

Long Zhou eNews

龙舟新闻



The Official Newsletter of the International Dragon Boat Federation

国际龙舟联合会官方实时通讯

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PRESIDENT'S NEWS

Welcome to the second edition of Long Zhou News the only official newsletter of the IDBF.



The final part of the 13th IDBF World Dragon Boat Championships for Premier and Senior crews took place in Kunming China. The Championship got off to a wonderful start with an absolutely amazing opening ceremony with beautiful dancing by many of the ethnic groups from the YUN Nan Province.



There was some exciting racing from the 2000 competitors from 22 countries. As always, the finals of each competition class were hotly contested and all the results can be found on www.idbfchamps.org.

The various Nations cups were presented at an emotional closing ceremony to:



China – Nations Cup
Canada – Senior Cup
Canada – Women's Cup

In the concluding part of the ceremony the IDBF Flag was passed from China to Thailand for the next World Championships in 2019.



2017 Congress Meeting

The following morning the IDBF members assembled for the 16th IDBF Ordinary Congress where 32 countries were represented.



During my welcome address as President I expressed our appreciation to Mike MacKeddie-Haslam for all the work he has done in the development of dragon boating around the world. He was presented with a glass plate in appreciation and members were informed that council had awarded him the title Founder Honorary President in recognition of his magnificent contribution to Dragon Boat Development. Mike MacKeddie -Haslam deservedly received a standing ovation.

The agenda included the elections for Vice Presidents and the General Secretary and following were elected:

Vice Presidents:

Mr Fan Guangsheng (China)

Mr Raymond Ma (Hong Kong)

Mr Matt Smith (Canada)

Ms Julie Doyle (Ireland)

Mr Peter Járosi (Hungary)

Senior Vice President Claudio Schermi retired having served 3 terms, he was appointed Honorary Vice President and thanked for his considerable contribution to the sport.

Mr. Peter Tang (Macau) was re-elected as General Secretary.

Some very important decisions were made by the members in Congress which included a number of changes to Statues and Byelaws which established a number of new commissions with the following Chairs:

Athletes Commission	Sue Holloway	Canada
Women Athletes Commission	Ellen Law	United States America
Sport for All Commission	Xu Jusheng	China
Para Athletes Commission	Nigel Bedford	Great Britain
Youth Commission	Patrick Cosgrove	Great Britain
Entourage Committee	Barbara Michaels	United States America

Congress also approved the inclusion of the Code of Ethics in our Statues and the Executive Committee have appointed the members of the Ethics Committee.

These important changes will assist in our application for IOC Recognition and we will inform the IOC officers of these changes.

In a Council meeting before Congress the International Ice Dragon Boat Federation (IIDBR) was accepted as an Associate Organisation and we were delighted that the President, Mr Luo, and two Vice Presidents, Ms Sue Holloway and Mr John Brooman were in attendance at Congress to make a Presentation about ice dragon boating to the assemble of IDBF members. There will be some thrilling Ice Dragon Boat competitions early in 2018 in Canada and China.

Congress also received updates on the preparations for our next two Championships in Hungary 2018 and Thailand 2019.

Bids for 2020 and 2021 were presented and the bid by France for the CCWC in 2020 was accepted. Hong Kong presented their bid for 2021 which would be at a new location and very different from the venue from 2012. The site is located near the old airport at a venue being developed for watersports. The bid by Hong Kong was provisionally accepted pending site inspections.



An important open discussion took place concerning future cooperation with the International Canoe Federation concerning points from the joint statement issued by the IDBF and ICF following a meeting in Hong Kong in June.

The following points were made during the discussion:

- Acceptance that one Championship is in the best interests of athletes
- That 2020 was too early to organise a joint championship, there were a number of reasons for this which included the need to establish a joint selection policy for consideration. The timing of the introduction of a joint Championship needs to be considered carefully as countries with a large number of clubs have detailed qualification time frames.
- Members wish us to have further discussions with the ICF before committing to a joint Championship

A further meeting took place with the President of the ICF at the Sport Accord Convention in Lausanne where it was agreed that a joint Memorandum of Understanding would be prepared which would include the recognition of the independence of each Federation.

2017 has been a great year for Dragon Boating around the World:

- Puerto Rico hosted Pan American Championship with every race televised via satellite TV.
- The Junior World Championships in Divonne les Bain had the largest Junior entry to date.
- The 13th IDBF World Dragon Boat Championship had 8 hours of live television – our thanks to CCTV5

We look forward to 2018 which will be a very busy year with two major events for dragon boaters:

IBCPC Participatory Dragon Boat Festival in Florence, Italy July 6-8

11th IDBF World Club Crew Championship in Szeged, Hungary July 17-22

In closing, may I take this opportunity of wishing you the compliments of the season and I look forward to seeing you all in 2018.

Mike Thomas
IDBF President

International Breast Cancer Paddling Commission (IBCPC)

IBCPC gets voting rights

The IBCPC has been, since its establishment in 2010, a Commission of the Competition and Technical Committee (C&TC) of the International Dragon Boat Federation (IDBF). The IBCPC is the governing body for its own regattas and has no voting status within the IDBF. The Commission has been allowed to be present at the IDBF Congress but it does not have neither voting rights nor a seat at the Council table.

At the IDBF Council meeting held at the 13th World Nations Championships in Kunming, China on October 24, 2017, it was agreed IBCPC, along with the International Ice Dragon Boat Federation (IIDBF) and other associations, would become associations of the IDBF which would give the IBCPC a seat at the Council table and more rights to a voice on IDBF matters. This is a good outcome as it will allow the Commission to be heard and to have IBCPC racing regulations incorporated at the International level.

The Congress had 22 items on the agenda ranging from financial reporting, Continental Federation updates, by law amendments and presentations of proposals from various countries for the next four years of World and Club Crew events. Knowing the dates of these upcoming events is helpful for the IBCPC in determining the years in which we will look to hold our forthcoming IBCPC Participatory regattas.

The Congress also approved our regulation regarding the criteria for entry into IDBF international breast cancer events which is: the definition of breast cancer paddler means: you must have had a diagnosis of breast cancer and the team must be 100% breast cancer paddlers which means: all crew; including paddlers, drummer and steer are all breast cancer survivors.

A visual representation of who we are

Occasionally we receive comments from individuals for not including different types of cancers in our festivals. This movement has proven that with a defined exercise program people treated for breast cancer do not have to avoid repetitive upper body exercise. **Dr. Don McKenzie**, first coach and founder of this movement chose dragon boat paddling because it is a strenuous upper body exercise and almost all members of a breast cancer dragon boat team have had invasive treatment to her/his upper bodies. We want all those struggling with treatment who watch us from the shore to know that every person in a breast cancer dragon boat has been treated for breast cancer. If we can do it, so can they. We are a visual representation of that reality and we now have the support of the IDBF for this principle.

Florence Festival now aligned with IDBF Championships

A number of the competitive IBCPC member teams have been asking about being eligible to enter other competition events around the world. We have also been asked if we can work closely with the International Dragon Boat Federation (IDBF) to better align the timing of our events so that those who wish to paddle competitively can attend other events.

We have aligned our IBCPC Participatory festival in Florence July 5 to 8, 2018 with the 11th Annual IDBF Club Crew World Championships (CCWC) in Szeged, Hungary, July 17 to 22, 2018.

We want to give you a guideline as to whether you should consider entering this event. The CCWC's are **NOT** a participatory event and in most countries you need to have qualified to be eligible to attend such an event, as the competition is fierce and fast paced. In order to preserve

the integrity of the event it should be the best teams from your country that enter these competitions.

For instance your team should have competed at a regional and preferably a national event and have been in the fastest three finishers in their final races.

Your members should also have been a part of the competing team for at least 6 (six) months prior to attending the event.

If you are interested in attending this event please send an indication to Meri Gibson, Vice President IBCPC, vicepresident@ibcpc.com Meri will be liaising with the IDBF C&TC to ensure a BCS category is included.

Jane Frost & Meri Gibson
IBCPC

International Ice Dragon Boat Federation (IIDBF)

The International Ice Dragon Boat ('IIDBF') Series has confirmed the dates of their Regattas as follows:

Inner Mongolia, China 9 - 11 January 2018

Tianjin, China 13-14 January 2018

Ottawa , Canada 20 February 2018

The possibility of adding the following venues are currently being considered:

Lillehammer , Norway ; Montreal and Quebec, Canada ; Rovaniemi, Finland ; Budapest, Hungary ; Harbin , Yinchuan and Wuhai, China.

Further details and application forms are available via:

Website: <http://iidbf.org/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/International-Ice-Dragon-Boat-Federation-IIDBF-557733541060853/>



2018 IIDBF International Ice Dragon Boat Series in China

9th -12th Jan, 2018
DUOLUN CITY, INNER MONGOLIA, CHINA

12th -14th Jan, 2018
BAODI DISTRICT, TIAN JIN CITY, CHINA

12 men boat races
Up to 16 people a team
All genders (at least 4 female paddlers)

TRY ICE DRAGON BOAT RACES IN CHINA!!!
FREE BOARDING AND LODGING !
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Chaoyang Road, East Sanhuan, Beijing, China

Ottawa Ice Dragon Boat Festival

100 teams registered in record time for the second edition of the Ottawa Ice Dragon Boat Festival! Teams continue to sign up to the waiting list in hopes of gaining a spot to the World's largest ice dragon boat festival. Athletes have registered from California, New York, Pennsylvania, Vermont, Ontario, Quebec and more.

The Festival is partnering with the International Dragon Boat Federation Series, Canadian Heritage and NCC to present non-stop action in the Nationals Capital.

Athletes and spectators are once again expected to make history when they converge in Ottawa setting a new participation and attendance record for this exciting new event. The Festival expects to see cold weather and fast races creating a memorable experience for all involved. The Ottawa Ice Dragon Boat Festival is held 10 February on the Rideau Canal Skateway, Dow's Lake.

Ottawa Ice Dragon Boat Festival



Tim Hortons' Ottawa Dragon Boat Festival

Registrations are now open for the 25th Anniversary of the Tim Hortons' Ottawa Dragon Boat Festival which is held 21-24 June 2018.

Spectacular for both participants and spectators alike, the Dragon Boat Race is a much loved cultural and sport event that reflects the spirit of competitiveness, inclusiveness, sportsmanship and team work. The Tim Hortons' Ottawa Dragon Boat Festival is the largest dragon boat event in North America with 200 teams competing in competitive and community races. Sport teams compete for supremacy in the Sue Holloway Cup, named after famed Canadian Olympian. Breast Cancer Survivor teams compete in their own race and are celebrated with a flower ceremony and full evening dedicated in their honour. These are just 2 of the many races that are highlighted over the 4 days.

Celebrating its 25th anniversary and having recently become the first stop in the newly created International Dragon Boat Professional League. The Festival is excited to invite teams from outside North America to join them for this momentous year by offering free registration to the first 25 teams to register.

Ottawa Ice Dragon Boat Festival



The Japan Dragon Boat Association

Introduction

In 1988, the dragon boat sport in Japan originally started, and in 1992, the Japan Dragon Boat Association (JDBA) was established. Since then, dragon boat racing in Japan has developed very rapidly in many areas throughout Japan. In 2002, the JDBA succeeded in inviting the “5th Asian Dragon Boat Championship Race” at Aioi city in Hyogo Prefecture. The success of this event has given the JDBA a power and energy to work with the ADBF and the IDBF for further development of the dragon boat sport.

In 2006, the JDBA welcomed Madam Kiyoko Ono as a President, the bronze medalist in women’s gymnastics at the Tokyo Olympic Games in 1964, who has rendered great contributions to overall sports development in Japan. She made many important contributions in her roles as Minister of State, Chairman of the National Public Safety Commission, advisory capacity to the JOC, President of the Japan World Games Association, Japan Anti-Doping Agency appointee, and a Vice President of the ADBF. In 2016, she was awarded the most distinguished award by the IOC, “Grand Cordon of the Order” for her past endeavours and contributions to the IOC.

2009 was a big turning point year for the JDBA. Since the establishment of the JDBA, JDBA has been successfully upgraded in the organizational status from that of a “private organization” to a “corporation” in September, 2009. This made the JDBA active more officially, and more importantly, helps the JDBA obtain governmental subsidies more easily.

The origin of boat races in Japan

It seems true that traditional boat racing in Japan was originally influenced by China. Boat racing in Japan took place mainly as a festival for fishermen for the purpose of praying to the Gods for a safe voyage and good fishing, whereas boat racing in China was performed on rivers and creeks to pray to their God of Agriculture. Japan is surrounded by the sea and boats played an important role in people’s lives. Boat owners and boat builders tried boat races to check the performances of their boats and show-off their boat building skills. This is how traditional boat racing developed and continued up until now.

Dragon Boating today in Japan

About 300,000 dragon boat sport population, including 3,000 paddlers in 70 JDBA registered teams. They form clubs all over Japan and are enjoying the dragon boat sport throughout the year. These club teams are made up of private companies, youth in local communities, hobby groups, students, etc. These club teams are the main power behind local races and are contributing to spreading dragon boating in Japan, and also some of the teams are making oversea expedition every year including ADBF and IDBF Championships.

Main active dragon boat races in Japan

- 1) Ujigawa-Genpei Dragon Boat Festival.
Sunday, May 7th at Uji River, Uji city in Kyoto.

The distance of the race course was 200 meters and more than 60 teams made entries to enjoy heated battles. Uji is a small city situated between Kyoto and Nara, two of Japan’s most famous historical and cultural centers. Two warring clans called, respectively, the Genji and the Heike had a big battle at the Uji River in 1184.

In commemoration of this historical battle, a 2-small dragon boat race named “Genpei Ryushu (dragon boat) Festival” is held every May. The “Byodoin Temple”, world heritage, is located only some hundreds meters away from the racing course, and many tourists’ attention turned out to the dragon boat races being held nearby. Uji city is also famous for superior quality of green tea.



- 2) The Tokyo Dragon Boat Race
 Sunday, May 21st at Odaiba, the bay area in central Tokyo.

Odaiba is a popular shopping and entertainment district on a man-made island in Tokyo Bay. It originated as a set of small man-made fort islands, which were built towards the end of Edo Period (1603-1868) to protect Tokyo against possible attacks from the sea and especially in response to the gunboat diplomacy of Commodore Perry. [<http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e3008.html>].

The race site is on the beach and this race is a preliminary round for the final Japan Championship that is held in Osaka in July. Participation saw teams from varied industries such as restaurants, clubs, as well as international teams competed on the 200 meters sprint course.



- 3) The “Sakai-Senboku Small Dragon Boat Race”.
 Sunday, June 18th at Takaishi city, located at the southern part of Osaka, closer Kansai International Airport (KIX).

The main industries of the city is towels (spinning factories), shell works, glassworks, and fisheries are the main industries of the city. The venue is within the Hamadera prefectural park, and the race is conducted at 2000m straight regatta course. The distance of the race was 250 meters for small boats only.

This event was run by the Osaka Dragon Boat Association, and along with the development of the event, they ordered and received two brand-new small Champion dragon boats in November, 2017.



- 4) Japan International Dragon Boat Championships (dedicated to Tenmangu Shrine)
 Sunday, July 16th at the Okawa River, central area of Osaka city.

The Tenjin Festival of Osaka is ranked as one of Japan's top three festivals, along with Gion Matsuri of Kyoto and Kanda Matsuri of Tokyo. The main celebrations are held including land procession and a river procession with fireworks. The fireworks of the Tenjin Matsuri combined with the illuminated boats and their reflections off the river make for a truly unique spectacles. [<http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e4023.html>].

The race distance is 250 meters only, and more than 50 teams made entries both to Standard and Small boat categories. The Japan dragon Boat Championship started in 1988 at Okawa River dedicated to the Tenmangu Shrine along with the Tenjin Matsuri to decide the Japan's Champion, and the winners of the races are eligible for the ADBF and/or IDBF Championships being held next year. Publication and pray for the safety of the race by the Oracle and Miko is performed in Shinto style at the opening ceremony.



- 5) KIX International Dragon Boat Festival
 Sunday, August 27th at Kansai International Airport (KIX). Izumisano city, Osaka.

The KIX Dragon Boat Festival was organized between two runways, No1 and No.2 within the premises of the Kansai International Airport. We included small boat category from this year onward to motivate more teams to join the race. One of the key features of this festival is that airline teams on top of international teams make entries every year. We received entries from CX, JL ANA, and teams from HKG and Singapore this year.

Every year different airline teams fly over to the KIX to seek for friendship by competing on the 200 meters straight course. While teams are racing on the water, many domestic and international airplanes are taking off and landing off only hundreds meters away from the racing course.



- 6) 5th Small Dragon Boat Championships
 Sunday, October 29th at Otsu city, Shiga Prefecture.

Lake Biwa is 670 Square kms, the biggest lake in Japan, and Small Dragon Boat Championship race was organized at the Professional Motor Boat Race Arena located in the Lake Biwa. The venue is only 15 minutes by train from Kyoto city. More than 60 teams from all over Japan and Canada team played exciting races to compete on 200 meters course. 10 kilos of Shiga Beef and 30 kilos of rice were awarded as a prize to the winners.



Compiled (text and photos) by Makoto Shobu
 Japan Dragon Boat Association

Cyprus Dragon Boat Federation

The II Intercontinental Dragon Boat Festival was held in Torrevieja, Spain on the 11th and 12th of November 2017.

This was a landmark for the Cyprus Dragon Boating Federation, as the Limassol Spartans Dragon Boat Club participated and won four medals in four different categories.

Racing against strong and competitive teams from America, Canada, Italy, Spain and United Kingdom the Limassol Spartans did themselves proud.

The ladies' team, in the small boat category - competed against eleven other crews and won Gold. Silver medals were also won by the open category - standard and small boat.

The mixed small boat won Bronze.

The club from Cyprus was ranked 2nd among the twelve clubs from the six countries that participated.

Within the framework of this event, eight Dragon Boat crews mixed with paddlers from six other countries and broke the Guinness World Record for the most distance covered by Dragon Boat in 24 hours – they paddled 266 Km and set the new record.

(The previous record was held by Hong Kong and was 247km)

The Limassol Spartans had twenty one paddlers who helped break the Guinness World Record. The results of the team can be considered a triumph for the team itself but also for the Federation and for Cyprus sports.

It is important to be noted that our Federation is a newly founded federation in Cyprus.

It was founded in 2008 and within just nine years has managed to establish itself in Limassol and to bring to Cyprus significant results in international events.

In 2017, Dragon Boat teams have been formed in Larnaca, Paralimni and Nicosia.

Dragon Boat is a team sport, ideal for all ages and interests. It can be practiced either by Athletes who wish to compete in major events or by people who wish to paddle for fun.

For more information about the sport and the Dragon Boat teams in Cyprus, please contact our Federation via email cyprusdba@gmail.com and through Facebook [@CYDBA](https://www.facebook.com/CYDBA)

CYPRUS DRAGON BOAT FEDERATION



Synchro Paddle: The Data-Driven Future of Dragon Boating

Link to YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Oh0-Vg7rgg>

Dragon boating is a fast-growing water sport. Such growth requires innovation to match, and solutions which fit the needs of a rapidly evolving talent base. Synchro Paddle is set to take the dragon boating world by storm.

Polaritas has been a central figure in the field of water sports innovation since its founding in 1984. The rowing, kayaking, and paddling courses at the Athens 2004, Beijing 2008, London 2012, and Rio 2016 Summer Olympic Games were all outfitted with Polaritas Albano cables and automatic starting systems, ensuring the accuracy and standardization of all races.

Polaritas is the only official and certified Starting System Manufacturer Partner of ICF. Polaritas is a certified Supplier Partner of FISA.

Synchro Paddle was developed in Budapest, Hungary, and hit the open market in Autumn 2017. Its moving water tank design and computerized metric analysis provide a level of technical proficiency currently unparalleled in the field. Synchro Paddle was optimized to accommodate the intensity of competition.

Synchro Paddle measures 5.5m (18ft) by 1.1m (4ft), and weighs 287kg (632lbs), making it a considerable space factor within a closed boathouse. It is designed to fit eight dragon boaters at once for competitive racing. The system allows for workouts while under capacity, so a race can be launched and Synchro Paddle can collect valuable performance data with just one or two athletes training on the system.

Synchro Paddle can be calibrated to races of 200m, 500m, 1000m, and 2000m. This variable length feature allows for interval workouts, and allows for the training of cardiovascular capacity across variant periods of exertion. Races can be logged and recorded, and are stored in Synchro Paddle's memory for later retrieval. The metrics from these races can be studied for performance reviews by athletes and coaches together.

Synchro Paddle allows both dragon boaters and coaches to monitor performance through a number of data points, including real-time stroke charts, pace, and rate measurement. This data can be retrieved to assess the performance of each competitor, and can be referenced to assign rankings to athletes following practices. This objective style of measurement is an asset to the coaches who choose to add Synchro Paddle to their repertoire, and allows data to bolster the decisions involved in selecting contestants for top-tier races.

Data provided by Synchro Paddle's computer includes tempo (strokes/minute), and distance travelled (in meters). They are provided in an easy-to-read display (shown below). These metrics, over time, allow coaches to see trends in the performance and racing styles of their competitors – a feature proven to be invaluable in competition at the top level.

Synchro Paddle's key strength lies in its moving water tank. The tank contains eight rotating paddle pieces stacked around a vertical central column, each of which is assigned to an athlete's handle. If an athlete is off-time, they can feel the difference in their timing through a difference in the tension of their handle. This virtue owes itself to water momentum, and perfectly replicates the feeling of pulling a dragon boat. With hours spent on Synchro Paddle, a team will be ready to go to the races – even if wintry conditions have kept the docks in the warehouse and the boats off the water. The feeling of pulling on the cord improperly is easy to recognize and easy to fix. The feature draws a racing team closer together, and makes the feeling of the collective stroke more recognizable. This could provide the edge a team needs to take the last few seconds of a tight-fought 200-meter race, where millimeters count on all angles.

The moving water tank's rotating column design also allows for single athletes to train on Synchro Paddle alone. The momentum of the water tank can be driven by a single individual. This feature makes Synchro Paddle an excellent option for teams who do not have reliable athlete turnout, as the system can be trained on with any number of racers.

Synchro Paddle features a stroke chart which provides a graphical display of the real-time power output of each athlete. This can be seen on the provided computer monitor. Performance can be adjusted to match the numbers seen on the screen. The stroke chart also displays a real-time representation of the side of the boat which is outperforming the other. This is invaluable while creating rankings and performance charts on a competitive team.

Statistics and big data are the emerging future of business, industry, and sports. With Synchro Paddle, land training for dragon boaters is distilled to a question of data science. Coaches now have access to data which has been inaccessible in the past, creating a new field within the training circles of dragon boating. Data will prove to be the present and future of the top echelon of dragon boating, and the teams that adopt it will prove themselves to the world on the racecourse. With Synchro Paddle, data metrics and real-time land racing are made available, practical, and accessible. With Synchro Paddle, Polaritas gives teams the edge they need to win.



Fig. 1 – Synchro Paddle allows for intense, cooperative workouts.



Fig. 2 – Athletes watch their data as they compete on Synchro Paddle.



Fig. 3: Synchro Paddle is fun!

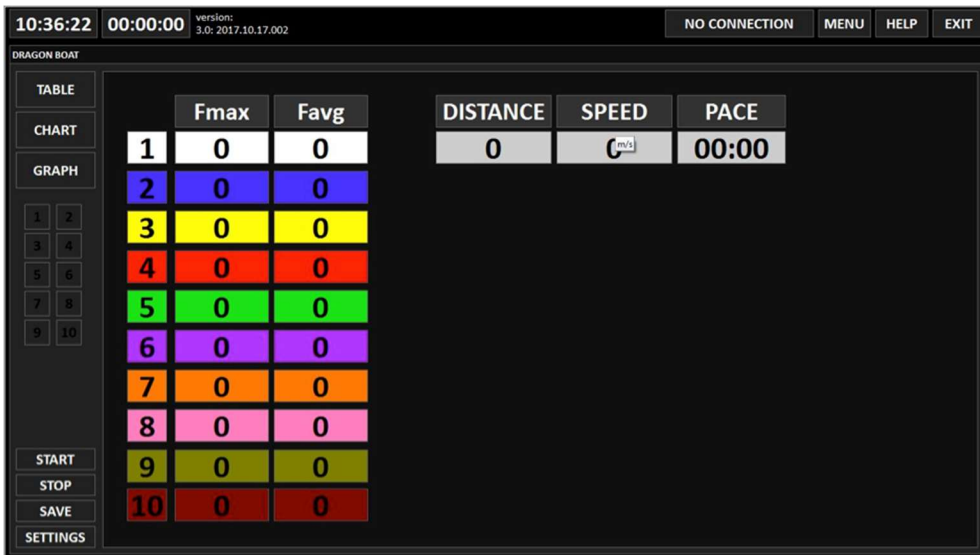


Fig. 4 – The chart displaying performance data.

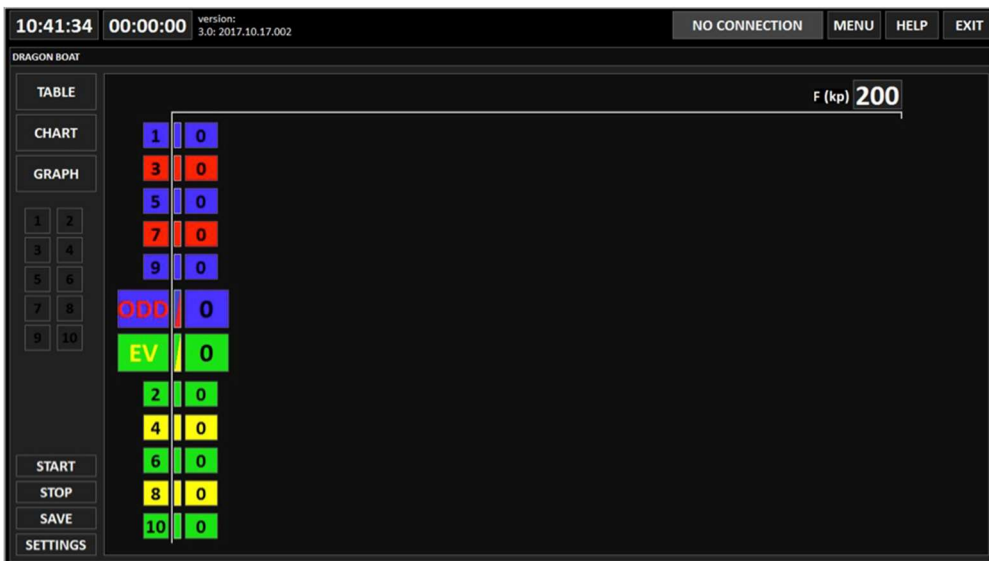


Fig. 5 – the chart displaying stroke force for each athlete.

Know your IDBF Race Officials – Wang Jian Nong

Mr Wang is from Hunan, Yueyang. This is the same place as where the 1st IDBF World Dragon Boat Racing Championships was hosted in 1995.



When you are not officiating, what do you do?

I work in a Sports Education Institution as a Principal and been in this same position for 10 years. Students are between 10 - 18 years old. The school mainly offers Shooting, Kayaking, Rowing, Weightlifting, Judo, Taekwondo etc... All of which managed by respective teachers and I look after all of them.

Are your family members involved in Dragon Boating too?

My partner was once a Race Official too. That was also during the local races in Yueyang. I do not have grandkids yet but I have a daughter who graduated from a Sweden University in Psychology. She is currently working in Beijing as an analyst for overseas education studies.

Impressive, you must be so proud!

Yes, I am. We are all in the businesses about people. We love interacting and communicating with people. My lover too, she's a department head of another Sports Education Institution.

What got you started with the sport?

It all started in 1987 when my hometown in Hunan, Yueyang started organising a local dragon boat race. The following year, the town evolved into running international dragon boat events. Amongst those years, there were more than 10 domestic races within China which I was invited to officiate. Above them all, I had the opportunity to officiate in the Asian Championships, East-Asian Championships and the Asian Beach Games. I came straight into the sport as a Race Official never as a paddler.

That's interesting, so when you became a Race Official, what was your first role? What were the challenges you faced?

I started as a Race Starter! I remembered the first time I did it; I felt that the rules and regulations were neither complete nor holistic. So, when races were run, when something goes wrong, I do not have a set of clear rules to back my decisions. Even the participants didn't know if they did anything right or wrong. Hence we just laugh our way out from any situation. It was easy to manage because all were locals and I knew everyone.

How many times have you participated in an IDBF Championships as an International Official?

Not including Asian Championships, this is my 7th time involved with IDBF World Championships/World Cup.

1995 WDBRC1 – Yue Yang, China
2004 WDBRC6 – Shanghai, China
2005 WDBRC7 – Berlin, Germany
2010 CCWC – Macau, China
2014 WCC1 – Fuzhou, China
2016 WCC2 – Wujin, China
2017 WDBRC13 – Kunming, China

What were your usual departments in the IDBF Championships?

I am usually at Starts, Boat Marshalling and I have also played the role as Chief Official in 2004 WDBRC, Shanghai. It was a great memory and Mike Thomas was my partner in arms then. I supported him as the Asian Chief Official. In recent years, I am doing more Judging & finishing.

After being so active in so many roles, which is your favourite and most challenging department?

I can't really pin point which is my favourite department. Every department is different with Boat Marshalling as one of the toughest. The department with the less amount of stress is definitely at Finishing because, once you match the races' position and time, you just send it out and you're done. This job is now even easier because of our technological advancement in photo finish cameras. It was tougher when we were using manual stop watches for the published results.

My most challenging role is definitely the job of the Chief Official. Not only I've to manage the races, I need to manage the people/officials by their personalities, uphold the rules of the federation, troubleshoot the limitations of the race site and to fulfil the requirements of the event organisation.

In your opinion, as an IRO, is there any learning from an IDBF Championship?

Yes, there is so much we can learn from IDBF. In the development of Dragon Boating by IDBF, one key aspect which I think we can learn would be its effort in professionalism. Since its inception in 1991 till now, no matter what Championships, which continent its presence is in, what rules it has amended, how the races were organised, IDBF's level of professionalism is very high.

The second thing which I think IDBF has done really well and we should all realise is the usage of our sport as a platform for multi-cultural exchanges and interactions. This helps tremendously in the improvement of our communication between nations and federations.

These are areas which all of us in the sport has to learn from. It is really about people. We must never forget that.

How about China, what do you think we can learn from the races here?

In China, our development of the sport seems to be faster. Main reason is the idealistic advancement into the Olympics. One of the key factors would be broadcasting. Because of that, the expectations for competitions are much more complex and strict. Time and flow of races are critical. You would have probably noticed how much attention our Chinese organisers and officials have given CCTV in this championship. The relationship with the media is something we are more familiar with at the moment. I believe this could be an area IDBF can explore further.

In this time of age, regardless from which spectrum of the sport, we cannot ignore the power of the media. We need the media to push our boundaries, not only making us more popular but stronger financially. If we have the finance, our federation will be easier to manage; our races can be much more elaborated. Selling of broadcasted advert spaces can supplement the expenses of competing teams. In China, we have the viewership, so sponsors are more willing to invest. An area which I hope IDBF can step into a deeper consideration in the near future.

How do you see our sport progress in the next 5-10 years' time?

It doesn't matter if its 5 or 10 years, as long we can set a common goal, everyone in the world will have a good grasp of where we are heading towards. Whether we want to be part of the Olympics, a world governance of the sport or even a strong brand of its own, we need that direction. Year by year, we run a club crew or a world championship, over time with progress, the development will seem stagnated.

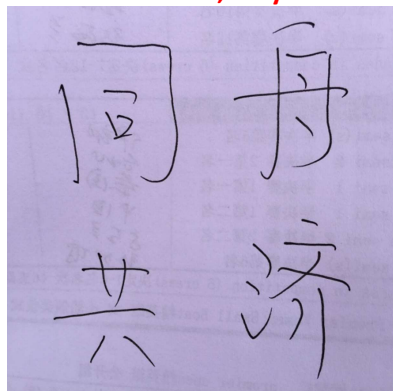
Let me give you an example, when a kid goes to school he knows he study to get good grades for an advancement to a better high school. Thereafter, he continues to strive harder so he can go to a better University. After University, he shortlists and identifies what career he wants to be in. What is the salary like...what are the prospects available?

There is a direction, a purpose, an end goal. Like any organisation, country. We need that clear direction and guidance. IDBF should work out a 5-10 year plan and under the discussion of the council members; deliver the concise plan to congress for their execution. In the plan, the respective departments or representatives can work on it systematically. Even so, it would be great if the participants and paddlers in the community know about this direction too.

When you want to inspire someone new to dragon boating, what would you say?

For Dragon Boating, we need to use our heart to experience the sport. Trying the sport is the first step; the second step is, only thru participation we will get to feel the spirit of teamwork, unity, camaraderie, better exchange in communication and understanding. There we will learn how to face challenges and failures together, enjoy success and achievements together.

Last but not least, do you have any motivational wisdom for everyone before we end this interview?



“Tong Zhou Gong Ji”

A Chinese saying: “Everyone paddles on the same boat, enduring hardships together, rejoicing success together!”

Interviewer: Jason Chen

To contribute to The Long Zhou eNews, email your article in Word or photos (don't forget to advise what they were from) to newsletter@idbf.org