

# L♥VE Boracay International

## Dragon Boat Festival 2026

April 24 to 26, 2026

Station 2, White Beach, Boracay Island, Malay, Aklan

### INFORMATION BULLETIN NO. 3 (TECHNICAL BULLETIN)

#### EVENTS

##### Two hundred meters (200m) straight course

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

DAY 1	DAY 2
Prem Open DB22	Prem Mixed DB22
Prem Women DB12	Senior-A Mixed DB12
	24&U Mixed DB12

#### RACE OFFICIALS

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

#### CONDUCT OF CREWS

All crews must follow the directions of the race officials at all times during the duration of the races. Team Managers or in the absence of listed team manager, the coach or captain are required to relay and explain the Rules of Racing to the team officers, and all racers.

All competitors must comply in an honorable manner with the rules. 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 while a race is ongoing.

Failure by crews to comply with the instructions of race officials; verbal abuse between competitors and between competitors and officials; conduct by competitors and team officials likely to bring the sport and the organizers into disrepute such as improper behavior and abusive criticism made onsite, in print, or online even after the competition; threat of physical violence or actual physical violence by competitors and team officials are considered misconduct congruent with violations of the IDBF Disciplinary Code, and may be dealt with accordingly.

Depending on the gravity of the offense, violations of the rules similar to the IDBF Disciplinary Code will be meted out by penalties from official warning, time penalty, disqualification from the racing class or the entire 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. An approved personal life jacket/flotation device (PFD) MUST BE worn by any racing crew member. Rescue/umpire boats shall be on the water for each race. For reference, a PFD must be worn over the shoulders and strapped across the body. Inflatable, belt type, or similar PFDs are not allowed.

Members of the organizing committee, race officials, hosts, and other individuals connected directly or indirectly with the race will not be liable for any incident such as death, injury, damage, or loss incurred during the 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. While crew is being checked, drummer and helm may check the boat and its equipment for any damage. A 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, noting the response and making sure all members are completely rescued. After being rescued, report to the marshalling / athlete's control for the final headcount according to the crew gallery checked.

## 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. Two sets of four boats per set will be used for this race whether for standard or small boat events. 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.

- Four (4) standard PDBF PS-BUK boats
- Four (4) standard Champion boats

Participants must use paddles that are IDBF-compliant (202a). No paddles and personal floatation device (PFD) will be provided by the organizers. Racers are advised to bring their own paddle and PFD.

Crews may not make any modification or put additional equipment on the race boat, except the following:

- Any sitting pad or device for the paddlers that is foldable and made of soft material, not beyond 2cm x 40cm x 20cm is allowed.
- A plastic water bailer or absorbent foam may be brought inside the boat. (Additional mechanical or manual pumps or devices for removing water from the boat are prohibited.)
- Go Pro, 360-degree cameras and similar gadgets are allowed, provided they are used without being held by hand. Both hands of the competitors must be dedicated to racing, drumming or steering only. Use of whistle is allowed only in emergency situations, not during racing. Communication device (smart phone, smart watch, smart glasses, *etc.*) meant to contact persons outside the boat or those used for social media live feeds are NOT ALLOWED.
- Internal communication device that needs to be setup inside the boat may be allowed, provided they do not unduly delay the races. The organizers and race officials reserve the right to prohibit use of internal communication device when in their opinion, its setup causes delay in the races.

**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 drummer and one helm. Crews may include one pair of reserves.

This notwithstanding, the organizers and race officials, at their discretion, may allow a different number of paddlers if the water and weather conditions become dangerous.

Additionally, a coach or captain may be included in the crew list. If playing, coach or captain must be included in the crew list as paddler, drummer or helm. The team manager is not allowed to load the boat in any capacity.

For the Senior A event, proof of age may be required to be pre-submitted on the deadline indicated in the Information Bulletin. A paddler racing in the Senior A event must be at least 40 years of age on the competition year 2026. For clarity, a paddler qualified for the Senior-A events should have been born in the year 1986 or earlier. Per IDBF C.R. 2.1.5, the drummer is exempted from the age requirement for Senior events, but must at least be 12 years of age. Additionally, due to limited available competent helms, the organizers are also exempting the helm from the age requirement in the Senior A events.

For the 24&U, the paddlers and drummer must be between 12 years to 24 years during the competition year 2026. For clarity, 24&U paddlers and drummers must have been born in the year 2002 or later. No age restriction with respect to the helm.

Aside from the emailed race forms and IDs, teams are expected to have printouts of their race forms and IDs. The Race Secretariat or Marshalling / Athlete’s Control may ask for it upon submission of race forms / checking, respectively. Photocopy of official document or ID will suffice. Checkers at the marshalling may likewise 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 list or gallery.

No gender restriction is applied with respect to the Open category for all crew members, which means that female paddlers are allowed to participate in the Open event. In the Women’s event, however, male racers cannot participate in the Women’s category, except as helm. This means that all crew members including paddlers, reserve, and drummer must be biologically female. A women’s crew may have a non-female helm.

For the Mixed category, no gender restriction is applied with respect to the drummer and helm in the Mixed events. Apart from the minimum number of paddlers (nine pairs for standard and four pairs for small boat), the crew actually loading the boat must be composed of a minimum of eight (8) to a maximum of ten (10) paddlers of each gender for standard and minimum of four (4) to a maximum of five (5) paddlers of each gender for small boat events. For clarity, acceptable crew combinations of paddlers in Mixed Standard event are as follows:

**STANDARD BOAT MIXED**

MALE	FEMALE
10	10
10	9
10	8
9	10
8	10
9	9

**SMALL BOAT MIXED**

MALE	FEMALE
5	5
5	4
4	5
4	4

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. Apart from the racers, only the team manager will be allowed entry into the boat loading area. Reserve players, coach or captain (if not racing) are not allowed to accompany the team members loading the boat. They may, however, assist team members during crew identity check, staying outside the marshalling tent.

Whether a racer is listed in the crew list as a paddler, drummer or helm, anyone in the crew list may take on any role interchangeably for the entirety of the races. This means that a racer who paddled in the elimination heat is allowed to be the drummer in repechage, or a helm in semi-finals, and back as a paddler in the grand finals, as the crew may deem appropriate.

Crew changes may be allowed 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 of the day has begun, no further change in the crew list will be allowed, except for justifiable reasons subject to the discretion of the chief official. To replace a crew member, report any requested crew change to the secretariat within the period allowed. Team managers are advised to print all final race forms before coming to the race site. The team must be ready to submit its final crew list should there be any technical difficulty during the race so as not to cause delay.

A steersperson may 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, the helm must be pre-approved by the race organizers. Borrowed helm cannot paddle or drum for the borrowing team. The organizers reserve the right to disallow a helm, whether registered or not, to further proceed from steering for a team if in the opinion of the chief official, the helm is not capable of safely steering for the team. In such case, the chief official shall order the team to find another more competent helm before proceeding with their next race.

Steerspersons are not allowed to paddle, pry, or make any motion to help propel the dragon boat that they are steering during the race. Drummer must remain seated in the entire duration of racing. For the first fifty (50) meters, drumming is optional. However, after the 50-meter mark, active drumming is required. Drummers must prominently show that they are hitting the drum with their stick. Failure to do so may be meted by verbal warning (first offense), time penalty (second offense), or disqualification (third offense). Paddling style is sitting only (fully seated). Standing, kneeling, or squatting are not allowed.

## **MARSHALLING**

Crews must report to Marshalling (Athlete's Control), and be ready to embark at least two (2) races prior to the scheduled race of the crew concerned.

Crew identity checks will be carried out by race officials in the Marshalling, with reference to the CREW LIST (primary reference), race ID, and/or CREW GALLERY. Once the crew has been checked, no member of the competing crew will be allowed to leave the loading tents, except the drummer and helm who may quickly check the boats and equipment that they will use. Any administrative task that needs to be carried out must be undertaken by the team manager, non-competing crew or support crew. Drummers

may borrow a stick from the boat marshal, but must leave their competitor's ID with the chief boat marshal, claimable upon return of the drum stick.

For the Senior Mixed Small Boat and 24&Under Mixed Small Boat events, the officials at the Marshalling area may request to see a photocopy of a government-issued ID or document where the date of birth is clearly indicated to verify the age of the paddler. Additionally, the race organizers may review the results and crew composition for these categories post-event. Should there be any discrepancies between the age provided by the paddler, and their actual age as verified using competent IDs, documents and other relevant proofs, so much so as to disqualify the racer concerned by reason of age, the organizer reserves the right to recall any and all awards given to the team in question. If the discrepancy is discovered, the offending team will face outright disqualification from the event as a result of intentional dishonesty.

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. Crews are advised not to paddle when there is an ongoing race. Boats proceeding to the starting area must keep away from the race course until all the boats that are taking part in the preceding race have passed. Moreover, if a crew is proceeding to the starting area and a race is ongoing, the drummer of the crew approaching the starting line must refrain from drumming to avoid confusion with the crews that are racing.

### **STARTING PROCEDURE**

The starter will be stationed at a sturdily anchored boat or pontoon at the starting line. In case water conditions do not allow stationing the starter, the starter may be relocated on land, which is just about 50 meters away from the starting course, bearing the same angle as the starter's former position.

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. Teams are advised not to stay too far away from the starting line.

All crews in the starting area must follow the instructions of the 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.

A pair of ropes will be available for the drummer and helm per lane. There will also be boat holders on the starting pontoons. This should virtually stop all movements of the boat. The drummer may call its crew to assist in complying with the alignment instructions of the starter. Once the foremost part of the boat is aligned, the starter will commence with the starting calls and procedure.

If in the opinion of the starter, the ropes or starting pontoons will not work to effectively stop the movement of the boats or align the boats at the starting line, the race officials may opt to do running starts. For the purpose of this race, "running starts" is defined as a starting procedure wherein boats have varied starting motion, from dead or zero movement to very slow movement forward, primarily due to water or wind condition, and not due to intentional effort on the part of the paddlers to "jump start" the motion of

the boat to gain advantage. Boats may move forward while still being aligned. In this scenario, the aligner may start the race when all boats are relatively lined up, or if in the opinion of the starter, they are under the best possible conditions for a fair start.<sup>1</sup>

In case of 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 and/or umpire. It is easier to align through a slow approach than to paddle back. Once the starter sees that the boats are more or less aligned, he will alert the crews to hold their position by saying "All boats hold/stop." This command may or may not be called and is not considered part of the official starting call. 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 is satisfied that all the boats are correctly aligned, the starter shall alert the crews by saying '**Are you ready.**' If the crew is **NOT READY**, 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. **Mere discomfort or imperfect racing condition, including being too close to the race buoys, is not a ground to raise a hand and delay the starting procedure.** It must be a condition that would prohibit the crew from starting the race safely such as boat or boat equipment failure, or a medical emergency that would require medical attention on a crew member.

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 (3) AIR HORN or "**GO**" will be called. Crew may do the "Paddles Up" or "Ready" position between "ARE YOU READY" and "ATTENTION." At this point, paddles may be in or out of the water. However, no movement of the paddle is allowed between "ATTENTION" and the AIR HORN or "GO." After the AIR HORN or command "GO," the white flag will be lowered quickly which also signals the start of the race. At this point, paddlers must already start paddling. The time interval between "ATTENTION" and the AIR HORN or "GO" will not exceed five (5) seconds.

**False Start.** If any member of the crew pulls a paddle in the water or starts paddling after the word "ATTENTION" and before the AIR HORN or the command/signal "GO," the crew has committed a false start. The starter shall indicate a false start by raising a RED FLAG again and successively sounding the airhorn. 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 first 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 five (5) seconds 'Time Penalty' at the Starter's discretion.

Once all the crews have returned to the start following a false start, the Starter will identify the crew/s 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 race will not be stopped. However, the crew that commits the second false start will be disqualified from that race outright, except during the finals heat. In case of a false start in the finals heat, the team that committed the second false start will automatically be the last finisher for that specific race.

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<sup>1</sup> Lifted from Dragon Boat BC (Canada) 2018 Official Rules and Regulations

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 starter's 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 one (1) second up to a maximum of three (3) seconds against the crew or crews in question. (Modified from R6.13 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 few minutes to allow the race course setup team 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. The course umpire's boat will then proceed quickly down the course and stop any crew 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 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, 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 this starting procedure to their crew members.

## **RACE CONDUCT**

Drummers must be seated for the entire duration of the race. For the first 50 meters, drumming is optional. No mandatory 50-meter silent zone. Beyond the 50-meter mark, active drumming is required.

Quoting IDBF Bye Law 3.4, R7, Part 2 of the IDBF Rules of Racing, Edition 9.0 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, third or fourth 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.

The proper course for each boat is a straight line in the middle of the racing lane, from its starting position to a corresponding point at the finish line. Each boat must race in its designated lane, which is distinguished by lane markers. Crews that leave their racing lane may be awarded a time penalty at the discretion of the chief official.

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.

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, 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 disembarking 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 disembarking area and disembark. 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), or a change in the race progression may be implemented wherein more teams may be accommodated in the succeeding round, instead of simply cutting the races and using the time obtained in the last completed round, all subject to the discretion of the chief official.

## 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 Racing*