew has deliberately swamped or capsized a boat, the organizing committee reserves the right to impose a minimum penalty of twenty thousand pesos (P20,000.00) and disqualify the crew in the race.

Should any crew or member use violence against or threaten any of the race officials or other competitors, the person/crew will be sanctioned according to the gravity of the offense.

FINISHES

The finish line is defined by finish poles placed on the opposite side of the race course. When water conditions will make it difficult to have two poles on the outer ends of Lanes 1 and 4, the finish tower may use just one pole and reference point designated by them, taking into consideration the same angle used by both the finish tower and the starter. A boat has finished when the foremost part of the boat crosses the finish line. All crew members must remain in the boat until it has completely crossed the finish line. Failure to do so will mean that the crew did not finish the race.

The ranking of each race and its respective timing will be determined by the chief judge or finish judge.

Immediately after finishing, each crew must return immediately to the disembarkation area and unload from the boat. When more than one boat crosses the finish line at the same time and none can be determined the winner by the naked eye, the finding in the photo finish camera shall be used for declaring the winner.

In case of a dead heat in a non-finals race, both teams with the same finish time will advance to the next round, provided there are enough racing lanes in the succeeding round of races. Otherwise, teams in a dead heat may be required to re-race. If for any reason, a re-race is not possible such as, but not limited to the water and weather conditions not permitting another race, the basis of the winner will be the finish time of the teams in their previous races, particularly in the round of races where everyone has successfully competed. In case a dead heat happens in a finals race, both teams will be awarded the same rank and no re-race shall be required.

In the very unlikely event that the races are not finished, rankings may be determined on the basis of the time obtained by the participants in the last round completed by all teams, *i.e.* eliminations or semis (not the repechage).

DISPUTES/PROTEST/DISQUALIFICATIONS AND APPEALS

In the event of a crew wishing to make a protest following a race concerning the conduct of another crew or results of a race, the registered team manager or team captain must lodge the protest with the competition committee through the race secretariat.

Two types of protests will be entertained: (1) protest on race result and (2) protest on race conduct. Protest on race result will be entertained within fifteen (15) minutes from the posting of the results of the disputed race. Protest on conduct will be entertained within fifteen (15) minutes from the end of the race or action being protested. Thereafter, no protest shall be entertained for whatever reason at all.

A protest is lodged formally upon the submission of a fully accomplished protest form available at the race secretariat, and payment of protest fee of two thousand pesos (P2,000.00) per protest. If a protest succeeds, the protest fee will be returned to the protesting team. Otherwise, the amount will be forfeited in favor of the organizer.

The chief official must immediately notify the other party involved in the protest and call a meeting of the competition committee to discuss the protest.

During the process of a protest, only the team manager or team captain of the protesting team will be entertained, and all the members of the crew in question must follow the directions of the race officials. Otherwise, the related crew will be disqualified even if the protest is accepted by the judges.

After reaching its decision, the chief official must inform all parties involved of its decision and the reason for such.

In the event that the parties to a protest are not satisfied with the ruling of the competition committee, either or both of the teams involved in a protest may escalate an APPEAL to the organizing committee with the competition committee who are serving, acting similar to a jury. An appeal will be entertained within twenty (20) minutes from the time the Chief Official issues a decision on the protest. An appeal fee of five thousand pesos (P5,000) shall be paid to entertain an appeal. The organizing committee and competition committee will jointly resolve the appeal within thirty (30) minutes from submission of the appeal in writing (use protest form). After the deliberation, a written resolution of the appeal will be handed over to the parties concerned within ten (10) minutes. Decision on appeal shall be FINAL.

SUPPLEMENTARY RULES

In case any matter is not covered by these Rules of Racing, the IDBF Rules of Racing and Competition Regulations will apply suppletorily.

**Patterned and guided by IDBF Competition Regulations and*