

2011 Dragon Boat Report

2011 was a good year in the dragon boating community. There were many highlights to be celebrated, and a few disappointments. One thing at a time.

Equipment:

We began the year with 35 paddles. Each of the paddles was refinished, and 8 new paddles were ordered; four 45 inch and four 46 inch. All 43 paddles had SARP burned onto the blade. Since that time, another 47 inch paddle resurfaced from someone's closet, and two 46 inch and one 48 inch paddle have disappeared, presumably into someone else's closet. There are 41 paddles at the compound and 38 PFDs. Inventory: four 45", ten 46", twelve 47", fourteen 48", one 49"

Membership Numbers:	Female/male
19 - 29 yrs	2/0
30 - 39 yrs	2/0
40 - 54 yrs	17/2
55 - 65 yrs	19/4
65 + yrs	23/4
Totals	63/10

Although future membership drives need to focus on all age categories and genders, it is very apparent which ages and gender are in the minority. Perhaps the under 40 categories, and the male population in general, should be the priority focus over the next couple years.

Dragon Boat Festival

The Dragon Boat Festival was a huge success this year, thanks to Susan Hind, who took on the ominous task of registrations and team recruitments, and to the huge number of individuals who volunteered their time in the many different areas that resulted in a smoothly run festival. The weather was perfect, not too hot, and no wind. 23 teams participated this year, each team running 3 races. To ensure fairness, each team ran one race in each of the three lanes, which helped even out the chances when all three boats were not consistent and each lane faced different challenges. It was a long day. Races began at 8:00, and except for the carnation ceremony, ran through until 4:30 without a break. It will be very difficult to expand the festival without changing the lane locations, or adding lanes, or using matched boats.

Teams

The Pink Piston Paddlers practiced Wednesday evening each week, and participated in the Salmon Arm Festival and the Penticton Festival. Dragon Tao practiced early in the morning on Tuesdays and Fridays and attended the Salmon Arm Festival and Harrison

Festival. Hot Knots practiced Monday and Wednesday evenings, and attended the Salmon Arm Festival, the Harrison Festival, and the Penticton Festival. All teams enjoyed successes. Throughout the course of a normal week, there are many times when the boats sit idle and could be taken out.

Changes For Next Year

It is hoped that Dragon Tao and the Pink Piston Paddlers will continue next year. The Hot Knot team no longer exists as it did. Almost half of the team travels in from Sorrento and the North Shore. A decision was made to acquire a boat and paddle out of the Blind Bay area.

Two school groups, a church youth group, a Girl Guides group, and a small group of foreign students were taken out in the dragon boats over the course of the season. These small tours had no effect on the memberships this year.

The open house held in Canoe in May was a huge success, and a number of new people tried out the dragon boat experience. Many individuals liked the try out, and a couple paddled with a team at a later date, but increases in membership were minimal, if any.

Clinics – paddling, coaching, steering

Clinics were not put on this year, but should again be strongly considered next year as a means of increasing the membership numbers and expanding the team possibilities.