



Cork Dragons – Information for all members

Welcome to all new and old members and we hope you enjoy paddling with us. Don't worry if you have never paddled before we welcome all new members. While we are primarily a team of breast cancer survivors, male and female, we have also expanded to include other cancers and friends and families of those affected. Our aim is to promote dragon boating as a sport, to raise awareness of breast cancer, to support our members in their mental and physical fitness and to have fun.

Cork Dragons was recently established in 2012. The initiative was the brain child of Canadian Sports Medicine Specialist Don McKenzie and is supported by a steering committee made up of the HSE, Health Promotion Department; Cork ARC House; Meithal Mara (who supply the boats and coach the crew) and The Prince Clinic, specialists in treating lymphoedema. Traditional thinking emphasised rest and compression of the area for lymphoedema sufferers. However, there has been a turnaround in this thinking and now exercise is encouraged. The paddling movement itself is believed to help

alleviate and in some cases prevent lymphoedema, a complication for many patients following breast surgery. If you are recovering from breast cancer, we recommend a minimum of three months after completion of therapy before beginning this sport and as with any exercise to take medical advice before signing up.

The Cork Dragons have their own committee and welcome all help in relation to training, fundraising ideas, sponsorships etc.

What you need to know before you step foot in a dragon boat

Equipment

Dragon Boat - The dragon boat is made up of 20 paddlers with a helm at the back to steer the boat and a drummer in the front to keep time – a total of 22 max. people per boat. We have fibreglass paddles for member use.

Personal Flotation Device (PDF) – every member will be issued with a PDF when they join as a member for the first time and it is that members responsibility to look bring their PDF with them every training session. We have spares for new members and in various sizes. If paddling you need to select one that matches your body weight as they should fit snugly and not slide up when you raise your hands in the air. If in doubt ask for help as it is vital for your safety that your PDF fits you properly. Your PDF must

- Always be worn whilst on the pontoon or out on the water
- Be the correct size
- Be securely fastened

Clothing – just some guidelines on what to wear or bring to a dragon boat training session :

Tracksuit bottoms or stretchy pants/shorts so that the legs of the pants do not trail in any water in the end of the boat (no denims as denim gets very cold when wet). Trainers, waterproof jacket and a hat. Waterproof trousers are always handy if it rains. Thin layers are a good idea under your jacket so that you can layer up or down according to the weather and to prevent overheating or in cold and wet weather that body temperature could drop very quickly. Some paddlers wear a paddling glove for better grip on the paddle. Sun cream and hand disinfectant are of obvious benefit while out on the water. For those for whom lymphoedema is a concern compression sleeves are recommended and should be worn at every training session.

Bring water bottles to prevent dehydration.

A complete spare set of clothes and towel can be kept in your car in case you get cold and wet.

A container or dry bag is kept on the boat for keys, phones etc

Cork Dragons have an official uniform that consists at present of a black cap with red dragons logo and grey jacket which can be ordered from the Chairperson Caroline Warren at a subsidised price of €25.00. Black pants and white body warmers are worn for competitive events.

Paddling Etiquette

- A minimum of 10 people is needed to take the boat out and as at presents we are - dependant on Meitheal Mara for the availability of helms, boats and extra life jackets. If you wish to join us training on a Tuesday night you **MUST** text the Cork Dragons phone on 087-937 5193 to book your place on the Monday evening 6pm latest so that the Captain and Vice Captain can organise the training session. If you have not booked your place and there is only 1 boat available you will not be able to go on the water if the boat is already booked up.
- There is a lot to organise very training session/regatta re.life jackets, tides, helms, safety boats etc and we ask that if you receive a text from the Dragon phone please give us the curtesy of **replying ASAP**; a simple Y/N will suffice so we can confirm numbers to Meitheal Mara.
- For insurance reasons we need all Cork Dragons to fill out Membership forms (available on the www.corkdragons.ie website – an annual fee of €50.00 and to sign the Daily Register at every training session before we go on the water. Captain Helen Mc Cauley or Vice Captain Mark O’ Connor will have the list of members on the Attendance Sheet and will collect €2.00 per training session for members or €5.00 per session for non members.
- If you are new to the training session please let yourself known to Captain/Vice Captain/Chairperson and let them know if you have any concerns re. paddling that we need to be aware of e.g. asthma, epilepsy or heart conditions or if you feel unwell during a paddling session or become very cold or any physical difficulty you should let the helm/captain know at once

Training

- Training on the water takes place on a Tuesday evening outside the Boardwalk Bar and Grill Restaurant and we ask that all members are there for 6:30pm **SHARP** to register and start the warm up session to loosen up muscles before we go on the water. Arriving late or leaving early delays everyone else in the boat. We aim to be out paddling every Tuesday night from April to October (weather dependant: in is not normally considered bad weather!) and after the cool down training sessions aim to be sitting in the Boardwalk Bar and Grill for a cuppa and a catch up by 9:00pm.
- Saturday morning walking sessions have also started at 11:00am at Blackrock Castle cark. Please text the Dragon phone on 087-937 5193 so that we can confirm numbers to the restaurant for the refreshements and catch up after the walk (approx..7km)

- Throughout the winter indoor classes are held in Douglas Ballet Theatre with personal trainer extraordinaire Carie Skinner Tuesday night Bootcamp 7pm – 8pm and Pilates 8pm- 9pm.
- We would hope, depending on numbers, to have two boats on the water for Tuesday night training. For some dragons training is a competitive, physical activity and for others it is more of a social event who would much rather take the training at a slower pace. Please let your helm know which training style suits your health and ability and we will try and facilitate it.

Health and Safety

Remember that you are responsible for your own well being and need to ensure that you are capable of taking part in a training session.

- Paddlers are expected to behave responsibly with the equipment and during the activity. There are safety measures in place to keep all members safe and these are non negotiable regardless of the capabilities of the individual paddler.
- Swimming ability – everyone taking part in dragon boat activities should be confident when floating in cold water and wearing a personal flotation device. Ideally each member should be able to swim at least 50m unaided when dressed in light clothing and tread water without a PFD for at least 3mins.