

CCDBA Steering Class

Paddles up! Take it Away!



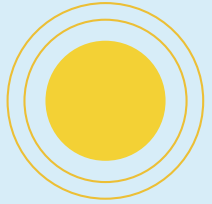
MANUAL OVERVIEW



This class provides essential information for anyone taking on the responsibility of steering a dragon boat in practice and in competition. Reading our steering manual carefully will give a steersperson an understanding of the boating rules and CCDBA's safety guidelines.



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From the mouth to Shark’s inlet



Introduction

The steersperson is in charge of the boat – not the caller, the coach, nor the captain. While on the water, the steersperson is responsible not only for steering the boat in the right direction but also for the safe operation of the dragon boat and for the safety of everyone onboard. This requires knowledge of boating safety, safe boating practices and the rules of navigation for Morro Bay Harbor or for a given race situation



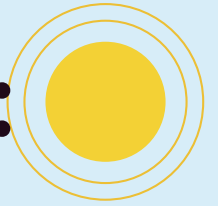


01

Procedures and Responsibilities

Safety is everything!

Steers are in charge of safety of:



**the
crew**

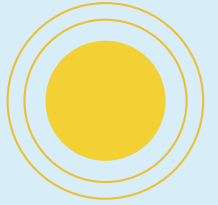
**the
boat**

**others on
or in the
water**

**CCDBA's
image**

wildlife

Steers must know:



**Number on
the boat**

**Strength of
boat**

**Hazardous
medical
conditions**

**Weather
conditions
& tides**

**Take it
away**



Before leaving the dock:



- Check the condition of steering oar, oar bracket and boat in general; do not use faulty or unsafe equipment.
- Make sure lights are functioning and placed in the proper position (stern light is white - fore port light is red and fore starboard light is green) when paddling in low light or at night.
- Verify that a throw line and hand held radio are in the boat.
- Make sure there are balers throughout the boat.
- Make sure there is a whistle onboard - (have one attached to PFD).
- Make sure your standing area is clear of gear and debris.



Before leaving the dock:



- Verify that everyone on board is properly wearing an approved PFD. Load seats 10 - 7 first, then 1 - 4 finishing with seats 5 and 6. One paddler from seat 5 & 6 should hold the boat by sitting on the dock and stabilizing the boat as the paddlers board.
- Brief the crew on safe behavior and what to do in the event of swamping/capsize.
- Determine mid-boat relay of commands
- Be sure that the boat is loaded properly (max persons not exceeded, weight distributed evenly - side to side and front to back; in conjunction with coach). An unbalanced boat is an unsafe boat.





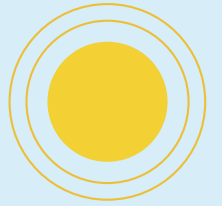
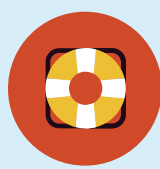
Returning to the Dock

- Be prompt; other teams may be waiting for your boat.
 - Do not cut across heavy traffic to return to the dock.
 - Have paddlers hold the boat at least two (2) boat lengths from the dock to reduce speed and coast in. Apply power and draw/pry strokes as needed to safely dock the boat.
 - Unload seats 5 and 6 first with one paddler holding the boat to stabilize. Then unload seats 4-1 then 7 - 10. Unloading the back seats last will prevent the boat from rising above the dock..
 - As a courtesy remove all items from the boat and bail excess water using sponges as necessary.
- Return throw rope, hand held radio and lights to the storage closet.





Physical Skills

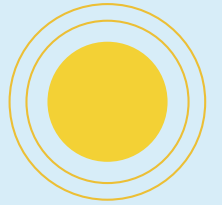
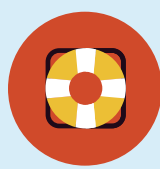


- Safely load and land from dock or beach
- Maintain a straight course at full racing speed with a full crew of 18-20 paddlers plus a drummer in a variety of weather conditions.
- Steer a figure eight course around two buoys at normal speed with a full crew, in both directions, or in the absence of buoys, steer a set course which includes both left and right angled turns.
- Execute sideways maneuvers without going forward (prying & drawing).
- Turn the boat 360° in both directions without the use of paddlers.





Physical Skills



- Maintain forward course in a straight line without the use of paddlers.
- Steer the boat in reverse for 50m with the use of paddlers (oar is in water just for correcting direction).
- Execute an emergency stop (from racing speed to full stop).
- Secure the boat using a cleat and half hitch knot and ensure all gear is put away correctly.
- Stand while steering to have a better 360° awareness of the boating area continuously.
- Keep your knees slightly bent with one foot forward. Do not bounce or lunge with the boat.
- Have footwear that will not cause slipping.



Process to becoming a CCDBA Steers:

The CCDBA Board Safety Officer (the Vice President or qualified designee) must determine that a steersperson has sufficient skill before he or she can steer solo (without an instructor on board). The Board Safety Officer will maintain a list of approved steerspersons.

Steps to being a Steers for CCDBA:

- Contact CCDBA's Safety Officer
- Attend a land-class session on steering. Offered every quarter or upon special request of 3 or more interested persons.
- Have at least 6 practice sessions of steering experience supervised by a certified CCDBA steering instructor.



Process to becoming a CCDBA Steers:

- Have at least 3 solo practice sessions signed off by a coach or certified CCDBA steering instructor. (See Practice Certification Test for checklist)
- Sign off on having reviewed all material in this manual - (see signature page).
- Be familiar with a California Boater guide. (Available at: [california boater](#) or Harbor Patrol office)



Note: CCDBA's safety officer has the discretion to waive some training requirements for persons with demonstrated boat handling experience (i.e. captain's license or other certificate show steering ability).




Qualifications:



- Sixteen years or older
- Clearly see with both eyes
- Clearly hear with both ears
- Clearly project voice
- Unrestricted use of arms and legs
- Ability to stand for one hour and physically capable of steering a dragon boat for one hour
- Ability to give our dragon boating commands
- Demonstrate ability to command & control up to 20 adult paddlers under stressful conditions and adverse weather
- Knowledge of USCG rules of navigation on inland waterways
- Knowledge of CCDBA Safety Guidelines

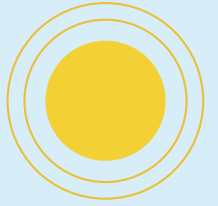
THE STEERSPERSON IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MAKING SURE ALL NAVIGATION AND SAFETY RULES ARE FOLLOWED

Safety - Our 1st Priority

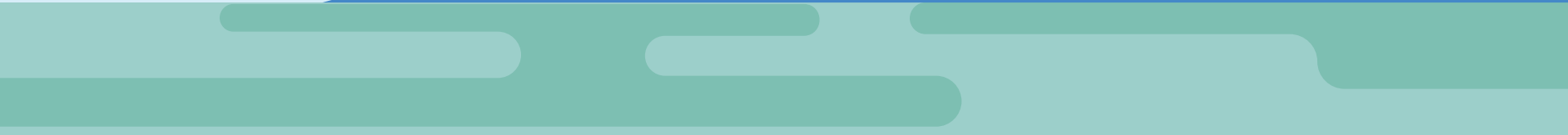
- Scan the area in all directions to look for other water traffic or obstacles. 
 - Know where the channel is and the traffic patterns of the channel
 - Be aware of kayakers, SUPs, other paddle crafts, surfers, divers and swimmers. Stay at a safe distance from them, and provide assistance if they are in distress.
 - Give Sailboats the right of way. Be sure to give them lots of room.
 - Point the bow in the direction you want to go signaling your intentions early and clearly.
 - Assign a mid-boat relay to repeat commands
 - Use the commands and wording consistently.
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Safety - Our 1st Priority

- Project your voice with authority to the front of the boat. Physically point your mouth towards the front of the boat. If you give a command while your head is turned away from the front of the boat most paddlers won't hear you.
- Allow plenty of time to give a command; paddlers may not be ready and may delay executing the command.
- Provide a short explanation of your intention to the boat: "Let's move away from the dock..." "We're drifting towards shore..." followed by your command.
- Be Courteous on the water

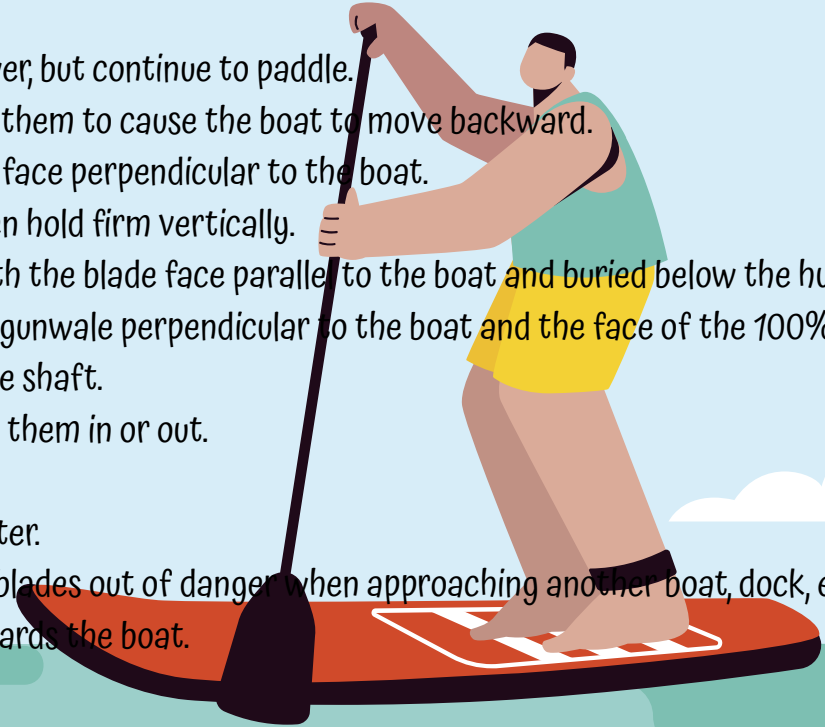


Stay inside the Harbor



Steering Commands

- **Sit ready:** All paddlers sit solid in their seats and prepare to receive the next command.
- **Paddles up:** All paddlers put paddles in the front position.
- **Take it away:** All paddlers start paddling.
- **Paddle easy:** Paddlers refrain from paddling with full power, but continue to paddle.
- **Paddles Back** (take it away): Paddlers put paddles behind them to cause the boat to move backward.
- **Hold:** All paddlers place paddles in the water with the blade face perpendicular to the boat.
- **Hold hard:** All paddlers drive blade doing a backstroke then hold firm vertically.
- **Hold for drift:** All paddlers place paddles in the water with the blade face parallel to the boat and buried below the hull.
- **Brace the boat:** All paddlers place the blade shaft on the gunwale perpendicular to the boat and the face of the 100% of the blade flat under the surface of the water with pressure on the shaft.
- **Bumpers in(out):** Paddlers near the dock bumpers move them in or out.
- **Let it run:** All paddlers stop paddling.
- **Debris port/starboard:** Paddlers watch for debris in water.
- **Watch your blades port/starboard:** Paddlers move blades out of danger when approaching another boat, dock, etc.
- **Draw** (port or starboard): Named paddlers draw water towards the boat.
- **Pry:** The opposite of draw. Push water away from the boat.





Considerations



The Wind

- Wind speeds above 20 miles per hour will cancel all CCDBA on-water activities
- Wind speeds above 15 miles per hour is cause to seriously consider cancellation of activity especially when the tide is against the wind.


The Tides

- Know the direction and the strength of the tidal flow. It's important to know both the direction and speed of the tide.
- Head against the tide and return with the tide.
- If winds are strong and opposite the tides, start practice going against the stronger force and returning with the stronger force.
- Remember - only go out if you are confident that the paddlers in the boat have the strength and skill to have a safe practice.

The Water Temperature

- Usually in the 50's - in case of capsizing or someone falling overboard, return to land immediately.

The Weather

- Know the forecast between practices
 - Boats will need to be pulled out of the water onto the dock during strong NorthWest winds.
 - Lightning will cancel practice - return to dock immediately during a thunderstorm.
 - Hazardous conditions may require boat's safe return to land no matter where in the harbor the boat is
- 



Considerations



- **The Bay**

- Know the location of the boat in the harbor at any given time during the practice.
- Know where it drops off for depth and where it is shallow - be cognizant of the tide - do not go in shallow areas on an outgoing tide!
- The harbor mouth and sea state - high surf will make the front of the bay less desirable because of swell.
- Pass at the stern of moored boats.
- Do not stop in the middle of the channel.
- Keep boat to starboard side heading north and port side heading south

- **The Customs of the Bay**

- Respect outriggers and their course lines.
- Respect fishing boats and their fishing lines.
- Yield right of way.
- Five short whistle blasts alert other boats to a dangerous situation.
- Beware of wakes - and the ricochet of wakes.
- Try to orient the boat to take waves at a 45 to 60 degree angle. Slow the paddling and if need be, stop the boat and/or brace the boat.
- When crossing the path of another vessel the boat on the right is the stand on vessel (which means they have the right of way). The other vessel should stop or slow down.





Questions?