

# DRAGON BOAT WORLD

## Magazine



Join the Action, Feel the Passion, Catch the Spirit

*The original media for Dragon Boating*

April 2018

## Hong Kong: Vibrant Races !!!



**Regional Focus:**

**Egypt -  
Dragons on Nile**

**News Scanner:**

**Tragic accident in  
Guilin/South China!**

**Spotlight:**

**ICF and IDBF  
talked ...?**



我们致送这条龙，  
给在桂林意外中死亡的亲友，  
希望他们凭著龙的勇气和力量，  
坚强地继续生活下去！

May this Dragon  
pass power and strength  
to the families and friends  
of the victims of the  
Guilin accident

Condolences and deepest sympathy from Dragon Boat World Magazine.







**Dear Paddlers and Readers,**

After a seven years break I'm more than happy to welcome you back to DRAGON BOAT WORLD MAGAZINE (DBW).

For those of you who don't remember, a very long time ago, when mobile phones were just enabling you nothing else, than making a phone-call, in Canada the first magazine under the name DRAGON BOAT WORLD was established and published for some years as a printed, hardcopy reading. It was the only dragon boat magazine around.

However, by the end of 2007 it closed down and I took it over. With a complete new make up and new concept the magazine was published the first time in January 2008 as DRAGON BOAT WORLD INTERNATIONAL and continued with four issues per year until the end of 2010. With its last issue in October 2010 the name was changed to become DRAGON BOAT WORLD Magazine.

It was never my plan to cease publishing DRAGON BOAT WORLD, but to support my living and family I was forced to pick up a job, which finally didn't allow me doing both in parallel. So it all fell asleep! – For seven years!

Meanwhile I have some more time and since recently being in contact with old dragon boat friends again, who told me about kind of a media-vacuum within Dragon Boating, I decided to awaken DRAGON BOAT WORLD. When talking to Mike Haslam, I learned that he is making a Newsletter as e-magazine named Dragon Sport News. When he listened to my plans of doing the magazine again, initially we both wanted to go together for a combined magazine.

The plan was to keep his name of the newsletter, while using an adapted design of DRAGON BOAT WORLD MAGAZINE. However, we both discovered having a misunderstanding after we had already announced our joint magazine to the public.

As a final result he will now do his Dragon Sport News and I will publish the one you are just reading.

Have Mike and me become rivals? No, certainly not!

We will help and support each other as friends! But friends may have some different points of view.

Talking about the awakened DRAGON BOAT WORLD MAGAZINE, the big change is the publishing as PDF-Magazine, which will be sent to known e-mail contacts, as well as being available for download from the also newly awakened website DRAGON BOAT NET ([www.dragonboatnet.com](http://www.dragonboatnet.com)).

Should you have come across DBW other than by e-mail, but you wish to directly receive it to your e-mail address, all you need to do is to register with DRAGON BOAT NET.

The making of a magazine is not an easy job and means a constant search for interesting stories, news, reports and the like. If you enjoy DBW receiving a feedback from you as reader would be awesome! Do you have a story to tell? Would you like to introduce your club and team? Please send me your contributions and don't forget some wonderful photos!

My e-mail: [wiekhorsthenning@mac.com](mailto:wiekhorsthenning@mac.com)

Companies are welcome to send press-releases including a photo about products and services. If you wish to advertise, I'm more than happy to send you the price-list.

Furthermore you all can help by forwarding this PDF-Magazine to your friends and teammates. If you are running a website you are encouraged to installing a download-link. This even is a great service to your visitors.

For now I hope you enjoy the awakened DRAGON BOAT WORLD MAGAZINE.

Henning





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# In the Spirit of Qu Yuan

As you may or may not know, and depending on which story you believe, the sport of dragon boat racing can directly trace its roots back to a real person who existed in China over 2,300 years ago. There are many versions of the story but the underlying belief is that Qu Yuan, an important minister in the Chu government, was a man of wisdom and was firm to his own beliefs. He was exiled by corrupt and jealous advisors to the king. In 278 BC, when his capital of Ying was captured by the state of Qin, he committed suicide by wading into the Milo River in the ultimate act of political protest. Now we don't advocate suicide, but we realize that sometimes a well worded opinion piece will at least start discussion, and in some cases it may even result in change.

The Spirit of Qu Yuan lives today throughout the world and we respectfully pay homage to him by having a regular piece in the pages of DBW that allows for the publication of paddlers' own firm beliefs. Send in your article for consideration, which you can choose to be credited or to be anonymous. To give it a start, it is quite clear from whom the following is coming:

## Two Mikes

When returning to Dragon Boating after a time of absence, at first you have a bit of a distant view on things. You realize changes and matters that haven't changed at all. As it looks to me, the ICF / IDBF discussion hasn't changed much, but what has changed are the positions of people involved.

Since 2015, after being the IDBF-President for 22 years, Mike Haslam is not the front-man of the IDBF anymore. His successor as President is Mike Thomas.

Mike T. is an old companion of Mike H. since the founding days of the IDBF and also him, he did a tremendous work in developing the Dragon Boat Sport.

After talking to various people from the dragon boat family I sensed some tensions between and about both Mikes. This might be true or not, it is simply what I sensed with my still distant view. So I decided to write about, while I'm sure, both Mikes don't like me doing this and I hope they will forgive me!

Mike Haslam as the founder of the IDBF has lead and promoted Dragon Boating to become a modern sport as we all know it by today. He guided the IDBF being the world-governing body for this sport.

Dragon Boating is kind of Mike Haslam's child. It's been his life, he always was fully committed and after 22 years being President of the IDBF certainly he will need to learn how to let go his child its own ways.

Mike Haslam was and is a public person trying to inform the community in a very open and transparent manner. He always wrote the former IDBF-Newsletter named "Dragon Boat International", which acted as the voice of the federation.





# In the Spirit of Qu Yuan



Because it really meant something to him to express his views, he started publishing “Dragon Sport News” (DSN) as e-magazine. In the beginning it was seen, as he still would try to be the IDBF’s voice, which – of course - caused some tensions. However, what he publishes in DSN, he does as a private person.

Mike H. certainly was a strong President and has left his footprints in every aspect of the today Dragon Boat Sport. Let me, at this point give him a very big THANK YOU for all he has done!

But this also needs to be given to Mike T.! One needs to be really brave to take over the position of such a President as Mike H. was. That is not an easy task and earns him my deepest respect, too!

And through my talks, which I had so far with both Mikes, as well as with others, I have learned that Mike H. would love to support Mike T., if he would be asked for. Further I’m sure Mike T. also some times would love to hear Mike H’s opinion.

They worked together before, when the roles were just the other way around. They are still the same guys, only that now Mike T. is the official voice of the IDBF, to which Mike H. has to adapt.

So my pledge in the Spirit of Qu Yuan addressing the two Mikes is:

**Go to have a beer together and talk!**

But perhaps I sensed the situation completely wrong and all the above said is not true, then everything should be fine anyway. – What remains is my pride in knowing both Mikes, they are very nice people and I wish to see them on the same boat.

Henning



*Mike Haslam*

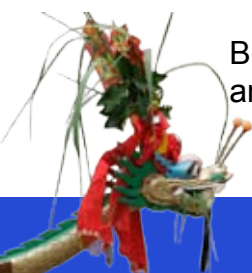


*Mike Thomas  
with Race-Officials -WC 2009 / Prague*

## Readers Feedback:

Since this is the first issue of DBW since a long time, of course there is no readers feedback yet.

But please send some feedback to [wiekhorsthenning@mac.com](mailto:wiekhorsthenning@mac.com) about what you think is good and what you don’t like in this magazine. Many thanks for your support.





## Training Accident in South-China leaves 17 Paddlers dead

Based on reports from the Chinese Xinhua News Agency we learned about a tragic dragon boat accident which happened in the afternoon of April 21st, 2018 on TaoHua River in Guilin (South China).

During a training session two fully packed boats came close to an overflow dam and both teak-wooden boats capsized badly.

57 fellow paddlers went into water with very strong current. 40 paddlers could be rescued. According to general media reports no life jackets have been worn.

The training session was organized without notifying the police. After the accident two of the organizers were arrested.

In total 200 rescuers were deployed to help.

More about the accident is not known so far. Of course there are open questions and we would like to learn more about, how this could happen. Especially when assuming that somebody might have had some local knowledge about the water conditions and its dangers.

There are one or two videos showing the boats capsizing at the overflow dam, which actually should have been easy to recognize.

Something must have gone badly wrong leading to this tragedy.

Our deep condolences go to the families and friends of the victims of this tragedy.



*(Photo taken from XinHua News Agency website)*

*The photo shows the scene of accident with rescue boats still on the water.  
In the far distance there are two boats, behind which a thin white line can be seen.  
This line must be the man made overflow dam.*







## The 9th Open German Long-Distance Dragon Boat Championships

Under the roof of the German Canoe Association DKV and organized by TVK 1877 Essen on April 21st, 2018 at the regatta course Lake Baldeney in the city of Essen the 9th German Long-Distance Champs took place with a total of 25 teams participating in three performance classes.

While the teams racing in the Premier Mixed Class and in the Masters 40+ Mixed, had to paddle 12 kilometers, in the Popular Sports Class had 4 kilometers less to go.

The water was calm, it was not windy and overall the weather conditions were perfect to do sports.

The winners in Premier Mixed Class:

- |                                 |             |
|---------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Drag Attack - Wuppertal      | 00:55:58,85 |
| 2. Kurpfalz Dragons - Mannheim  | 00:56:36,93 |
| 3. Pneum. SpreeCoyoten - Berlin | 00:57:23,72 |

Masters 40+ Mixed:

- |                                 |             |
|---------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Neckardrachen I - Böckingen  | 00:57:21,04 |
| 2. Neckardrachen II - Böckingen | 00:58:42,73 |
| 3. Berlin Dragons - Berlin      | 00:58:58,62 |

Popular Sports Class:

- |                             |             |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Wilde Hassianer - Gießen | 00:38:54,32 |
| 2. Team KCW - Witten        | 00:38:54,71 |
| 3. Team TVK - Essen         | 00:39:21,33 |

## Do You Have Any News?

No matter from where you are, if you send us your news together with photos - if any, we publish them!

E-mail to: [wiekhorsthenning@mac.com](mailto:wiekhorsthenning@mac.com)







## DRAGON BOAT NET re-launched !!!

Dragon Boat Net is the central dragon boat website of Creative Dragon Works (Henning Wiekhorst) an independent media company for Dragon Boating.

From 2006 until 2011 Dragon Boat Net was the biggest dragon-boating-website, informing and promoting the dragon boat community world-wide.

Dragon Boat Net was operated at first from Hong Kong but since mid 2008 from Germany. Henning was also the publisher of the world-wide dragon boat magazine, Dragon Boat World International (DBWI). In parallel with DBWI, Henning started Dragon Boat World Television and made Creative Dragon Works the IDBF webmaster for the IDBF and helped to develop the idbfchamps as a website for showing immediate live race results from IDBF Championships.

Creative Dragon Works ceased all its dragon boat activities in early 2011! (read more the history on <http://creative-dragon-works.com>)

<https://dragonboatnet.com>

In March 2018 Dragon Boat Net was put online again and has announced its official re-launch for May 2018, but was ready to operate even three weeks earlier and is as from now fully operational.

Dragon Boat Net goes hand in hand with the DRAGON BOAT WORLD Magazine. While News will be published on the website as soon as they come in, DRAGON BOAT WORLD, which is only published quarterly will handle them more in depth.

Dragon Boat Net offers teams from anywhere in the world to introduce themselves. Just send in your introduction and some photos and you will get your club's own page, which can be accessed via the "Links" in the main menu of the website.

Under "Links" as Club-Links you can search for teams in various countries to get connected.

"Insights" provides you with deeply researched topics about the Dragon Boat Sport, while the "Race-Calendar" is the most comprehensive one you can find. - And there is much, much more...

**Just visit Dragon Boat Net and check it out !!!**





## Principles for the Governance of Dragon Boating in Europe



*By Claudio Schermi – EDBF President*

The last 3 years have been truly remarkable 3 years in the course of development of the Dragon Boat Sport, with very successful Continental and World Championships.

For the future we will do our utmost to fulfil our mission.

There are great expectations from Paddlers, from the Dragon Boat Community of Europe and from our EDBF Members. In 2018 Europe will host the 3 main events of the year, the EDBF ENC in Brandenburg, the IDBF CCWC in Szeged and the IBCPC Participatory Festival in Florence.

Our Federation's Members are the bedrock of our sport.

The EDBF faces new challenges and we need to have real vision and fresh leadership in tackling those challenges.

Our objectives for the future are that we need to offer better competitions, improve the EDBF presentation of our sport, reform our calendar, develop new media, and shape our own future

within the IDBF and the European paddle-sport community.

**We** are taking this important responsibility for the Paddlers and for the Dragon Boat Community of Europe.

The Dragon Boat Community of Europe includes not just paddlers but all stakeholders: the Race Officials, the EDBF Members and the Clubs, the Coaches, supporters and families, the Event Organizers, the boat builders, the sponsors and maybe others to be identified.

**We** have many pressing issues within EDBF, first of all the GOVERNANCE of our sport. And we discuss about it at the last European Dragon Boat Convention in Belgrade, November 2017

**We** agreed to work together, to involve the Executive Committee and the Council in the day by day life of our organization.

**We** agreed to maintain close ties with our Dragon Boat Community of Europe, especially with the Paddlers. We wish to organize our Paddlers, to communicate with them, to serve them, to learn from them and to subject ourselves to their oversight. We should always be part of the Paddlers Community of Europe, work for their interests and share good and bad times with them.

The EDBF will need to be committed to the long-term future of dragon boat sport, developing strategies in areas such as youth development, sustainable development, education, prevention, safety and antidoping. We should never be inactive.

**My** main goals, as new EDBF President, will be to grow dragon boating in Europe, to promote a rejuvenation of our sport and to make it able to generate increased revenues and thus opportunity for our paddlers, for our members, for our Clubs and for the organisation of our sport at every level.

I am fully aware that the capability of any individual







is limited, but if we are united in a team serving our sport with dedication, with your support and commitment, there is no difficulties that we cannot overcome.

**We** must investigate and bear in mind what paddlers think and we must work with them.

The EDBF should be able to set up inspirational goals in line with the will of the Paddlers and the need for development of our sport and lead the Dragon Boat Community to achieve those goals.

This is one of the reasons to continue in the future with the EDBF Annual Convention and to develop the programme with sessions for Coaches, Paddlers, Organizers and Sponsors.

There is still considerable room for the EDBF Executive Committee and Council to improve our leadership, governing capacity and organization, and the quality, competence and practice of the EDBF Members and Officials.

These are missions of an historic importance to which we must dedicate all our wisdom and strength.

I wish to underline the EDBF gender equality in our good governance policy, with 4 women and 3 men in the Executive Committee.

**We** should very much consider the requirements of the following recent IOC document dated March 2018 and the application in the European Dragon Boat of the 25 recommendations of the IOC Gender Equality Review Project:

<https://www.olympic.org/~media/Document%20Library/OlympicOrg/News/2018/03/IOC-Gender-Equality-Review-Project-Recommendations-Overview-March-2018.pdf>

<http://www.claudioschermi.it/>



*The brand-new EDBF Logo*





## ICF and IDBF talked ...?

As DBW learned from the IDBF website, on March 14th, 2018 the International and European Federations of Dragon Boating and of Canoeing - ICF, ECA, IDBF and EDBF - meet in Rome to talk.

They issued a joined statement as a result of their discussion, which we quote with exact wording in the following:

*(Beginning of quote)*

### Joint statement

1. IDBF and ICF agreed to unify the rules soon as possible. The basis of these unified will be in principle be those of the IDBF.

2. It was agreed that we recognize the need to have a joint education of race officials. Exchange information's about the different education systems.

3. There was the willingness to organize a single Championship for Clubs in Europe with the date to be agreed.

4. ICF and IDBF encouraged other Continental Federations also to consider joint Championships.

5. Both international Federations agreed to promote Dragonboat as a part of the 2021 Master Games with a joint proposal.

6. IDBF and ICF agreed to continue the discussions during 2018.

*(End of quote)*

When reading the above, you might think, it is always good when people talk and DBW certainly will agree with that. However for those who followed the way the IDBF has walked during the past two decades in developing our sports, know that this topic is perhaps the hottest boiling matter around.

To explain to those only involved with Dragon Boating since recently, we have to dive a bit into history:



In 1980, the Hong Kong Tourist Association sent three dragon boats to London to help promote Hong Kong and its culture. The boats made their debut at the Chinese festival on the river Thames.

Mike Haslam, at the time the ICF Race Director, being in charge to organize the coming Canoe World Championships in the UK saw the boats and recognized the potential of those exotic boats.

He bought the boats and suggested to develop Dragon Boating as a sport within the ICF.

It took the ICF two or three years of consideration, just to conclude in dragon boats being to dissimilar to canoes and not to develop the Dragon Boat Sport.

Mike Haslam got in contact with the Hong Kong Tourist Assosiation and decided, with their help, to go his own way. This then finally resulted in the foundation 1990 first of the EDBF, in 1991 of the IDBF and in 1992 also the Asian DBF.



*The IDBF was founded in 1991*

A very important point was to preserve and respect the Chinese tradition, which actually provides the exotic herbs and spices for the non-Chinese world and making it such a colorful and people packed sport. Success was on its way!

Around the time 1999 onwards , when the IDBF first applied for membership in GAISF (General Association of International Sports Federations) suddenly the ICF made a 180° turn and claimed they would be the only Federation representing the Dragon Boat Sport and that suddenly a dragon boat is a canoe!





Only in 2003 the ICF ran their first Championships in Taiwan, with a questionable participation.

Before they have done nothing for our sport and said, they don't have anything to do with it.

In 2007 after its third run for it, the IDBF finally made it against the objection of the ICF to become a GAISF member and the recognized world-governing body for the sport of Dragon Boating.



*GAISF 2007 - Beijing: Result for the IDBF*



The background for the trouble is money! Roughly described it works somewhat like: The more members with a club, that is member in a national association under the roof of a GAISF Federation, the more governmental support – depending on the country – can be obtained for the sport. – So, welcome to the world sport politics!



The above outline is very brief, but should provide a basic understanding.

Also there have been similar statements as the one jointly published in Rome recently. Those statements practically weren't worth the paper they've been written on – unfortunately!

However, it would be nice to see the whole issue being closed and concluded.

ICF and IDBF are talking in secrecy and it was not possible for DBW to get any other comment or information, than the latest statement.

Is the IDBF giving up some of its firm standing? Hopefully not! They have come so far and provided so many exciting and people packed World Championships, which we all don't want to miss.

On the other hand, anybody promoting this wonderful sport is welcome. So, why not to combine forces? For example, why can't the ICF Dragon Boat Program become an IDBF-Associate Event Organizer? They shouldn't argue about IDBF rules of racing, because those of the ICF aren't that much different anyway.

Further it would be great to see the ICF regaining trustworthiness. Once things are agreed on, please simply stick to it and don't ignore them, as it has happened before.

Why are there still countries where Dragon Boating wants to develop, but the National Canoe Federation is blocking it?– Example: Egypt!

To conclude, there are a lot of questions the Federations have to work on. The more secrecy, the more questions and worries will come up to the public.

At least the persons talking nowadays are others than before. Let's hope they get along better and that this makes the difference.

The good thing, people like the Fishermen in China and Hong Kong won't be bothered anyway. No matter what's the outcome, they will paddle to their own rules, as long there is water.



## Vibrant Races in Hong Kong

Hong Kong is not only very dense populated, it is also densely “Dragon Boated”!!!

Well, people who know me, know that I should know! - Haven't I been living in Hong Kong for almost thirteen years ? – And still, when recently setting up the Race-Calendar on Dragon Boat Net website with 50 dragon boat events taking place in a territory with a land area of only 1.104 square kilometers, I remembered all the nice people racing the Dragons – with all the action, the passion and especially the Fishermen's spirit! All these intense memories didn't leave me a choice other than writing about it again.

If you are living in Hong Kong you actually have no choice, you will come across some Dragon Boating and so it happened to me during my time in the city.

When I wrote my book, I gave it the title “Hong Kong – Mother of Dragons” which absolutely describes the role Hong Kong has played for the modern sport of Dragon Boat Racing.

Racing dragon boats is certainly the national sport of Hong Kong. The roots are to be found with the Fishermen. Dragon Boating is part of their social life and the skills and traditions have been passed on from one generation to the next over hundreds of years.

The Fishermen don't only race on Dragon Boat Festival Day, which always is the fifth day of the fifth month of the lunar-calendar – they also hold many competitions within their family groups spread over spring, summer and autumn and they race almost anywhere that you find water.





# Regional Focus

The Fishermen Races generate the most exciting racing atmosphere in Hong Kong, full of tradition, joy and friendship. These races are family battles and each one is different to the other regarding the boats used. While one competition uses the big dragons with 56 Racers in a crew, the next event is organized using the small dragon boats with just 12 Paddlers. Crews bring their own boats to many of the races, which are often transported by sea from one island to another either loaded onto or towed behind a Fishing Trawler.

It is simply amazing and a very special, unforgettable vibrant experience to take part in one of those races, which normally the tourist and travelers to Hong Kong never see.

Looking at the crews and clubs in Hong Kong today, we see a variety of different paddler profiles and crew compositions. There are obviously the Fishermen and other local community crews, as I remember for example the Firemen and the Hong Kong Police crews and then there are the more serious, let us say the regular club crews, which are normally a mix of local and expat paddlers. These club crews tend to meet and train on a fairly regular basis. The third group is made up of Corporate Crews from the business sector, some of which have existed for a long time and others come and go.

The Fishermen are known as having the strongest teams in the territory and for the Non-Fishermen's crews it is regarded as a great honor to be invited to a Fishermen's race. But competing in their races is not easy, as they do not necessarily race to any standard rules. Known differences are at the starts, which are normally 'free' with seldom any ropes to hold to keep your boat aligned.

Racing on the sea towards the beach with a swell coming in from the side or behind the boat demands special skills to hold the boat in position on the start line and whilst the Helm is busy doing this, the start signal might be given with no warning words of "Are You Ready"





# Regional Focus



Once a race has started and depending on which race you are in, you might also find the competitors in the other crews suddenly standing up, mid race, to try and boost their speed. Fishermen races definitely have their own rules but the best feature of their races is the meals after the race - seafood, seafood, and more seafood!!!

There are, of course, also other races held in Hong Kong and the two with worldwide reputations are the Hong Kong International Races, now organized by the Hong Kong China Dragon Boat Association (HKCDBA) and the Stanley International Races organized by the Stanley Dragon Boat Association.

These two races do not only have a world-wide reputation for being nice events. They have influenced the Dragon Boat Sport in being what it is today.

Stanley itself had long been an important settlement for fisher folk and dragon boat racing has always been a very popular way to celebrate the annual Tuen Ng Festival. As far back as the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) East and West seemed to mix well here.

In the late '60s the local races started to attract the interest of several expats living in the Stanley area and by the early '70s the expats were racing against the local Chinese crews. The Chinese always dominated the races because of their, in general, lower body-weight compared to the Westerners. A boat with Chinese crews didn't dive as deep into the water, which resulted in less water-resistance. So to make the races fairer for all in 1975 the organizers divided the races to allow the expats to compete in a category of their own. This was followed shortly after by the introduction of a Ladies' Competition.

Now, that marked a big change in tradition to which ladies weren't allowed to enter a dragon, because in ancient belief they were regarded as not being clean. To the old saying a Dragons wife always was a Phoenix. By this the first ladies teams didn't paddle a Dragon rather than Phoenix Boat. I guess more for practical reasons and over the years this resulted into the ladies simply also paddling Dragon Boats.





# Regional Focus



One may say thanks to Stanley for initiating our ladies being allowed to ride a Dragon and for expat men having their own racing class.

Despite the for nowadays sport so important changes of traditions Stanley somehow managed to miss out in playing any role in the initial development of the modern era of Dragon Boat Sport, which started in Hong Kong in 1976 – or was it one year earlier?

With Dragon Boating being almost part of daily life in Hong Kong and also one, if not the oldest Chinese traditions it is not surprising that in 1975 the then Executive Director of the Hong Kong Tourist Association, Mr. John Paine and the Chairman of the Hong Kong's Fishermen Association, Mr. Philip Lai should discuss Dragon Boat Racing as a way to promote Hong Kong as a tourist venue, with the attraction of a traditional sport and associated festival of Chinese culture.

They decided to hold the first International Dragon Boat Race in Hong Kong, in 1976 with a crew from the Japanese City of Nagasaki invited to race in Shau Kei Wan's Typhoon Shelter. Thus it was that Dragon Boat Sport was born as this race marks the beginning of the modern era of Dragon Boat Racing. Since then until today the "Hong Kong International Festival Races – HKIR for short, have been held annually on the first weekend after the traditional Festival Races (Tuen Ng).

Following the regional success of the HKIR, the Tourist Association decided to go a big step further by starting a world-wide campaign of promoting Dragon Boat

Racing in their overseas markets as a way of attracting more and more tourists to the city and with the intention of making the dragon boat a symbol of Hong Kong.



# Regional Focus



Starting with the UK, USA and Canada, considerable efforts were made to promote Hong Kong by inviting crews to compete in the HKIR and wooden dragon boats were sent to England, Germany and other Countries for the invited crews to train in and promote Hong Kong through the media in their Home Countries.

And where did these boats come from? That's right, from the Fishermen in Hong Kong, mainly from Chai Wan, a district on Hong Kong and from Cheung Chau, a small outlying island within Hong Kong's territory.



I dare to say, without the so colorful, passionate and vibrant Fishermen races, the idea to promote this tradition as typically Hong Kong would not have born. The Fishermen have built the boats, which were shipped overseas and the Fishermen have shown the first oversea crews how to paddle. All this finally has lead to the foundation of the European Dragon Boat Association (EDBF), the Asian Dragon Boat Federation (ADBF) and the International

Dragon Boat Federation (IDBF). Today we even have since then regular World Championships and thousands of joyful Dragon Boat Races and Festivals in over 90 countries.

Now that a new season of Dragon Boating just has started, I'm sending my best wishes to the Fishermen in Hong Kong - may the Dragons always be pleased.

For the traveler to Hong Kong I really recommend you to visit one of the Fishermen Races.

There are a few spots like Shau Kei Wan, Cheung Chau, Aberdeen or Stanley Bay from where you can watch pretty closely.

The big Stanley Race takes place at Stanley Beach and is known as the worlds biggest one day dragon boat event. Did you ever experience a 12 lane race? - There you will!

**It's vibrant!**







## Eye Dotting Ceremony and Giving Name to a Boat



The modern sport of dragon boat racing was born in Hong Kong and many people still consider Hong Kong as a dragon boat “Mecca”. Since I live in Hong Kong I am frequently asked about how the traditional Eye Dotting Ceremony is performed. In Hong Kong, there are two major ceremonies involving boats. One is the Eye Dotting or Awakening Ceremony and the other is the naming of a new boat, which some people consider to be the christening. In Hong Kong, if you want to know anything about the traditions of the sport you look to the Fishermen. The Fishermen, who populate the various harbors around Hong Kong, are the keepers of the traditions of the sport.

You will find many variations on the theme of awakening the dragon throughout the world. Even the differences between European Dragons and Asian Dragons play a role in the ceremony. For example, in Europe you will sometimes find performers dressed as ancient fighters doing a dance that symbolizes the hunt of the dragon. At the end it is the fighter, not the dragon that is blessed. I am not one to mess with another country’s culture, but it seems odd that anyone could hunt a dragon, the most superior beings in Chinese culture. The dragon is so powerful that you certainly don’t want to make him angry.

In Asian culture the ceremony is about respecting the dragon and getting him into a good and friendly mood towards you, the team, and the community. You want the dragon’s protection, not his anger. However, additional ceremonial performances, such as the Lion Dance are always welcome and definitely will add to a spectacular show and event.



# Pool of Culture



The ceremony, which is known as the Eye Dotting, is actually the Awakening of the Dragon and should be repeated each year after the dragon's rest during the off-season. It is typically performed when the dragon boats are first returned to service and again just prior to racing. It is important to remember that it is considered very bad luck to paddle or race in a dragon boat that has not been properly awakened or has its eyes closed.

In Hong Kong, the fishermen don't incorporate the naming of a new boat during the Awakening Ceremony. Although naming the boat may be important to Western Cultures it is not such an important part of owning a dragon boat in the East. Still when naming the boat there is no smashing a bottle of Champagne against the hull or sprinkling of holy water or anything like that, but if breaking a perfectly good bottle of booze helps float your boat go ahead, just do it in a separate ceremony. Just don't blame us if your boat breaks before the bottle. Back to the Chinese way:

## 1. Choosing the date:

When planning the ceremony the first thing you want to do is set the date. You will need to consult a Chinese calendar as there are good and bad dates. A boat awakened on the wrong day will have bad luck and will not perform well. Choose wisely. There are several web sites that can help you find the right date or you can consult with a Feng Shui Master.



## 2. Items needed:

- a) Red paint and a brush –
- b) Incenses –
- c) Symbolic Hell Money –
- d) A metal bucket or open container to burn the Hell Money -
- e) A basket of fruits, a steamed chicken or other foods a dragon might appreciate –
- f) A small table and table cloth –
- g) A Roasted Pig –
- h) (Only if you give a name to your boat) Red wrapping paper or cloth to cover the writing of the name on the boat's hull.







### 3. Preparation of the boat:

In the case of Name Giving, paint the name on both sides of the hull somewhere close to the drum. When the paint is dry, cover it with the red wrapping paper or cloth. Before the ceremony you need to dress the boat by attaching the dragon head and tail, drum and drum seat. You should also decorate it a little.

The boat can be on land or in the water for the ceremony. If the boat is on a trailer make sure there is nothing in the way of the head and that it can be reached easily. If the boat is in the water tie it up at a 90 degree angle to the dock or the shore with the dragon looking towards you. Remember, you must be able to reach the eyes. It is acceptable to tie several boats together as long as they all face the same direction.

### 4. Ceremonial procedure:

#### a) Making a Sacrifice to the Dragon:

Place the table cloth in front of the Dragon. If you don't have a table you can put the table cloth on the ground in front of the boat. Put the fruits and chicken and perhaps other foods on the table cloth and decorate it nicely together with some incense. Place the metal bucket or container nearby the table cloth.

Next, have someone who is important to the team, club or organization, like the team captain, club president or your big sponsor, hold the burning incense in their hands. The hands should be clasped together in front. The person should then bow three times to the Dragon and three times to the open water. The team and other attending guests may also bow. Repeat for each boat you are awakening. After bowing, place the Hell Money in the metal bucket and burn it. So far no speeches are held! By making the sacrifice and bowing, you will be showing respect to the Dragon and the spirits of the water.

#### b) Giving Name to the boat: (only if applicable, otherwise skip this point)

Again, have someone important to your team or group perform this step. If you are adding a sponsor's name to the boat this would be a perfect time to involve them. Have the sponsor remove the wrapping paper or cloth covering the name of the boat. It is appropriate for the person to say a few words such as "This boat shall from now on carry the name "\_\_\_\_\_" Or "I wish you all good luck on the water"... something like that. This is not the time for long drawn out speeches. Remember, the Dragon is waiting and he still can't see.

**DRAGON BOAT NET**  
**[www.dragonboatnet.com](http://www.dragonboatnet.com)**  
**The Paddlers Site**



# Pool of Culture



## c) Awakening the Dragon:

Again, one of the important persons, it doesn't need to be always the same, takes the red paint and the brush and dots the dragon head at five points: The center of each eye, the tongue and the tip of each dragon horn. Painting the eyes gives the dragon sight. Painting the tongue gives him taste. The horns are painted to give the dragon power.

## d) Bowing of the Awakened Dragon:

If at this point the boat is still on land it is time to launch it. You can place incense somewhere near the bow of the boat, the joint where the head attaches is a good place. Once the boat is in the water have the crew load. The entire crew including drummer and helm back paddles some distance away from the shore or dock and then sprints forward briefly toward the ceremonial party. They stop the boat and repeat the process a total of three times. This symbolizes the Dragon bowing to the audience, which may bow also or greet him in return.

## e) Showing the Dragon around:

Next the boat is paddled once around the water venue. This allows the Dragon and the spirits of the water to become introduced and know where the Dragon will be moving around.

## f) Cutting the Roasted Pig:

When the boat is back, it is time for speeches and to cut the roasted pig, which is known as food for the gods. The cutting is ceremonial, but after that it just becomes another dish for the party. The fruits and chicken, which have been symbolically sacrificed are in fact still there and can be eaten.

Again, there are many different variations on this ceremony. This is the one that many of the Hong Kong Fishermen use and that is familiar to me. It is similar to ceremonies in other parts of Asia. If you use this one you can feel confident that your boats are properly awakened, named and are ready to race.







## Egypt: Dragons on Nile



**The first attempts to get Dragon Boating going in Egypt have been undertaken some 12 years ago, but due to several reasons they weren't very substantial and finally almost nothing was achieved. Since nearly two years a new development is spotted, and this one looks promising, although it is torpedoed by the Egyptian Canoe and Kayak Federation**

China and Egypt have the world's oldest civilizations and they share special historical ties. Egypt is proud of the River Nile, which is one of their most ancient civilization symbols, and the dragon stands for both, superior power and benevolence in Chinese culture.

Racing the powerful Dragon on the amazing river Nile perfectly signals the bond of the two countries, and so on October 3rd, 2016 the first River Nile Dragon Boat Festival was kicked off as sportive and cultural event. Twelve teams including four professional groups from China, Egypt and European countries joined the race.

The Dragon Boat Festival is organized by the China-Egypt Friendship Association, a non-governmental organization in Cairo, with the cooperation of the Chinese Embassy and the Cairo governorate.

About two month later, December 17th, 2016 marked the grand opening of the Dragon Boat Academy at the Royal Muhammad Ali Club in Giza, Cairo. The project, developed in collaboration between the Egyptian and Chinese governments. There exists a forty-year friendship between Egypt and China. The ties between the two countries are strong and have been particularly built up in recent years.



# Regional Focus



The large community of Chinese expatriates in Cairo has become deeply intertwined with the economic, social and cultural landscape of the city. In addition to the immense amount of business conducted in Cairo, the Chinese community has demonstrated a commitment to sharing its own cultural history with Egyptians while simultaneously integrating elements of Egyptian culture. Cairo has witnessed a myriad of events, such as the Chinese New Year celebration held at Azhar Park, in which the Chinese and Egyptian communities have engaged with one another to learn from each other's cultural backgrounds.



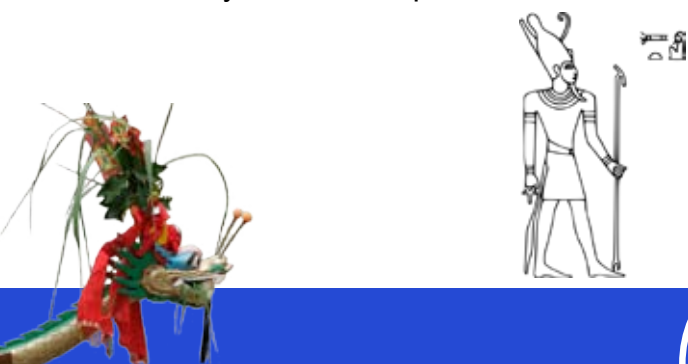
Ehab Gouda, president of the Egyptian Friendship Association in Hong Kong and founder of the Dragon Boat Academy, and Mary Lai, President of the Sino-Egypt Friendship Promotion Society, have been instrumental in the long project to build up a program of dragon boating in Cairo.

In thinking of the significance of the Nile in Egypt's long history and the dragon boat's importance in Chinese culture, the idea to merge the two in the form of a Dragon Boat Academy in Cairo was born, as with the Dragon Boat Festival on Nile before. The project was begun two years ago by the Egyptian Friendship Association in Hong Kong, with Ehab Gouda at the core.



Royal Club Mohamad-Aly offered the ideal space as a home to Egypt's first-ever dragon boat academy, given its historical presence in Cairo. The beautiful club, located in Giza with a prime position along the Nile, has a rich cultural history. The owner, Dr. Maged Farag, first bought the land for the club in 1988 and immediately saw the potential to be used as a public space. The land once witnessed a space for a museum and research center. The architecture and the activities offered too have been historically themed around the medieval period in Egypt. Given the club's commitment to enlivening Egyptian history, this seemed a perfect venue for the dragon boat academy to make a space for itself.

Dragon Boating presents a great opportunity for groups to gather together and work on team building, whether as a family activity, a class outing or perhaps a professional retreat. Vodafone and P&G for example have both recently visited the academy as part of team building retreats. At the start of February 2017, a group of young girls spent a day at the Royal Club Mohamad-Aly working on building up their skills as a team. The group came as part of the 3D Academy, a program that functions as a compliment to school for Egyptian youth and helps them to develop positive skills through a variety of experiences. The girls spent two hours on the water and came back both exhausted from the hard work and reenergized from the team effort spent powering through the Nile together. The group chose to take on dragon boating as a way to tackle a new challenge as a group and improve their teamwork.





# Regional Focus

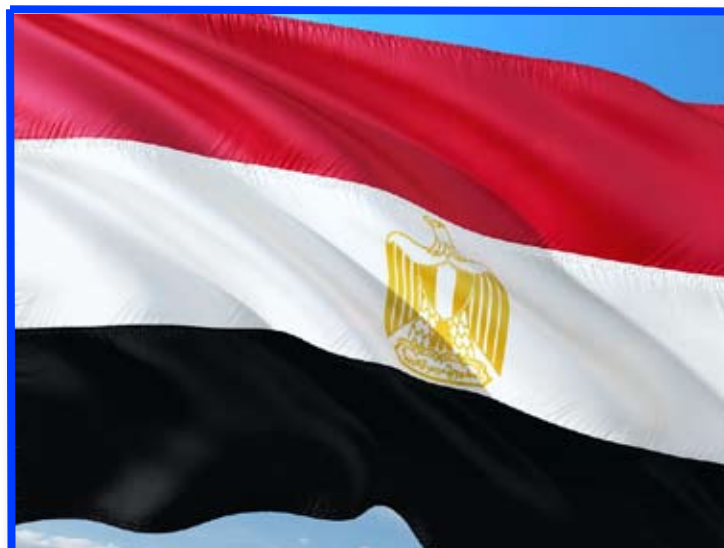


Now, with all the above high-level efforts where two countries want to show their strong bonds and friendship by combining culture and sport in a so joyful activity as Dragon Boating, the Egyptian Canoe and kayak Federation has nothing better to do, than trying to prohibit the events! - Even if the canoeists have some legal grounds because in Egypt there is no National Dragon Boat Federation yet providing a roof for such events, why can't they just once say: "Hey great, somebody wants to do Dragon Boating, can we be of help?" - Wouldn't that be a different approach instead of always building up barriers, as done before in other regions?

What Ehab and Mary have initiated is great and hopefully they stick to it and go one step further to establishing the Egyptian Dragon Boat Federation. Please feel encouraged by this magazine and keep us informed. To all the teams and club out there, who are thinking to travel for paddling in different surroundings, others than at home - why not once to paddle on river Nile? - Doesn't that sound cool?

So the call goes for **DRAGONS ON NILE !!!**

Contact Ehab and Mary via facebook:  
<https://www.facebook.com/DragonBoatEgypt/>



*Landscape photos taken from the Internet "Free to use"  
Others downloaded with permission from DragonBoatEgypt*





## Buying a Carbon Fiber Paddle?

(paddle photos by [www.doublefifth.com](http://www.doublefifth.com))

Recent years have shown quite an increase in sales of carbon fiber paddles. Many paddle-makers, dealers and traders try to get a piece of the market, which results in significant price differences. So the questions are:

**Where do price differences come from?**

**What to pay attention on, when buying a paddle?**

Regarding advanced technical developments for dragon boat paddles, changing the shape is not an option and the dimensions are strict regulated by the IDBF paddle specification scheme 202a. The IDBF preserves the traditions and culture coming from the Chinese origins of Dragon Boating. The playgrounds for making different types of paddles are the materials.

If you want to participate in races, which follow the IDBF rules of racing, you will need to have a paddle carrying an IDBF certificate. – And here already is a hidden possibility of misunderstanding when you go out to buy a paddle!

The IDBF certificate is issued per paddle type, while the type does not refer to the shape rather than to the material the paddle is made from. So if you have two paddles of the same shape and dimensions, but one is made from wood and the other from carbon fiber, these are two different types!

As customer buying a paddle from an IDBF certificated paddle maker who offers dragon boat paddles made from three different materials, you should check which of the paddles carries a certificate – it might not be all three of them!

Another matter is the kind of certificate. There are two! The one according to the 202a specs and the other one for festival race paddles. The difference is, the festival paddles don't meet the dimensional tolerances as tight as desired for the sport racing paddles. This likely has something to do with the stability of production processes and the reliability of the installed quality control.



There also is a problem of paddles being sold on the market with fake certificates. This of course is a bad game as with any other fake products too.





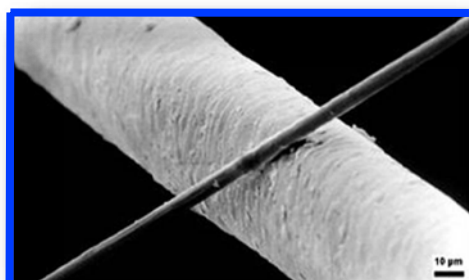


A hint helping you not to be tricked, is to refer to the IDBF-List of certificated paddle makers and to simply pay attention to the certificate number on the paddle you want to buy. Compare with the IDBF-list if the number is matching to the name of the paddle maker. Also keep your fingers of the paddle when the number is on a simple sticker or similar, which is relatively easy to remove. It might well be a sticker, but to get it off – what you never ever should do! – you really will have to work on it! The IDBF specs clearly demand a durable imprint of the certificate number and good paddle makers follow that.

While all the before said applies to dragon boat paddles in general, let's dive deeper into the topic of carbon fiber paddles, for which it seems to become more and more a fashion to have one instead of a solid and well made, quality wooden one. Why are some paddles more costly and others so much less expensive?

Carbon fiber is usually formed when polyacrylonitrile fibers – it also could be another base-material - are carbonized, dehydrated and heated repeatedly at increasing temperatures. Polyacrylonitrile is the same fiber that you will find in acrylic fabrics used in the shirt or sweater you might be wearing right now. Turning it into carbon fiber is a complex process. As the fibers are heated they bond on molecular level into hexagonal shapes that look a little like chicken wire. Each pass through the oven at higher temperatures allows more of these little hexagons to bond together and to become more and more pure carbon. After five or six passes at temperatures between 2000° to 3000°C, long ribbons are formed. Once the purity reaches 80% carbon, the ribbons are named carbon fiber. These ribbons will have a diameter of 0.4 to perhaps 0.9 micrometers. Just to compare, this is a fraction of what a human hair measures. Already here you can sense at least two quality measures, it's carbon purity and the ribbon diameter.

white = human hair  
black = carbon fiber



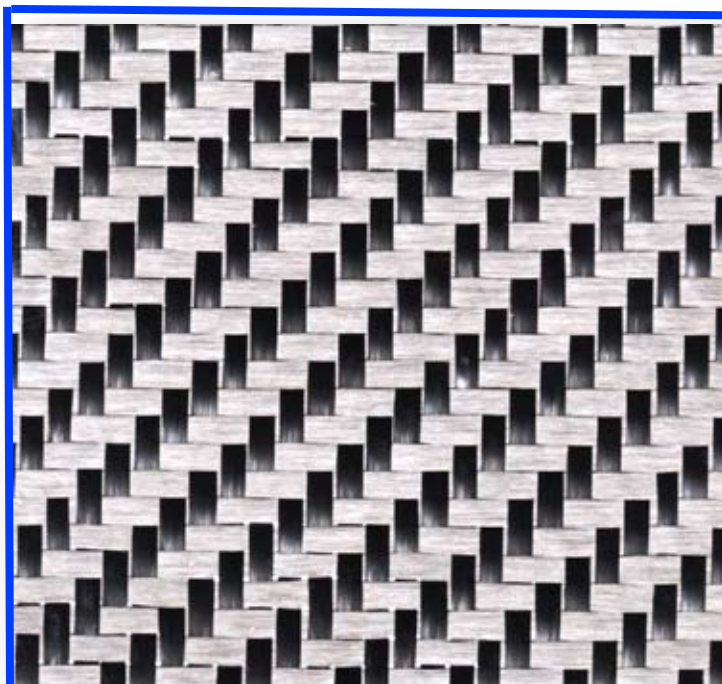
The ribbons are bond to become a thread or Roving, which is described by the number of ribbons it contains, the "K" number. 1K means 1000 ribbons in a thread, a 80K Roving has 80.000. However, this number doesn't tell you anything about the ribbon-quality!



*Roving*

One may think now, the thicker ribbons are the stronger ones, while "stronger" refers to tensile-strength. But it might be the other way around. The more repeated process steps have been undertaken, the thinner the ribbons might become with an increased purity of carbon. The purer the carbon is, the stronger it is!

The carbon fiber bonded to Rovings is just like thread. The Rovings are used for weaving carbon fiber into a fabric, which easily can be cut with a pair of scissors. – And you may bet on it, there are different qualities for the weave at accordingly different prices as well!



*Weave*



However, the fabric is not such an impressive material. The true benefits arise after the fabric is combined with epoxy resin to form a composite material. Epoxy resins, again there are cheap ones and expensive ones, harden or cure into a substance that is insoluble and that won't melt like plastics.

To make a paddle blade, layers of the carbon fiber fabric are placed over a foam or wooden core – there are cheap and weak ones and strong, more costly ones – and then covered with epoxy resin. Most are then put into some sort of vacuum press that compresses all of the air out, so the resin penetrates the fiber and bonds with the core. Even this final pressing determines the paddle-quality and causes cost. Allow it to cure and – a carbon fiber blade is born!

The resulting composite is very strong for its weight. If you were to compare a sample of the carbon fiber composite with the equivalent thickness of steel you would find the carbon fiber to be both stronger and considerably lighter than the steel. However, not all carbon fiber fabrics are created equally. There is a wide range of different weaves and varying grades of carbon fiber, where you simply can say, the better the material, the higher the cost are!

A carbon fiber paddle, as mentioned before usually has a foam core. Also for this there are, similar to the carbon fiber, different qualities available. Enhanced material properties always make a material more expensive.

A manufacturer has to choose what he thinks are the appropriate materials to him for making his paddle. That's one side of the coin.

The other side is the paddle construction and workmanship.

All paddles are made of three parts. Blade, shaft and grip. A "one piece" paddle means the entire paddle goes back into the mold with a very thin layer of fabric. It's cosmetic.



When a paddle comes out of the mold there are edges along the sides that have to be sanded down. Like a waffle. If too much batter is used it oozes out the sides and you can see the white foam core beneath.

Imagine to cut a blade in half, you want to see extra material on the sides. A high quality paddle uses more, cheap paddles use very little. If you drop a quality paddle the blade tip might chip but there is extra material in the tip. If you drop a cheap paddle and it chips it will go through the roving and expose the core, which then absorbs water and expands, possibly causing further damage



In case a really cheap paddle pleases you because of its nice graphics on the blade, please be cautious! It may look cool, but it covers up the blade so you can't see how it was finished. A graphic can cover a multitude of flaws.

As a conclusion you should think twice before buying a paddle! Although there might be some lower priced paddles in good quality on the market, in general a good paddle has its price.

Beside the above, there are other points to consider, which are more related to your engagement into paddling.





The final property of carbon fiber is the stiffness. A composite paddle is typically much stiffer than its wooden counterpart. This translates into more power transferring from your muscles to the water. Think of it like this: Imagine a lake and there is a long row of steel pipes sticking up. You grab each pipe and pull your boat past and then grab the next pole and the next.

Each pipe is very solid and you can get a great pull each time. Now imagine the same row made out of small trees. As you pull each tree bends just a little. The pull still feels good, but it's not as strong as the pull on the steel pipe. Here's the catch. After an hour pulling on those pipes you can really feel it in your shoulder and elbow. The carbon fiber paddle, like the steel pipe, is unforgiving and you'll feel it in your joints.

Is carbon fiber worth the extra money? If you are paddling in some sort of marathon or long distance race then there is no question that an extra light paddle is worth every penny. However, most dragon boat races are sprints and you won't be lifting this paddle a few thousand times. It's more like a few hundred times. For a novice or junior paddler there is no need to own a carbon fiber paddle...yet.

*A quality wooden paddle certainly does a good job!*

*If you use carbon fiber paddles, have a wooden one in spare!*



The best paddle for someone just starting out or whose body is still developing is a good forgiving wood paddle. There is nothing worse than a shoulder or elbow injury because you started out with too much paddle, except possibly spending a couple hundred bucks on a paddle and then deciding you don't like dragon boating.

Typically, people new to paddling will want to take the time to be sure they've developed the right muscle groups to be able to handle a super stiff and light paddle. Now to be fair, there are some carbon fiber paddle manufacturers who build flex into their shafts, specifically to address the injury issue and these can be fine for more experienced kids and recreational paddlers.

If you are an advanced recreational paddler or an elite paddler then you are the prime candidate for carbon fiber. Keep in mind that some paddlers struggle with a light paddle in the wind and that prolonged practice with a stiff paddle could lead to injury, so don't throw out your old wood paddle. Although all carbon fiber paddle blades are the same shape there are variations in shaft dimensions, materials and construction. In fact the paddles can weigh anywhere from 11 ounces to nearly 20 ounces, so keep in mind that not all paddles are created equally. Do your homework before you purchase. Decide which characteristics are most important to you before buying and if possible, try out a teammate's paddle and see how you like it.





## IDBF APPROVED RACING PADDLES



Paddle Manufacturers	License No.
1 Burnwater	3011/3012/3013
2 Apex Composites Inc.	3021/3022/3023
3 ZRE Zaverall Racing Equipment	3031/3032
4 Asia Explorer Limited	3041/3042/3043/3044/3045
5 "Trivium"	3051
6 Braća-Sport Ltd	3061
7 Ocky Oars	3071
8 Grey Owl Paddles Limited	3081/3082/3083
9 Simon River Sports	3091/3092/3093
10 ES Dragon Paddles	3101
11 Talon Technology	3201/3202/3203/3204/3205
12 Land & Ocean Composite Product Co. Ltd	3111
13 G'Power	3121/3122
14 Chinook Paddles	3131/3132
15 Raab Paddles	3141
16 Swift International Ltd.	3151/3152
21 Champion	3191/3192
22 Olympic Boat Sport	3211/3212
23 Kober & Moll GmbH	3221
24 Dutch Composites	3231
25 Seatec Paddle	3241/3242
26 Kialoa Paddles	3251/3252
27 Zieji Sports Oars	3261/3262/3263
28 Stanley Dragon Boat Association	3271
30 Hangzhou Flying Eagle Boat Co. Ltd.	3281
31 Kanoe Sports	3291
32 Kajner Sport KFT	3301
33 RK Company	3311
34 Yarn-Way Enterprise Co., Ltd(U-Known Composite)	3321
35 Shanghai Far East FRP Boat Co., Ltd.	3331
36 AUB Dynamo Baltic	3341
37 Panda Pádla	3351
38 Fuyang Golden Bridge Factory	3361/3362
39 Xpirits	3371
40 Coosat Design&Manufacture Co., Ltd.	3381/3382/3383
41 Panenka Paddles	3391
42 Albatros Ltd.	3401
43 Lettmann GmbH	3411
44 Hangzhou Kanhua Boats Ltd	3491
45 Quickblade USA	3501
46 Dongguan Kingpaddle Industrial Co., Ltd.	3511
47 Hornet Watersports	3521/3522
48 Yupin Sports	3531







**For the Calendar of Races and Events  
please attend to**

**<https://dragonboatnet.com/race-calender>**

**For Your Event:**

**Photography  
Video-Production  
Web-Design**

Bildbearbeitung: Fotomontagen und -freistellungen



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