

Team Captain Information Package

**JOIN US ON SATURDAY, MAY 23th, 2026
FOR OUR 9TH ANNUAL
WILDWOOD DRAGON BOAT CHALLENGE!**



This package contains information for Community Team Captains and anyone interested in forming a first-time or returning community team for a fun, active, and meaningful day at the lake.

The Wildwood Dragon Boat Challenge is a one-day community event, held at the Wildwood Conservation Area just east of St. Marys. It was created to bring people together through fun, teamwork, friendly competition, and community connection — no previous paddling experience required.

Community teams are the heart of this event.

Many teams are made up of friends, families, co-workers, or local organizations who:

- Practice just once
- Race only at this event
- Spend the day laughing, cheering, and surprising themselves with what they can accomplish together

Proceeds from the event support the Thames River Paddling Club equipment fund and Andrew's Legacy, our long-time community partner. Funds raised for Andrew's Legacy go toward placing AEDs (automatic external defibrillators) in public spaces, helping save lives in memory of Andrew Stoddart, who passed away at age 15 due to sudden cardiac arrest while playing soccer in Kintore.



More information about Andrew's Legacy can be found at:
<https://andrewslegacyforever.ca/>

The Thames River Paddling Club includes members ranging in age from 11 to 75+, paddling at all levels — from recreational to competitive. Events like this help grow the sport while creating an unforgettable experience for the wider community.

So... What Is Dragon Boating?

Dragon Boat Racing is the ultimate team sport. It's energetic, inclusive, and surprisingly easy to learn — especially for first-time teams.

A dragon boat holds:

- 20 paddlers (you may race with 16 - 20 paddlers)
- 1 drummer (calls timing and keeps the team together)
- 1 steersperson (provided by the event if needed)

Most community teams have never paddled before — and still have an incredible race day.

Teams at the Wildwood Dragon Boat Challenge compete in a variety of race formats designed to keep racing fun, exciting, and engaging for all skill levels, including:

- 300m Qualifying & Final Races
- 100m Knock-Out Sprints (short, back-to-back races)
- A 1km Flag Catching race for top teams

No experience is necessary! Our coaches can have your team race-ready with just one on-water practice. Success in dragon boating is based far more on teamwork and coordination than strength or athletic ability. Whether your goal is a fun day out, supporting a great cause, team bonding, or a bit of friendly bragging rights — dragon boating offers something for everyone.



STEP ONE: GETTING STARTED

- Select a Team Captain, who will be responsible for:
 - being the team's contact person for the event & relaying information to the team
 - handing in paperwork and attending the Captains meeting before the first race

You're not on your own! Our organizing team is here to help guide you through every step.

- The Team Captain should familiarize themselves with the sport of Dragon Boat Racing and other event details, refer to our website:
 - www.thamesriverpaddlingclub.com/wdbc
 - Follow our Facebook page for updates: www.facebook.com/wildwoodchallenge
 - Training and practice information is available online

STEP TWO: RECRUIT YOUR TEAM

- A team usually consists of 16 - 24 members:
 - Your team shall provide the drummer
 - We will provide a qualified steersperson, if you require, for a small fee
 - You must have at least 8 female paddlers in the boat for each race (the
 - Everyone ages 11 and up are welcome to participate!

Not Enough Team Members?

This is common! Business teams can invite family, friends customer to round out their roster - and still count as a business team.

Or reach out and we may be able to pair you with another team!

- Recruiting Ideas Include: Hosting a short information meeting at work, posting on social media, and encouraging coworkers to sign up together as a team activity. You can also post or use a signup sheet (template available).

STEP THREE: REGISTER YOUR TEAM

- You can register your team on our website: www.thamesriverpaddlingclub.com/wdbc
- Waivers, available on the website, must be submitted prior to your practice.
- Do not delay! Any teams registered after team #16 may be placed on a waiting list. The final team registration deadline is May 9th, 2026.

- Your Team Entry Includes:
 - An on-water practice with one of our trained coaches
 - Multiple races (typically 4 - 7)
 - All equipment
 - A full day of entertainment, food and activities
 - Support for Andrew's Legacy
- Entry Costs are as follows:

Registered & Paid By:	Cost:
Early Bird - March 7th	\$800
Final - May 9th	\$900
Youth Team - all paddlers are 18 or younger	\$200 off the above price
Distance Team - based 100km away from Wildwood	\$100 off the above price

Additional practices and a steersperson for race day is \$40 each.

Youth & Distance Team Discounts cannot be combined.

STEP FOUR: BOOK YOUR PRACTICE TIME

- All inexperienced teams are to complete **just ONE fun, coached on water practice** - that's all you need to be race-ready. Additional practices are available.
- Practices are available in the two weeks leading up to race day.
 - Coaching and a steersperson is included.
 - Practices are at Wildwood Conservation Area, park entry is FREE for participants.
- Book your practice on our website, first come first serve.

STEP FIVE: CHALLENGE

- Challenge another business, organization or club to a friendly challenge:
- Special awards and Challenge Cups are up for grabs for the top team in specific categories, based on demand. A minimum of 3 teams is required per category, some of these categories may include:
 - St. Marys Community - teams with at least 16 members who reside in St. Marys, Perth or Oxford County but not Stratford or Woodstock.
 - Best Team Spirit
 - Emergency & Medical Service Team
 - Manufacturing or Construction Team
 - Professional Service or Business Team
 - Youth Team - all paddlers must be 18 or younger
 - Women's Team - all paddlers must be women, drummer & stern may be male
 - Suggest your own challenge!



Custom Team Shirts

Show Your Team Spirit on Race Day

Custom team shirts are a great way to build team spirit, look unified on race day, and take home a lasting memory of the Wildwood Dragon Boat Challenge.

What's Included	How It Works	Important Details
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prices starting at \$16 per shirt One large or a medium & small print included (e.g. medium back + small front print) Custom designs available Wide range of styles to choose from (t-shirts, tanks, dry-fit polyester, and more) Proceeds support the Thames River Paddling Club. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team Captain collects sizes via provided online form for your team Artwork proofs provided for approval Ready before race day! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please order by: April 28 to avoid delays

GERBER'S GRAPHICS
Proudly provided by long-time event sponsor

Questions or Ready to Order?
Contact Gerber's Graphics!
Email: info@gerbersgraphics.com

STEP SIX: RACE DAY

- Arrive early on race day. The Captains Meeting and Eye Dotting Ceremonies will happen approximately 1 hour before the first race (typically between 8am and 9am)
 - Team members should be on site at least 1 hour before their first race
- The announcer will call your team name approximately 15 minutes before your team is required in marshalling.
 - Team Captains should check the results board for updates and ensure their team is in marshalling 30 minutes before your race time. This time is needed to collect paddles, load the boat and paddle to the start line.
- Set up a team tent and enjoy your day
- There will be a BBQ booth, music and games for the whole family to enjoy! As well as a silent auction supporting our causes and an event merch booth to take home a lasting memory of the day.
- A race schedule will be sent out 1 - 2 weeks before race day.
 - Slower teams can expect to finish their last race between 1:30pm and 4:30pm
 - Top teams will participate in the 1k Flag Catching race scheduled to end by 5pm

Approximate Schedule

Captains Meeting - 8:00am

Eye Dotting Ceremony - 8:30am

Games, Kidz Zone & BBQ Open - 9:30am

First Races Begin - 9:00am

Lunch Break - 1:00pm

100m Knock-Out Races Begin - 1:40pm

Award Presentations - Throughout the day & Finals at 5:00pm