

DRAGONBOAT RACE DAY

BASIC PADDLING COMMANDS

- **PADDLES UP;** The paddle is above the water **ready to take a stroke**. Commonly used for starting the movement for the boat in a non-race situation.
- **TAKE IT AWAY;** Command to **start paddling!**
- **LET IT RUN;** Command from the drummer/steersperson to **stop paddling**. Let the boat coast with the blades out of the water.
- **CHECK THE BOAT OR HOLD THE BOAT;** Bring the boat to a full stop by **holding paddles perpendicular in the water at your hip**.
- **STEADY THE BOAT;** Place paddle blades **flat on the surface of the water** with slight downward pressure to stabilize the boat.
- **WE HAVE ALIGNMENT, IN THE GATE, OR ALL BOATS HOLD;** Starter's call signifying they have **exact alignment** of the boats, and the race start is imminent.
- **ATTENTION PLEASE OR READY, READY;** Command given by Starter to **prepare crews for start**. Start horn (GO!) follows quickly after.
- **FINISH NOW;** Nearing the end of the race, the steersperson instructs the team to **finish the race – NOT faster** but give it all you've got with **deep – hard - paddles!** Empty that tank.....

BASIC PADDLE GUIDELINES & TECHNIQUES

- **SITTING;** Sit up straight, hips to the gunwale (side of the boat), paddle resting across lap (**LET IT RUN**).
- **POSITION FEET;**
 - Outboard or inboard foot against the floor of the boat in front of you, and the other foot stabilized underneath you.
- **HOLD THE PADDLE PROPERLY;**
 - o Outboard hand; full grip at the throat about 2" up from top of the blade.
 - o Inboard arm; on top of the paddle hand. This hand will be pushing the paddle down into the water.
- **"PADDLES UP" POSITION;**
 - o Lean your torso out over the boat, both hands outside the gunwale always, slight twist of the torso (towards your paddle partner), lean forward from the waist along with your arm and shoulder to begin your first stroke.
- **THE STROKE;** Enter your paddle blade (like you are stabbing a fish) at a 45-60 degree angle **to the hip of the person sitting in front of you**.
 - o Sink the entire blade by driving down with your top inboard arm. Your pinky finger should get wet.
 - o Pull your submerged, perpendicular, paddle blade back (like opening a heavy church door) to **your hip** as you begin to straighten your torso up.
 - o Quickly **SNAP BACK UP** to the entry position for the next stroke. The snap is important and fast.
 - o While in stroke, keep the blade close to the boat (don't bang that thumb) and perpendicular to move more water.
- **DO NOT LOOK AT YOUR PADDLE;** looking at your paddle will throw you out of synch with the other paddlers. Always look up the boat either diagonally across or straight ahead. **THE GOAL is to stay in SYNCH!!!!**
 - o If you are seated towards the front of the boat, keep your eye on the pacers. If you are seated towards the back, look forward to the middle of the boat.