

HAWAII DRAGON BOAT ASSOCIATION

Dragon Boat Care and Maintenance

HDBA Dragon Boats are made of the highest quality materials, however, like any quality product they must be properly maintained.

Care of the Gunwale

The care of the gunwale is extremely important. The gunwale is the wood upper edge of the boat. This wood edge comes varnished, but due to wear and weather the bare wood will become exposed. When this happens you must reapply a new coat of quality varnish containing UV filters. It is better to use thin multiple layers rather than one thick layer of varnish. All wood areas on the boat should be protected this way.

1. **If the wear is mild**

Step One: Sand the entire gunwale lightly with fine grit sand paper.

Step Two: Re-varnish by applying multiple coats of varnish, allowing each coat to thoroughly dry before applying the next coat.

2. **If the gunwale has become damaged by the sun and weather**

Step One: Sand the entire gunwale down to the bare wood (what kind of sandpaper) and re-varnish the entire gunwale with a quality varnish.

Step Two: Varnish with multiple light layers to provide the maximum protection. Allow each coat to thoroughly dry before applying the next coat.

Care of the Hull

The hull consists of two layers, an inner and outer hull, these two layers are placed one within the other with a small separation between the hulls. It is important you understand this method of manufacture, so proper storage can take place.

The care of the hull is extremely important. Scratches, which allow the bare fiberglass to become exposed, need to be taken care of immediately. Large areas of damage due to collisions or other accidents must be repaired properly. A good fiberglass repair shop can take care of these types of damages. Small scratches to the gel coat can easily be taken care of with the purchase of a gel coat repair kit.

Transportation of the Boat

The transportation of the boats is also important. The boats should be carried or placed on a kart when moving the boats to and from the water. Do not drag the boats over the sand or other surfaces.

General Care for your boat

- During the paddling seasons, boats should be cleaned and dried. Do not let standing water accumulate inside the boat. This should be done after each days use.
- The boats should be covered with a cover. This will prevent sun damage to the gunwales and reduce the amount of maintenance needed on the wood.
- Make sure to check the inspection ports on a regular basis to see if there is any water accumulating. If so use a pump to dry this area out.
- If there is a small amount of water, don't worry as this is normal. If there is a large amount of water check the hull for damage.

Storage for your boat

For boats that are not used during the off-paddling season, it is important to properly store the boat.

1. Boats should be cleaned and dried.
2. All wood should be cleaned and varnished, if needed, prior to winter storage.
3. If the boats are stored out in the environment, they should be covered or turned upside down using cradles, with the weight of the boat sitting on the seats at the brace points.
4. Open the inspection ports to allow the boat to completely dry.
5. In areas that are susceptible to freezing weather, care must be taken not to allow moisture to stay between the hulls.