



Kent Dragon Boat Association (KDBA)

Safety and Procedure Handbook

October 29, 2022

Table of Contents

1 PURPOSE OF HANDBOOK

2 DESCRIPTION OF KDBA

3 BRIEF HISTORY

4 BOATING PROCEDURES FOR PRACTICES

- 4.1. Loading the boat
- 4.2. Safety Checklist
- 4.3. On the Water
- 4.4. Returning to the Dock
- 4.5. Boat loading during races

5 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES CHART

6 CANCELING PRACTICE

- 6.1. Lightning
- 6.2. Freezing Temperatures
- 6.3. High Winds
- 6.4. Communication Flow

7 BRINGING BOATS TO THE LOADING DOCK FROM MOORAGE

8 HULI DRILL

- 8.1. Frequency and Preparation
- 8.2. Conducting the Drill

9 MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

- 9.1. Emergency Contact Cards
- 9.2. Roles and Responsibilities

10 BOATING ACCIDENTS

- 10.1. Steering oar breaks
- 10.2. Team member falls out of the boat

- 10.3. Swamping
- 10.4. Capsize-boat sinks
- 10.5. Capsize-boat flips
- 10.6. Collision

11 STEERING COMMANDS

- 11.1. Sit ready, prepare to take it back, take it back, Paddles up, take it away, ease off, bumpers in/out, let it run, high set, debris port/starboard, watch your blades port/starboard, hold, hold hard, hold for drift, brace the boat, draw, pry

12 ATTENDANCE AT PRACTICES

- 12.1. Reserve a spot on Team Cowboy
- 12.2. Canceling reservation
- 12.3. Participation in Races

1 DESCRIPTION OF KDBA -Kent Dragon Boat Association is a member of the Pacific Dragon Boat Association (PDBA) , a group of 23 or more teams devoted to raising awareness and developing standards for the sport of dragon boating. Two KDBA teams hold team practices on Lake Meridian in Kent Washington; The Ladies of the Lake (LOL, women) and Dragin' Tails (DT,mixed team). Both teams participate in races throughout the Northwest and occasionally overseas. Membership is open to all ages (over 18) and physical abilities.

2 PURPOSE OF HANDBOOK- Kent Dragon Boat Association (KDBA) strives to conduct safe practices and races. For this reason a handbook is necessary to communicate standards to team members, tillers and coaches.

3 BRIEF HISTORY-KDBA started around 2000 when a group of local educators wanted to form a team. Initially, LOL was started and a short time later the mixed gender team, DT. During summer breaks from school, a youth team was active for several years.

4 BOATING PROCEDURES FOR PRACTICE

4.1 Loading the boat-Every paddler signs a waiver before entering the boat. For members, the waiver is on file. The coach gives a waiver to guests and keeps the signed waiver. Proper fitting PFD's are mandatory. Paddlers are loaded into the middle of the boat first with the front and back positions loaded last. The tiller checks for balance while all hips are against the gunnel (side of the boat). Maximum and minimum number required for practice is determined by the tiller and coach. Team members need to be aware of paddlers who need assistance entering and exiting the boat.

4.2 Checklist before leaving the dock:

- ✓ **Equipment** Is equipment safe? Benches secure? Till and holder secure?
- ✓ **PFD's**- is everyone wearing an approved PFD? Is there a lifesaving PFD with a rope attached on board? Is the PFD snugly on paddler? If a paddler goes overboard, they will be lifted by the shoulder straps, so the PFD **must** be snug. Does the paddler have emergency information on their PFD or on their person?

- ✓ **Medical**-Paddler should have a bracelet or necklace ID with emergency information.
- ✓ **Communication**- Does the coach or team member have a charged cell phone in a dry bag?
- ✓ **Safe**-Does the coach know the number of paddler's and their full names? How many non-swimmers are on board? Is there a roster of members with emergency contact information readily available? Did guests complete a waiver including medical conditions and emergency contact information?
- ✓ **Balers**-How many bailers are on the boat and are they secured?
- ✓ **Weather**-Has the weather changed, making practice unsafe?
- ✓ **Load**-Is the boat loaded properly and weight distributed evenly?
- ✓ **Command**-Did the tiller inform the team that she/he is in charge of the safety and crew members of the boat. Does everyone know that he/she has command of the boat?

4.3 On the water- The tiller is in charge while the boat is on the water. All paddler's must obey his/her voice commands quickly and without question. This is essential to prevent mishaps and potential dangerous situations. A glossary of commands is listed in Chapter 11. It's essential that all members know the commands and can respond instantly to the verbal order given by the tiller. The paddler's responsibility on the water is to keep hips to the gunnel at all times and maintain perfect timing in sync with the lead paddler. When changing sides, the paddler seated on the right bench slowly stands halfway and moves in front of the left paddler, the left paddler scoots across the bench RIGHT OVER LEFT.

Please read Chapters 9 and 10 to become familiar with how to respond in accidents or medical emergencies while on the water.

4.4 Returning to dock and unloading-After practice is finished, the coach will say "tiller has the boat." During the summer months the dock is busy and many times an alternate unloading site is necessary (beach instead of dock). Please be patient while the tiller decides the safest and most expedient location for unloading. Follow the tiller's commands closely during this time. Unload from the middle then forward and backward bench by bench. Please remove all personal items and water bottles. If your bench area has excess water, use a sponge or bailer. Be courteous and assist paddlers, as needed, off the boat.

4.5 Boat Loading during Races-While waiting to load the race boat, the caller will initiate a safety check including identifying non-swimmers, checking for snug fitting life vests and counting paddlers. The boats are loaded front and back first and the middle sections last. Check around your seat and identify buoys, dock ropes and location of bailers (tied in or not?). Bailers will be needed immediately if the boat swamps (high waves or collision).

5 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES CHART

	BEFORE LEAVING DOCK	ON THE WATER	RETURNING TO DOCK
T I L L E R	Safety, boat balance, medical conditions, PFD's, non-swimmers identified, Lifesaving PFD, paddler count, weather check, command of the boat, bailer check	Ensures safety of the boat and paddlers at all times. Awareness of other boaters on the water. Sensitive to changes in weather that would affect boat safety	Solely in charge of the boat for docking. Returns the boat to moorage with the assistance of 3-4 paddlers.
C O A C H	Waivers signed, seating chart (may be changed by tiller), PFD's on and secure, paddles distributed, charged cell phone in dry bag, list of paddlers, medical conditions and emergency numbers in dry bag, roster with full names for practice	Conducts practice based on a scheduled training program that progressively challenges the team to a greater fitness level. The tiller may interrupt training for safety reasons. Watches for form and corrects as needed	Checks with paddlers after practice and follows-up on any developing injuries or illnesses that would affect performance
C R E W	Wear non-chafing comfortable clothing for practice, sign waiver or waiver on file, readily agree to coaches positioning on boat, inform coach of any physical problems that may affect performance, be courteous, listen to and obey tiller	Follows coach's training schedule, maintains a good attitude, makes effort to improve form, consistently follows lead stroker's cadence, keeps talking to a minimum, obeys tiller's commands quickly	Unloads in the middle first followed by back and front of boat, volunteers to take the boat back to moorage, courteous to fellow paddlers and assists those who need help

6 CANCELING PRACTICE

6.1 Lightning-Practice is canceled if lightning is occurring one hour before practice or anytime during practice. In addition, if thunder is heard during practice, boats return to the dock. As a general rule, no thunder or lightning for a period of 30 minutes

6.2 Freezing Temperatures- If ground temperatures are freezing or below freezing one hour before practice, practice is canceled. As an alternative, the coach or tiller can check the dock and apply salts that are fresh water approved.

6.3 High Winds- Winds 15 knots and higher cancels practice, however the final decision is up to the tiller.

6.4 Communication Flow- 90 minutes before practice the coach and tiller will decide if practice is canceled due to poor weather conditions for paddling. The coach will send out a group text message and post on Team Cowboy at least one hour before practice announcing the cancellation.

7 BRINGING BOATS TO THE LOADING DOCK FROM MOORAGE

A minimum of two paddlers and not more than five will paddle the boats from moorage to the dock. The transport paddlers will place three life jackets and three paddles in the boat for guest paddlers' use. Transport paddlers need to allow more time for bailing the boats after heavy rain.

RSVPs on Team Cowboy are reviewed two hours before practice. Boats and equipment will be retrieved based on the numbers of "YES" RSVPs as of two hours prior to practice. If a paddler RSVPs as "maybe" and does not change their RSVP to "yes" or "no" by two hours before practice, they will be considered a "no." However, if they attend practice and there is room on the boat, they will be welcomed aboard.

8 HULI DRILL - *Practicing capsizing of the boat to be prepared in a real emergency*

8.1 Frequency and Preparation-The teams will hold a HULI drill at least once a year during the summer months. Coaches will prepare paddler's for the event by going over the roles and responsibilities of crew members during a drill.

8.2 Conducting the Drill

8.2.1 Tiller is in charge - Tiller will take charge; one of the coaches or captains may assist the tiller in taking charge, if needed. All other members should follow directions given by the tiller. Although we may all have ideas about how to proceed, it is essential that one person is in charge to ensure the most efficient process possible. Prior to capsizing or turning the boat over, the tiller will outline the process beforehand. Rescue of non-swimmers is the priority.

8.2.2 Count to ensure all paddlers are safe - All paddlers should attempt to move to one side of the boat so Tiller can take a headcount. When the boat tips, most paddlers will fall to one side of the boat. The count will be done on that side of the boat -- all team members should attempt to quickly move to one side of the boat. If a paddler is under the boat, please remember that there will be a space for air to breathe. Either reach for the gunwale to determine how to swim out or knock on the boat so another paddler knows you are underneath.

8.2.3 Assigning roles - Immediately after a head count is done, and everyone is accounted for, the Tiller will assign 2-3 paddlers to gather equipment, including paddles, till, etc. If you find yourself near many paddles or gear, you can also volunteer quickly to be a person to hold gear. All other paddlers will be responsible for helping to right the boat.

8.2.4 Turning the boat - The Tiller will determine the best direction to turn the boat to minimize the impact of waves. Proceed with this process as quickly as possible. Then almost half the people should work their way to the opposite side of the boat -- simply call out that you'll swim to the opposite side so the Tiller can ensure that approximately half of those helping to right the boat will be on each side.

8.2.5 Flipping the Boat -- The most effective way of minimizing water during the flip, is to flip the boat as quickly as possible. Get the boat turned in one quick motion. A couple people need to be on the side grabbing the bottom of the hull and pulling it over (side out toward the open water). The rest will be on the opposite side pushing the hull up and over. On the count of 3 the whole team moves together and those pushing the hull up and over should do so as fast as they can. Afterwards, everyone moves a little bit away from the boat - NO ONE should be holding onto the sides of the boat. If you are on the open water side and you see that the boat is starting to turn over and come toward you, let go immediately and move away from the boat.

8.2.6 Bailing and Entering the Boat - If you have long enough arms to bail the boat by reaching over and not putting weight on the boat, then help bail. The Tiller will then tell the team which person is going to enter the boat first and when. That person should immediately move so their weight is centered and she/he should stay low. She/he needs to immediately start bailing as quickly as possible. The next person in should be small, but also be a quick bailer. Then the next person or two can be those who either have water issues, or who weigh less as they will be affected by hypothermia faster. The tiller will keep letting people know when to get in the boat.

8.2.7 Counterbalancing Weight - When the first few people are getting in the boat, someone in the water on the opposite side of the boat places some weight on the gunwale. This is to keep the boat balanced and minimize the water going back in the boat. This is the ONLY time someone should be holding onto the side of the boat. After enough people are in the boat, those in the boat should shift weight to the other side when a person is getting in to balance the boat. This means keeping aware of surroundings at all times.

8.2.8 Getting in the Boat - Those who can, may push themselves up with their arms and get their torso over the gunwale and then pull their legs in. If that proves difficult, ask for help. People can be pulled up under their armpits or they can be pulled up using their PFD. Two teammates can also help out by either using their hands to boost someone up, or two people can build a step using their arms or a paddle to then lift a person up to help them into the boat.

8.2.9 Loading Equipment - Paddles, dry bag, emergency kit, etc. should be loaded into either the bow or stern and away from the bailing space in the center of the boat. We do not want to clog the area where bailing is most beneficial. The paddles can then be distributed after everyone is loaded and facing the proper way.

8.2.10 Cooperation & Teamwork - Keep calm and minimize talking so the tiller can be heard. Do NOT hang onto the side of the boat. Time is of the essence (especially if a capsize should occur in the winter). Please anticipate moves without needing to wait for the Tiller to tell you. Examples: After capsize get to one side of the boat so we can do head count; if gear is floating by you grab it; step up and say hand me the paddles - be a gear gatherer; once a successful head count is achieved there is nothing wrong with a few people moving to the other side of the boat so the Tiller doesn't have to call people's names out and wait for people to make the move; help counter balance the boat when people are getting in.

8.2.11 Commands - The items you should not take upon yourself to do and always wait for Tiller instruction: Head count; turning the boat; flipping the boat; and getting into the boat.

9. MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

9.1 Emergency Contact Cards - All members are required to complete a medical emergency card. The card should be attached to their life jacket or placed in an easily accessible life jacket pocket. An emergency contact necklace or bracelet will also suffice. The club secretary will distribute the cards to new members to complete. The coach's dry bag will have a laminated list of member's names, medical condition, medications and emergency contact (name and phone number). To respect paddlers' privacy, the list will be kept with the coach's dry bag and not accessible to other paddlers.

9.2 Roles and Responsibilities - The coach and tiller will work together during a medical emergency. Specific actions will be determined at the time of the emergency. Generally, the goal is to paddle to the nearest dock. The coach will phone 911 and tell the operator the dock number where the patient will be waiting while the boat is moving toward the dock. The local fire department has a list of dock numbers and corresponding addresses on hand.

10 BOATING ACCIDENTS

10.1 Steering oar breaks OR housing breaks

The tiller will immediately call "hold the boat" and pull out the steering oar. The tiller will instruct the paddlers to use a series of starboard and port draw strokes to carefully bring the boat back to the dock.

10.2 Team member falls out of the boat

The steersperson will instruct the team members to brace the boat throughout the rescue. A designated paddler will grab the swimmer firmly by the front of the PFD.

Tell victim the procedure before beginning rescue. Count to 3, push down on the victim to below water line. The swift movement will provide momentum to pull them into the boat.

10.3 Swamping

Start bailing the boat as soon as swamping begins. Depending on conditions, continue practice or return to the dock

10.4 Capsize-boat sinks

Follow same procedure under HULI drill

10.5 Capsize-boat flips

Follow same procedure in 8.2.5

10.6 Collision: Start bailing immediately after collision occurs. Stay near seatmate and check if they need immediate help for any reason (anxious, non-swimmer etc). Next, listen for instructions from tiller. More than likely most paddlers will be in the water. If possible continue bailing the boat. Depending on conditions, paddlers will re-enter the boat OR push the boat to the shore. The tiller will determine the best approach. Paddlers are responsible to account for team mates and listen to the tiller. Back at the shore, a final safety count and medical assessment should be completed. Coach will check on paddlers 24 hours after the incident.

11 STEERING COMMANDS

11.1

Sit ready: All paddlers sit with their hips against the gunnel prepared to receive the next command.

Prepare to take it back: Prepare to back paddle.

Take it back: Back paddle.

Paddles up: All paddlers put paddles in the front position.

Take it away: Start paddling.

Ease off: Paddlers refrain from paddling with full power, but continue to paddle.

Bumpers in/out: Paddlers on the dock side (or boat side) of the boat move bumpers

Let it run: All paddlers stop paddling.

High set: Prepare for wake.

Debris port/starboard: Paddlers watch for debris in the water.

Watch your blades port/starboard: Paddlers move blades out of the way (dock etc)

Hold: Paddles are placed in the water perpendicular to the boat.

Hold hard: Drive blade into the water and then hold perpendicular.

Hold for drift: Paddles are placed parallel to the boat.

Brace the boat: Place the wide face of the paddle blade just under the surface of water.

Draw: Extend paddle away from the gunnel while blade is parallel to the boat. Pull paddle (moving water) toward the boat.

Pry: The opposite of draw. Push water away from the boat.

12 ATTENDANCE AT PRACTICE

12.1 Reserve a spot on Team Cowboy - All paddlers must RSVP to reserve a spot for practices on Team Cowboy. The acceptable responses are "yes," "no," and "maybe." However, if "maybe" has not been changed by two hours prior to practice, the coaches will count it as a "no" and plan for boats and equipment without the paddler who indicated "maybe." However, if the "maybe" paddler shows up at practice and there is room on the boat, they will be welcomed. Please refrain from showing up without indicating "yes" prior to practice. The coaches do advance work to plan for equipment and the seating of the boat. If a paddler shows up without advanced notice, the coach must reconfigure the seating.

12.2 Canceling reservation - Paddlers should cancel their reservation as soon as possible, so that the coaches can plan accordingly to seat the boat and plan for appropriate equipment. At the least, a paddler must cancel more than two hours prior to practice. At two hours prior to practice, the coaches consider the attendance list as final and will plan accordingly.

12.3 Participation in Races - Paddlers should show up to practices prior to racing to ensure that they are conditioned and race-ready. Paddlers should sign-up for **AND COMMIT** to races well in advance on Team Cowboy. The Association views these RSVPs as commitments and registers for races accordingly. As the Association must register and pay the registration fees well in advance of the race, it is important that the paddler(s) commit to the races for which they have RSVPed. With rare exception, the paddler who intends to race, must pay race fees. These fees vary from \$35-\$50 (roughly) and must be paid in advance to the Association Treasurer. Race fees are in addition to Association dues (paid annually). A paddler must sign a waiver for each and every race event they will be participating in. In some cases, cross-rostering may require additional race fees.

Revision Control Chart

Barb Atrops	August 13, 2013
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