

Racing Etiquette

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Intent

This Racing Etiquette document sets the standards that we expect from all members and supporters participating in or supporting competitive racing events.

These guidelines for competitive events supplement and reinforce, not replace, existing DCC codes of conduct and any rules or guidelines published by Race Committees. Crews and supporters are strongly advised to make themselves familiar with all the rules governing an event they have entered. If there is any contradiction the Race Committee's rules should be followed.

The Sponsor for Racing Etiquette is the Racing Coordinator.

The basic standards for DCC members:

- We will compete in a fair manner at all times;
- We will do everything possible to avoid boat to boat or boat to person contact;
- No paddler is more important than any other: we will give adequate space on the water to less experienced crews;
- Every crew has a responsibility to avoid an accident, but any overtaking boat has a specific duty to keep clear of others at all times;
- We expect fast boats to behave considerately and responsibly towards slow boats, not the other way round;
- Behave to others as you would like them to behave towards you;;
- If we see someone in the water in safety related difficulties it is our absolute duty to help them.
- We do not support confrontational or aggressive behaviour;
- We will co-operate fully with Race Organisers and Officials, respecting all requests and decisions.
- Listen and adhere to the instructions given at the pre-race briefing.
- Prior to getting on the water at a race event, make sure your boat is not causing an obstruction to foot traffic or vehicles. Particularly emergency vehicle access.

On the water.

- Faster paddlers should think and look ahead;
- Slower crews should expect to be overtaken and thus paddle "off centre" to allow a bigger space on one side for other crews to pass;
- If you are approaching a slower crew advise them which side you intend to pass and be patient;
- Make allowances for the different skill level and experience of novices;

- Be prepared to give way to other water craft. Don't put your safety (or theirs) at risk;
- Be considerate to any waterfowl on the water, especially if they have young.
- Friendliness and courtesy has a positive effect on everyone. Remember that DCC is a 'friendly club' and we want to maintain that reputation.

At Portages

- Faster paddlers should not barge or expect slower paddlers to get out of their way;
- Communicate your intentions to other paddlers e.g. "we're going long/short" but be prepared to adapt;
- Don't block other crews (especially if you are a slower crew). Get into and out of the boat as quickly as possible and move away from the side;
- If you want to rest get out of the way. Don't delay anyone else's entry into the water by holding on the side to feed;
- Slower crews should have a quick glance behind when coming in to a portage. Talk to those around you and be tolerant.

Support Crews

- Be considerate and respectful to other paddlers and water users. Treat other paddlers as you would want your crew to be treated;
- Encourage your crews to keep the rules, especially if they are tired and stressed;
- Help other crews in difficulty.
- Be prepared to offer general assistance to any paddlers at road crossings;
- Don't allow your kit and equipment to become a trip hazard on the portage
- Park safely and considerately at all times.
- Minimise support crew numbers and vehicles as far as possible and be aware of Race Committee instructions about support crew (DW and Watersides in particular).
- Never get between any crew's boat and the water at a portage launch point. You will get little sympathy if you get wet.
- Follow all instructions issued by race organisers. It is becoming common to penalise paddlers for support crew misdemeanours. This won't make you popular.
- Keep the noise down at night.

When It All Goes Wrong

Competitive Paddlesport is generally conducted in a safe, fair, friendly and supportive manner. Occasionally crews and supporters make mistakes or errors of judgement due to over-enthusiasm or ignorance of the rules. Remember that we can only regulate our own conduct; we need to let Race Committees regulate the conduct of others. If you see a clear breach of the rules, safety issues or unsporting behaviour then report it to the Race Committee within the time limits established in the rules. Do not intervene with other paddlers or crews.

DCC will support Club members who have fully complied with our codes of conduct and any rules pertaining to a specific race should they need to make an appeal (or defend against an appeal) made to race committees.