

## **DRAGON FLYERS INFORMATION FOR NEW MEMBERS**

This document is intended to provide useful information for new members. Much of the information provided is common sense or available in different sections of the club website, but consolidated here for ready reference. Welcome aboard! Please invite your mates to join us on the water.

### **Membership**

Membership fees are payable annually and include your subscription to Dragon Boat ACT (DBACT). You will receive email notification when renewal is due.

### **Club ethos**

All welcome. Participation, relaxation and enjoyment, and respect by and for everyone. Bring your best efforts to build on your level of fitness, but no-one is there to judge you and no-one should feel under any pressure. Do your best and have fun.

### **Training**

Always at Grevillea Park, Russell.

- Saturdays – arrive by 8.30 a.m. for warmup, on water at 9, off water by 10.30 in Summer. In Winter (from 1 May) arrive 9 for 9.30 on water and 10.30 end.
- Tuesdays and Thursdays – arrive by 5.30 p.m. for warmup, on water at 6 and off water by 7 p.m.
- In winter the weekday times vary and we usually have an on-land exercise session in a suitable venue in place of one of the training nights.

Allow an extra 15 minutes after each session to help clean and cover the boats.

A JotForm is sent on the Club's Facebook group site and by email for you to complete before each training session. It is important to do this by the time requested so that the coaches and sweeps can organise the session. Late changes can be notified to the coach shown on the JotForm.

### **Communication**

We have a Club Facebook group for communication. However important matters (including JotForms) are also sent by email via RevSport for those not on Facebook.

### **Equipment**

DBACT has an ample supply of life jackets and paddles located at Grevillea Park, available for use by members of all clubs. Should you prefer to purchase your own, please contact the club uniform officer.

Some paddlers prefer to purchase their own 'bum mat'. It is also possible to purchase special 'paddling pants' that have a grip on the backside, and/or leggings for use in winter. Club uniforms and some equipment is available from the uniform officer – ordered through the Flyers website-- go to [Shop - Dragon Flyers](#).

There are other Canberra or on-line vendors who sell other equipment and clothing that we can advise about.

### **Health and safety**

- Obviously, ensure you are well hydrated before each session and take a plastic drink bottle with you on the boat. Arrive preferably 30 minutes but no later than 20 minutes before each training session, in time to be marked off, help get the boats in, and join in the warm-up.
- All members are required to undertake an annual swimming test: 50 metres + 10 minutes treading water (organised in the lake or a pool, something to look forward to!) As an alternative, you can opt to wear a life jacket on all occasions. Between 1 May and 1 September ALL paddlers are required to wear a life jacket, regardless.
- For anyone new to Canberra winters, brrrr! Rug up, warm clothing that still allows flexibility of movement. Members generally suggest that the most useful items are gloves suitable for paddling, waterproof socks, leggings and a thermal top.
- At the commencement of each session, the sweep will run through brief safety requirements. Please listen up – throughout the entire session. Following the sweep's instructions is the key to both safety and coordination.

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- In the winter months *Paddles Flat* (see below) should be automatic each time we stop paddling.

## **Uniform**

The club uniform is red and navy blue. Club shirts are available from the uniform officer, not compulsory for training but preferred (if possible) for regatta competition. Other uniforms are required will be used if participating in representative teams eg ACT or the National team the Auroras.

As mentioned above, In the winter months we usually wear additional items and we can advise about where to get these.

## **Competitions**

DBACT regattas are conducted throughout the summer on the Grevillea Park course. All welcome. A registration form will be sent to each member beforehand and (for insurance purposes) must be filled out in advance in order to participate.

Events are typically 200, 500 and 2000 metres, so there is something for everyone. If competing on the race day is not for you, DBACT is always looking for volunteer officials.

We are keen to maintain the Club's history of successful competition and we encourage our members to participate in other regattas such as those in Jindabyne, Nowra etc and the annual national competition - "AusChamps" which is held each year in different States where we compete against clubs from around Australia. Many of our members have also been selected for the ACT representative team and for the Auroras which is the Australian national Dragon Boat team.

The Flyers usually participate in the PanPacific Masters Games held on the Gold Coast in Queensland every 2 years which is always a great event with lots of fun and competition.

## **Coaching**

Guidance from qualified coaches is blended into training sessions, generally low key and directed to all participants rather than individuals. Please feel free, however, to approach coaches for individual feedback.

## Sweeps

The sweep is the captain of the boat when on the water and is in charge of the boat for steering and safety of the crew and boat. They stand at the back and call steering commands that control the boat. Safety is paramount, so it is important to listen to them at all times.

The common calls are:

- ***Are you Ready?*** – an alert call for you to get ready to paddle – rest your paddle shaft of the gunwhale (“gunnel” ie edge of the boat) ready to go to the next position when ‘Attention’ is called.
- ***Attention*** – raise your paddle up and be in the set-up position of the stroke ready to commence paddling.
- ***Go*** – start paddling (forward) – or:
- ***Back Paddle*** – (for example, when setting out from shore) - put your paddle behind you and pull the water forward so the boat reverses.
- ***Let it run/ steady/easy*** – stop paddling.
- ***Slow the boat*** – stop paddling but let your paddle drag in the water to slow the boat. This is often followed by ‘Stop the Boat’.
- ***Stop the Boat*** – immediately put your paddle perpendicular deep in the water, this brings the boat to a fast stop.
- ***Hold water*** – You hold your paddle in the water beside the boat in an upright (perpendicular) position with blade facing forward to hold the boat in one place or prevent drift. If there is a sideways drift, the sweep may instruct you to put your paddle blade deep into the water facing the side of the boat.
- ***Brace the boat/Paddles Flat*** – this is done to steady the boat – paddles are held out from the boat the full length of the paddle with blade flat on the water. The inside hand holding the handle and the outside hand about half way along the shaft with slight pressure on the blade. This is done to stabilise the boat in choppy or rough water but also when people are swapping sides. (We usually swap sides half-way through a training session.)
- ***Draw left or right*** – this is to move the boat sideways. Paddles are placed in the water with the blade facing the boat and on the ‘Go’ call the paddle is drawn through the water toward the boat.

- ***Paddles on/paddles flat*** – extend the paddle out perpendicular to the boat and rest the paddle face on the water with one hand lightly on the shaft to stabilise the boat.

All actions must be done with paddlers in time with each other and when called by the sweep. Be alert at all times.

**Details of the current Coaches, Sweeps, Committee members and Safety and other officers are on the website.**

### **Further information**

*Dragon Flyers:*

<https://www.dragonflyers.net.au>

*Dragon Boat ACT:*

<https://www.dbact.com.au>

*Australian Dragon Boat Federation:*

<https://www.ausdbf.com.au>