

GLOSSARY OF DRAGON BOAT TERMS

"All Down" Command from drummer/steersperson to stop paddling and rest with paddles on laps.

"All-up!" Command from drummer/steersperson to ensure everyone begins to paddle in unison. Paddles are paused in the catch position until command to start paddling is given.

"Attention, please" Command given by race starter to prepare crews for departure, the start gun will follow in approximately 3-5 seconds.

Back Paddling The stroke used to bring a boat backward into or away from a dock or a race start.

Catch The point when the paddle first comes into contact with the water.

Check "Check the boat" or stopping the boat's momentum whether in a forward or backward motion i.e. if moving forward a 'check' would be accomplished by back paddling.

Draw stroke or Draw Stroke used most often by front or back paddlers to line a boat up straight at the start of the race or to turn the boat around. The paddle is placed perpendicular to the side of the boat and 'drawn' towards the boat.

Drummer The person who sets a crew's timing by rhythmically pounding a drum or calling stroke rates. The drummer sits in the bow and is usually lightweight.

Engine room Refers to the larger paddlers in the middle to back of the boat.

Exit The point in a stroke in which the paddle leaves the water cleanly and quickly midway between the paddler's knee and hip.

Finish The point near the end of a race (in a 500m race usually the last 100m mark) when a team's drummer/steersperson calls for an increase in power and rate.

Hitting the catch Driving the paddle forcefully into the water at maximum reach.

Ignition Refers to the paddlers at the front of the boat who set the pace.

“Let it run” Command from drummer/steersperson to stop paddling and let the boat coast with blades out of the water.

Pull The phase of the stroke in which the paddle is fully buried in the water and the paddler pulls the paddle back directly parallel with the boat.

Reach/extension The phase of the stroke in which the paddler maximizes the length of their stroke before hitting the catch.

“Ready, Ready” Command used by steersperson/drummer to prepare crew for race start - paddles buried in water at beginning of stroke phase.

Recovery The final phase of the stroke in which the paddle, following the exit, is snapped forward to the catch position.

Rotation The stroke phase that involves trunk rotation in order to maximize reach.

Rushing Occurs when a paddler’s timing is ahead of and out of sync with the rest of the crew.

Steersperson The person located at the stern of the boat responsible for steering and giving the crew commands, preferably someone with sailing or boating experience. A minimum of two dragon boat practice sessions are required to acquire the skills necessary to steer the boat.

Stroke Refers to one cycle of the paddling motion. Also refers to the first two paddlers in the front seats who set the pace for team.

Stroke rate The paddling pace, the number of times the paddle goes through the water in a minute. Rates can vary from 40 to over 80 depending on the intensity of effort. The crew’s optimum rate for racing is determined by the coach.

Swinging The bad habit of dropping the top hand into the boat on the recovery phase thus causing the bladed to swing out over the water. This inefficient technique prevents the achievement of higher stroke rates necessary for racing.

“Take it Away” Command given by drummer/steersperson to begin paddling, usually follows command of ‘All Up’.

Top Arm Drive To maximize the catch, the top arm is driven down aggressively burying the paddle. The top arm continues to push down until the end of the stroke.

Turbo Refers to paddlers at back of the boat. Paddlers in the back seats must catch the water very aggressively because the water is moving faster and is harder to get a good hold.

Set Command to place paddles in a position across laps with blades out over the water in preparation for the 'All-up' command

Six-Sixteen A common race start technique consisting of six hard strokes followed by sixteen faster strokes.

Series Race strategy whereby crew pulls harder for 10-20 strokes.