

# **RACING FOR ROOKIES\***

## **And Non-Rookies**

### **What You Need To Know**

#### **PREPARATION**

1. Make appropriate travel and accommodation plans.
2. Make a list. Pack all essentials. Don't wait until the last minute to do this.
3. If you do not have a paddle and PFD, borrow one from TRRA. Sign out the items and get the PFD with the logo from the locker. There are paddles and vests at the races but you don't want to use them.
4. Bring food and water. Don't rely on getting these things at the race. Water is expensive and food may not be what you are accustomed to eating before racing
  - a. About a gallon of water should suffice for a normal day.
  - b. Food should be familiar to you and easily digestible. Trail mix, peanut butter, fruit, protein bars.
5. Bring a chair or a blanket. It is a long day
6. Remember your butt pad. You don't need cushioning but just something to stop you from sliding on your bench. You can't pull hard when you are slipping.
7. Other things to remember: sunscreen, hat, something to do between races, jacket, dry clothes, hand sanitizer, extra toilet paper (occasionally the port-a-potties run low).
8. Bring a copy of the team roster. You may need to reach someone on the team.
9. There will be a team meeting at the hotel on the evening before the race to discuss car pooling to the site, last minute issues, etc. if you can't make it, have a contact to fill you in.
10. Put all your gear together the night before the race. Check it once and then twice! Tim Schaus tells us this reduces stress the morning of the race.

#### **RACE DAY**

1. Get a good nights sleep before (and days leading up to the race), and eat a light breakfast.
2. Know where you are going and what time you need to be there.
3. Pitch in to set up the race site. We take our banner, a canopy, and tarp.
4. Check and double check what races you are in and your seat assignment. The seating may change for each race. Remember: ALL positions in the boat are important!
5. Know your race number and listen for announcements. Marshaling starts 30-45 minutes before the race. WE WILL LEAVE WITHOUT YOU.....IT HAS HAPPENED.
6. Warm up to get your heart rate up and break a sweat before your race. Water warm up is minimal and you will not perform well if you are not warm. Team warm ups will take place around our tent.
7. KNOW THE RACE PLAN. Know the start and count. You may not be able to hear the calls.
8. Rest when you can. We need all your energy.
9. Hydrate well and use the facilities early. It is a balancing act. Don't wait until the race is called. There is usually a line.

## **RACE STRATEGY AND LINE UP**

1. Know your seat and the race plan.
2. Listen to marshaling instructions.
3. See your competition but remember they are your competition.
- 4. Look strong. You are!**
5. Board the boat safely but quickly. Have your PFD on? Help your seat mate.
6. Once in the boat, **NO TALKING.....EVER!** Listen to the steerer and drummer for instructions. Coaches or captains will answer questions.
7. Listen to calls. Don't question, just do it
8. Feel good about being on this great team whether you are in a bench, on the drummer's seat, or on the sidelines. Take pictures if you are not paddling in a race.
9. Support, encourage, and cheer each other on.

## **RACING**

1. At the starting line follow commands from the steerer and drummer, not the linesman.
2. **STAY FOCUSED AND KEEP YOUR EYES IN YOUR BOAT!!!!**
3. **BE READY!** That means legs and core engaged before the gun. The start can happen when you least expect it.
4. Paddle the race like practice. A mistake novice racers make is trying to paddle harder than you have trained. We need you for the whole race so don't run out of gas.
5. Be quiet. Listen. Count. Pull hard. Stay in time.
6. **BREATHE!**
7. Go very hard at the finish. Empty your tank.
8. Relax and enjoy the experience. Trust your technique. Keep your head up.

## **AFTER THE RACE IS OVER.....**

1. Briefly celebrate.
2. Acknowledge your competition.
3. Then **BE QUIET** and listen to commands. Getting into the dock can be challenging.
4. Disembark in an orderly fashion and help your teammates.

IF YOU HAVE QUESTION, PLEASE ASK!

**WE ARE THE PITTSBURGH PADDLEFISH!**

**TEAMWORK. CAMARADERIE. POWER.**

Adapted from: Personal experience, The Pittsburgh Paddlefish Team Handbook by Frank Petrich & Kathi Robinson-Dassel, and The Rookie's Guide to Surviving World Championships by Bob Mina

*Paddles Up!*

*Marie Hirsch*

*revised June 2016*