

Osoyoos Flag Race Guidelines 2023

Introduction

A flag race includes a team member – called a flag catcher – positioned at the front of the dragon boat. The objective is to have the boat steered directly to the flag buoy, where the flag catcher will remove the flag, raising it above their head to signal the end of the race. The flag catcher will be seated backwards on the drummer's chair to allow them to remain in contact, safely, with the boat. The coach will be seated on the edge of the foredeck, where the drum usually is.

Race Conduct

1. The correct course for each boat is a straight line from the start line to the finish line. Each boat must remain in its lane and must not interfere with other boats.
2. If race officials determine that one boat has interfered with another by not keeping a proper course, a time penalty may be applied to the offending crew at the Race Director's discretion.
3. The official racing course is approx. 250 meters. Both ends of the course will be marked with a set of buoys at the start and coloured flags at the finish. The colour of the flags will correspond to the assigned lane of the boats. Lane 1 (closest to the shore, will have a blue flag to retrieve at their finish. Lane 2 will have an orange flag to retrieve at their finish.
4. The removal of the flag by the flag catcher will constitute the finish of the race. The flag-catcher must remain safely in position on the boat and demonstrate possession of the flag by raising it above their head.
5. The flag-catcher must remain in complete contact with the dragon boat, and specifically the drummer's chair for the entire race, including paddling out to the race and returning to the shore to unload. No standing.
6. If the flag-catcher fails to grab the flag or drops it, the team will be subject to a 10 second penalty.
7. The steersperson, responsible for safety on the boat, shall immediately hold the boat in the event the flag-catcher falls out of the boat.
8. No other team member besides the flag-catcher may grab the flag.
9. The flag catcher may only grab the flag in their assigned lane. If the flag catcher grabs the wrong flag, the team will be disqualified. The team whose flag was taken will place in the heat as if they had successfully grabbed their flag. Race officials will determine times.
10. All members must remain in the boat from start to finish, especially the flag catcher. If the flag catcher dives off the boat to grab the flag or falls in the water after grabbing the flag, the team will be disqualified from the heat.