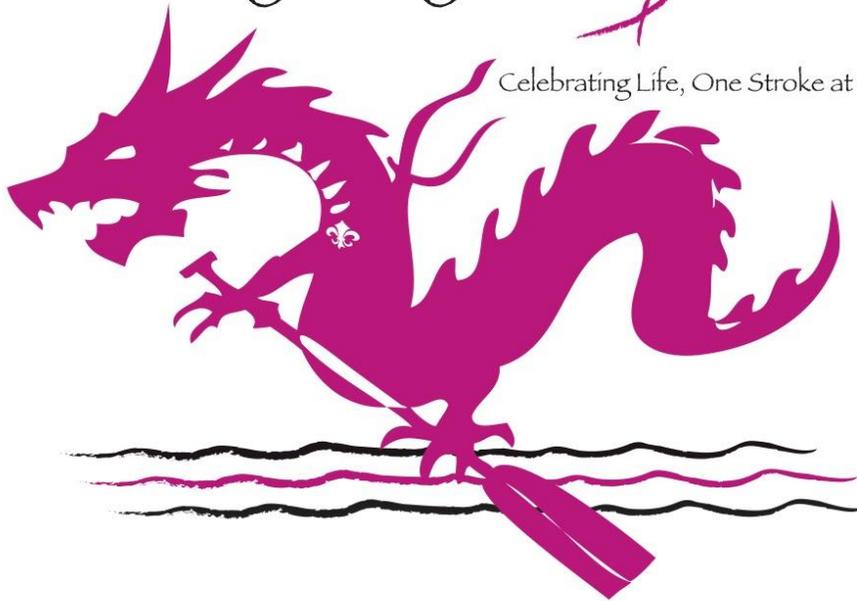


Welcome!

Derby City Dragons

 Celebrating Life, One Stroke at a Time



**We're very happy you have chosen to be a member of
Derby City Dragons (DCD)
The Louisville area's
First Breast Cancer Survivor Dragon Boat Racing Team!**

Welcome to the Derby City Dragons!

We are so pleased that you have decided to join our team! You are now among the ranks of some of the most amazing, hard working men and women that you will ever meet. Let it be known that henceforth, you shall be known as “Newbie”! A Newbie is a term of endearment specifically for those that are new to our team and shall last for at least one season.

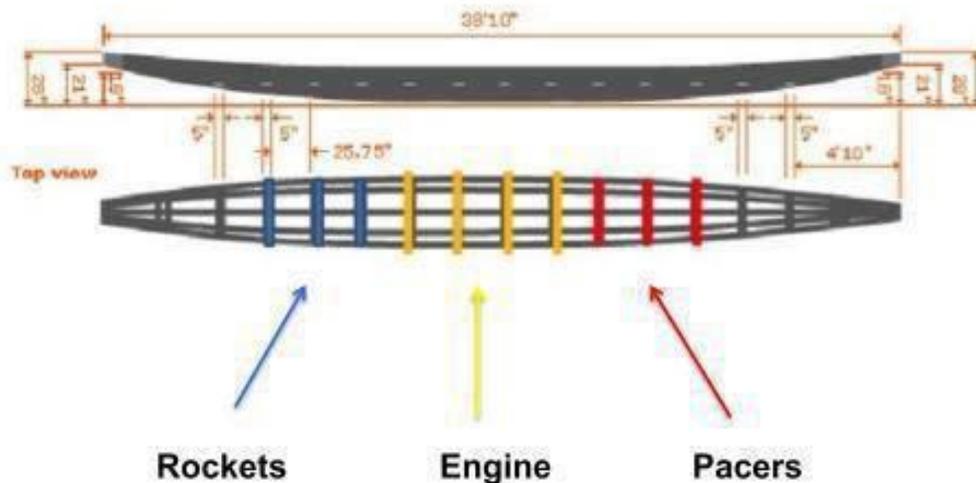
So, Newbie, this is a short document meant to help you with your integration to the team. We hope you will always ask questions as they arise. Every team member is a resource for you, we are all in varying stages of breast cancer treatment and have been with the team from its inception to your arrival!

Let’s talk about attire – be comfortable and practical! Wear weather appropriate clothing, but be aware that it gets warm when you are paddling. In the summer, wicking shirts and quick dry shorts or pants are a must. Water shoes with a back work well, but you may wear tennis shoes if you like. You do not need to spend a fortune on clothing. Always bring a water bottle or a camel back for hydration. A hat and sunscreen are very helpful. We always have a small cooler with wet rags to cool yourself.

FYI – you will be asked to provide your weight! We don’t care how much you weigh, we just want to balance the boat! For safety and peak performance, the boat must be balanced right to left, and front to back. The coach looks at the roster for each practice or race to effectively balance the boat. Rest assured, we vary in weight as much as we vary in ages, occupations and stages of cancer!

Your new ride, Blossom, is a 42-foot dragon boat. She has 10 benches with two persons per bench. In addition to the 20 paddlers, there is a drummer in the front (bow) and a steers person in the back (stern). A complete crew is 22, but we will practice with as few as 8 – 10 paddlers if necessary. As a new paddler, it is recommended that you practice on both sides to see which feels the best to you. Try to be open to paddling on either side of the boat to allow us some flexibility when we need to move paddlers around quickly to balance the boat.

PARTS & POSITIONS



Front of the boat (Pacers – Seats 1-2-3)

The **front six paddlers** help set the pace and should be reserved for paddlers with good long paddling strokes. Smaller, but strong paddlers are needed here. Front paddlers need to have long strokes and be quick on the exits because of the natural tendency of paddlers behind them to rush.

Middle of the boat (Engine room – Seats 4-5-6-7)

The **middle eight** or the engine room is usually reserved for the taller, heavier, or stronger paddlers. In the center of the boat the water has been disturbed by the front paddlers and is moving more quickly allowing paddles to be pulled through the water more quickly and easily. As a result, middle paddlers tend to rush their exits relative to the front paddlers. Therefore, these paddlers need to have the strength to dig deep into solid water to gain an effective, powerful stroke. It is by digging deep that they maintain their stroke rate and provide power to the boat.

Back of the boat (Rockets – Seats 8-9-10)

The **back six paddlers** of the boat can be smaller people but they still need to be strong. The water is moving faster and is 'softer' at the back and it takes a little more effort to add to the power of the boat. Rocket paddlers need more skill to paddle well, to get a good catch, and go deeper and longer. Because of the shape of the boat, water at the back tends to be moving out and away from the hull. Hence, back paddlers need to have good technique to keep their paddles close to the hull and not be drawn out into a wide, circular return.

STROKE TECHNIQUE:

Your job is to learn the stroke technique for our team and to stay in SYNC depending upon your position in the boat. First and foremost, let's discuss your position in the boat.

Your bottom, or “Sit Bones”, should be on the front edge of the seat, your outside hip firmly against the gunwale (sounds like gunnel) which is the side of the boat. Lean forward and outside the boat. Your outer foot should be braced against the foot hold. Your other foot should either be beside it or beneath you. As you gain experience, you will use your feet to add force to each stroke. Your inner hand should have a light grasp on the top of the paddle, your outer hand should be about one hands length above the paddle blade. Your grip should be comfortable, no death grip necessary!



There are six elements to the stroke.

- 1) REACH – The reach position is an extended position with the paddle a few inches above the water before driving it into the water. This is called the “Paddles Up” position. The outside shoulder should be dropped slightly and extended forward. Lean the torso forward and slightly outside of the boat for more extension. The outside arm should be straight. If the torso is leaning forward and outside the boat when the paddle enters the water, it will want to come back to the normal upright position. Your “Sit Bone”, toward the middle of the boat may even lift up off your seat while reaching. The top hand should be outside the boat, as well, about forehead high. The top elbow should be only marginally bent. Your torso should be facing your seat mate, but your head is facing forward. As demonstrated in the photo above, this is called the “A frame”.
- 2) CATCH – The catch phase determines the speed of the boat. The catch is the moment the paddle blade first hits the water. During this stroke, there is a very slight pause before catch, which helps set timing in the boat. All blades

should be hitting and exiting the water at the same time for maximum speed. At the catch, your blade should be fully extended at about a 45-degree angle. Your outside (bottom) hand should be under the arm of the person in front of you.

- 3) PULL – Once the paddle is fully submerged or "buried", the next component of the stroke is the pull phase. The buried position should have your paddle at a 90-degree angle. The paddle should then pull back directly parallel with the boat. The top hand stabilizes the paddle as the bottom arm and back muscles pull back. To use the back muscles effectively, the paddler sits up while pulling and continues to drive the paddle downward with the top hand. As you pull, there is a "twitch" from your rotated position. From the leaning forward position, you are sitting up, using your core to pull the paddle through the water (while still maintaining a slight forward lean). You should "push off" with your outer foot to maximize your pull. Maximum power and endurance will come from using the larger muscles of the back, shoulder and trunk rather than relying on the smaller arm muscles.
- 4) EXIT – At the end of the stroke, the paddle should exit the water right before the hip. Start thinking about the exit when the paddle is at about the knee. Give a little push, or lift as you exit to accelerate the boat. The outer arm should bend slightly as the top hand pulls up and in. Once the paddle is out of the water, it is ready to be pushed forward again.
- 5) RECOVERY – As you exit, you go into the recovery position where your muscles are at rest. The rest time is determined by stroke rate.
- 6) ROTATION – Rotation is key in the position and stroke technique. We will assist you with your rotation technique on dry land as it is difficult to describe. With a simultaneous rotation and lean, a team of 20 paddlers can gain a good 7 feet per stroke. That's what we are aiming for!

Some of the terminology that you will hear is as follows:

HEADS IN THE BOAT: I'm going with this one first as it is the most difficult! We love our team members, we want to catch up and chat. When either the drummer/ coach/ steers person calls for Heads in the Boat, all chatter must cease. Focus is on your surroundings, form and practice. Listen for further instructions.

PADDLES UP: You will be taught the correct position for paddles up, you will get in this position when we are about to start.

TAKE IT AWAY: We all begin paddling as one.

BACK PADDLE: Reverse the stroke to move the boat backward. You want to stay in sync with all paddlers on the boat.

HOLD THE BOAT: Your paddle should be vertical in the water to stop the boat movement.

HOLD THE BOAT FOR DRIFT: Your paddle should be vertical in the water, but you will turn your paddle with the flat edge facing the boat. This stops the boat from moving sideways. This is a helpful command to know when it is windy and the steersperson needs to keep the boat from moving sideways.

BRACE THE BOAT: Paddlers lean slightly to the side and place the paddle blade flat on the water with a slight downward pressure, the shaft of the paddle may be on the gunwale. This stabilizes the boat when there are wakes or folks are changing seats.

DRAW STROKE: The steers person will call for a right or left draw, and often the seat numbers of those to draw. Paddlers should lean slightly to the side and pull the water towards them, often in a sweeping motion.

PRY STROKE: The steers person will call for a right or left pry, and often the seat numbers of those to pry. Paddlers should lean over the edge of the boat with the paddle close to the side of the boat, bury the paddle and push the water away from them.

LET IT RUN: Stop paddling.

SIT UP: Get in the Ready position to begin a race.

Our History

Derby City Dragons bring a new sport, a new team, and new attitude toward breast cancer to Louisville. The team is made up of men and women who have or had breast cancer. Founded in 2013, we are a 501c.3 non-profit organization dedicated to developing and sustaining breast cancer survivor dragon boat teams.

We are part of an international dragon boat movement conceived of by a Canadian sports medicine specialist looking for a way to prevent lymphedema, a life-hampering and sometimes life-threatening disease that can result from the removal of lymph nodes, common during breast cancer treatment. The motions involved in raising a paddle and digging it into the water are one of the few effective preventatives.

Aside from reducing the lymphedema risk, Derby City Dragons raise the physical fitness level of every member of the team. Recruits range widely in age and physical fitness level (many begin with very low activity levels) and become active, health-conscious athletes.

Our program recruits new members each year and turns them into athletes, while continuing to build the core strength of veteran paddlers. Many team members express surprise and delight at the team's ability to paddle a 750-pound boat and to attempt chasing the Belle of Louisville down the Ohio River.

Paddling is what we do, but Derby City Dragons are about service, too. Our mission is as follows: to raise awareness in the Louisville area about breast cancer; to restore the physical, emotional and spiritual health of survivors; to alert others that such restoration is possible; to transform health challenges through encouragement and support; to commemorate our sisters and brothers who have died of breast cancer; and to "awaken the dragon" in each of us, celebrating life, one stroke at a time.

Team members learn the importance of regular training, physical exercise, commitment to a sport, and reliance on themselves and the team. Our program is open to any breast cancer survivor, regardless of age, physical ability, or other factors because this sport does not demand brute strength. The key to our success is synchronization of action.

Breast cancer patients and survivors come in all ages, ethnicities, income levels, and genders, as do their family and friends. This team ranges in age from the late 30s to the late 60s and has provided opportunities for survivors and supporters to learn about breast cancer, form new friendships and support structures, and participate in an exciting and challenging sport. Few of the team members were athletes, or even exercised regularly; many had never been on the water; some had never participated in a team sport. Each member has stretched his/her perceived physical limits and moved beyond their comfort zones.

Our Mission Statement

- To raise awareness of breast cancer in our community.
- To restore physical, emotional and spiritual health of survivors.
- To transform life challenges through encouragement and support.
- To commemorate our brothers and sisters who have lost the battle with breast cancer.
- To “awaken the dragon” in each of us, celebrating life, one stroke at a time.

Our Vision

To make a difference in the fight against breast cancer through dragon boat racing and involvement in community activities.



Current Officers, Staff and Crew Leaders

Board of Directors

President – Kathie Carman

Vice President – Kathy Schmitt

Secretary – Susan Plander

Treasurer – Margaret Fadeley

Fundraising – Edie Wooten

At Large - Melissa Barrett

Suzanne Childers

Phyllis Lee

Advisory – Carol Challas,

Missy Wislocki

Team Coach – Carol Challas

Team Captain – Phyllis Lee

Crews

Membership – Jeanne Ballard, Cathy Reynolds & Melissa Barrett

Fundraising – Eddie Wooten

Safety – Dana Roberson

Festivals – Susan Plander and Phyllis Lee

Community Outreach – Ellen Jacobs

Communications/Sunshine – Cathy Reynolds

Equipment –

Training – Missy Wislocki

Merchandise – Shauna Tomlin

Steering Instructor

David Wicks

Expectations of Derby City Dragons Team Members

As a member of this organization, there are certain expectations we have for each member. We understand that every one of us has a life outside the boat, and that the responsibilities we all have can supersede paddling. That being said, the following expectations are in place for all of us.

Dues – Annual dues will be paid promptly and by the published deadline of April 1, each year. There are two levels of participation and associated dues. These dues include one (1) team polo shirt.

-Full membership - \$100.00 annually. This level is a full participant and is eligible to practice and participate in all races, practices, festivals and special events such as Hike, Bike and Paddle.

-Supporting Member - \$50.00 annually. This level is a supporting or casual membership for people who know they cannot participate at the full membership level, but wish to participate as their time and physical ability allow. They are eligible to paddle in events such as Hike, Bike and Paddle, any casual paddling events such as year-beginning/ending paddles to/from Cox Park and practices as space is available in the boat.

If you are having an issue with meeting the deadline for payment of dues, please make arrangements with the treasurer to set up a payment plan.

All members – full and support - shall sign up for scheduled activities in a timely fashion, attend practices, fundraising events, crew meetings and non-paddling workouts to the best of their ability. If a member cannot attend an event for which she has signed up, she will notify the coach/captain/crew chair ASAP.

All members of Derby City Dragons are expected to be punctual!!

Festivals – When we announce participation in a dragon boat festival, each full member will have the opportunity to sign up for the event. Should the member fail to attend the festival, the member will provide their reason to the coach. The coach will provide the explanation to the Board. If the Board feels the reason is not an excused absence, the team member will pay a \$50 fee to Derby City Dragons before she is permitted to participate in additional festivals.

If there are not enough Full members to fill the boat, participation will be opened to Supporting members.

In addition to these expectations, each member shall remember that while this is a team sport, each of our members participate for differing reasons. We will be supportive of

each member and encourage all of our teammates, as we are truly ONLY competing against cancer.

Member Expectations of DCD

The Derby City Dragons will welcome everyone who is a survivor of breast cancer, or who is going through treatments. We will be supportive, understanding and compassionate in helping you find your “inner dragon”.

We will provide training, coaching and peer-assistance as you learn the intricacies of dragon boating.

We will encourage new members to become involved in the full range of activities of this organization.

The Derby City Dragons will provide the opportunity to participate in dragon boat paddling in a safe and welcoming environment. Equipment will be maintained as to provide safe and successful participation.

We will be observant of weather conditions, water conditions and the physical state of our members to the best of our abilities, to provide optimal participation by our members in a safe and danger-free environment. Please see our section on Safety and Weather parameters for more information on these topics.

The leadership of Derby City Dragons will be open to suggestions, ideas, concerns and fears of our membership, and address these topics in a timely and transparent fashion.

If you have concerns not addressed here, please let us know immediately, so we might answer your questions.

Safety Procedures Derby City Dragons – Revised 2018

Paddlers:

- All participants must have a current waiver and membership form on file. Guests of members are required to make reservations in advance as well as sign waiver forms.
- PFD's must be worn at all times with an attached whistle.
- Water bottles or camelback, waterproof container for phone, keys, sun hat/glasses and paddling shoes, no flip flops.
- New paddlers will have a paddler's orientation. During practice focus on paddling, keep cell phones off and conversation to a minimum.

- Have the common sense to only participate in activities that you can do. Because conditions will vary daily according to water levels, rain, wind, heat and your own abilities, you must assume the role of judging for your own safety. If you cannot carry the boat, that is okay. Be careful on the dock and at boat ramps. Inform the Steersperson and the Coach about any problems before the practice.
- Agree to follow all directions from the Coach and Steersperson.

Steersperson and Coach: Every time the boat leaves the dock there shall be a qualified steersperson and coach or assistant coach who shall be in charge. The Coach is responsible for paddling practice, instruction and paddler fitness. The Steersperson is responsible for all aspects of boat safety, navigation as well as steering. They jointly are responsible for first aid, launching and landing procedures and trailering the boat. The boat should be checked before each practice to ensure that there are no leaks, cracks or other damage.

Boat Balance: Before leaving the embarking area, the Coach and Steersperson should ensure that the boat is well balanced. That is, that each pair of racers are of similar weight or height and that, generally, the heavier pairs are seated in the boat's middle section. Coach and Steersperson must know the number of people in the boat, when the crew is embarked.

Weather Requirements: In case of inclement weather, the team shall check www.weather.com before departure. All trips will be cancelled if heavy rain or thunderstorms (greater than 50% as forecasted for that time of day). Decision will be made two hours before the practice, and the team will be notified by email or text. If on the river and thunderstorms develop head to shore and wait until they pass. We will use the 30-30 rule. If from the time one sees lightning, you have to wait 30 seconds, to hear the thunder. If you hear thunder in less than 30 seconds, one should wait for 30 minutes before paddling.

Programs on all rivers will adhere to the 100-degree rule: add the air and water temperature together. If the combined temperature is below 100, protective clothing should be worn; i.e., wetsuits or dry suits.

We use the [KMA / KHSAA Heat Index Chart for determining Reduction in Activity \(color\)](#). If the heat index is above 105 degrees all programs are cancelled. If the heat index is between 95 and 105 ice wraps shall be provided, and all participants shall carry water and drink often. If possible, go earlier or later in the day.

Knowledge of the area: All practices shall be held in the chute and or the Ohio River between the 2nd Street Bridge and Cox Park. Avoid paddling in the barge channel except when crossing the river and therefore the barge channel. A thorough visual check must be made to verify that there is no visible barge traffic, and then cross as quickly as possible to the opposite shore.

The team can practice in other areas, but before they do the area must be scouted by both the Coach and Steersperson. Regular practices should be developed so they leave

after dawn and return before dark. If planned in advance, paddling practices can be on the water after dark, but they must have a white light and flashlights.

Equipment for a Derby City Dragon Boat

Life jackets with whistle per participant

Paddle per participant

Butt Pad per participant

Steering oar

First aid kit

3 Bailing Buckets

Throw Bag

Cooler and ice wrap as needed

Cell phone

GPS

Marine Radio

Sufficient water for the participants

What to Do in the Event of a Capsize?

It is the steersperson's job to ensure that the boat does not capsize. Be cautious and prudent. Assess your participants abilities, the conditions and act safely.

- Know your bench buddy and how many people are on the boat.
- Paddlers should not grab onto any person as this might result in drowning the person. Keep an arm's length away from each other until everyone is calm. Trust in your PFD.
- Cover and protect your head with your arms while coming back up. Make the sure the boat does not run you over as you surface.
- Immediately after surfacing, check to see if your partner is present and okay. Front pair checks on caller, back pair checks on steersman.
- Count off from the front.
- Remember that commands come from the steersman only (or if incapacitated, the coach/caller/drummer).
- Immediately search for missing crew; they may be trapped underneath the capsized boat.
- Immediately administer aid to injured or incapacitated crew.
- Instruct everyone to hang onto the boat, stay together, and not wander or swim off by themselves.
- Follow the directions from the Safety Boat on how to right the boat.
- As soon as it is safe to do so, return the boat back to shore.

In the Absence of a Safety Boat

- Do not worry about anything floating away, unless it is a bailer, which should be on board every time you leave shore. Anything else can be gathered up later.
- Pull the steering oar fully aft so the handle is at the steering oar arm (and therefore out of the way).
- Position three or four strong members at the middle of the boat to help push the gunnels up into the air. A few members should be on the other side to help roll the boat right side up.
- As the boat comes over, be careful to keep clear as it rolls. It will come over pretty quickly so watch out!
- Once the boat is the right way up, help two or three lighter paddlers into the boat and have them start bailing water.
- While the boat is being bailed, the coach or steersperson should assign others to gather the paddles, and move weaker swimmers to the bow and stern of the boat.
- As the boat rises more paddlers can climb in (in pairs as the rest of the crew hold the boat stable).

Dehydration - Dehydration occurs when you lose more fluid than you take in, and your body does not have enough fluids to carry out its normal functions. Not drinking enough water during hot weather or exercise can cause dehydration. Anyone can become dehydrated, but young children and older adults and people with chronic disease are more at risk. It is the responsibility of each paddler to have enough water and to drink that water. The Steersperson's job is to monitor their paddlers and ensure that people are fit to paddle. Heat Stroke and Heat Exhaustion are both related to dehydration. Review the temperature chart on next page.