

Season Wrap-Ups Festival Reports Giving to AZDBA



ARIZONA DRAGON RIDERS

The AZ Dragon Riders kicked off the 2022 season after a long two-year hiatus from Covid. Initially, we could only take out small boats, adhering to the social distancing rules. It was a struggle starting all over again, but we were able to build back a full team. Thanks to the resurgence of the AZDBA Dragon Boat Festival in Tempe back in March, our boats were filled with enthusiastic paddlers who were excited about the sport!

The Dragon Riders competed in 4 Dragon Boat events during 2022 and are proud that we medaled in 2 of them. We are very pleased with the results and encouraged that our team will continue to improve in 2023.

- Marina Del Ray March 5-6, 2022 – cancelled due to extreme weather
- Tempe March 26-27, 2022
- Long Beach July 29-30, 2022, Silver Medal Division IIIA
- San Diego September 24-25, 2022, Bronze Medal Division B

At our last race in San Diego, we are so proud to have achieved a bronze medal in Mixed Division B. We were so happy that the ASU team won a gold medal in the same division! We made sure to cheer for each other and made new connections. In San Diego, Arizona had 2 top teams that brought home medals and represented our state. We were amongst the top 6 teams which is a great accomplishment.

We have enjoyed volunteering with AZDBA events. Our team participated in the set-up and take down of our home festival in March. We recently spent time at the Ironman Triathlon in November as bike pointers. What an inspiration to see athletes from all walks of life accomplish amazing athleticism. We also are excited to volunteer with the Super Bowl committee partaking in the NFL experience.

For the holidays, the AZ Dragon Riders look forward to doing community charity work. We are planning to support our local charities through feeding the homeless and we are also collecting toys for Banner Children's Medical. If you are interested in contributing, please bring a unwrapped toy to the Marina on Tuesdays or Thursday evenings when the Riders practice up until December 20th. We hope to brighten the tiny warriors' Christmas!

The CrAZy Cuddlefish in the LA County Dragon Boat Festival, their first race since the pandemic



Lastly, we enjoy bonding with each other both inside and outside the boat. Some of our teammates have participated in running events like the Phoenix 10K, the Scottsdale Half Marathon, and the upcoming Rock & Roll Marathon. We have done some dryland training together at bootcamp to further strengthen our abilities to perform. We will also have a year-end family friendly Holiday celebration to reflect and appreciate our fellow teammates. It truly has been a special year for the Riders, and we look forward to what 2023 brings!





Arizona Gila Dragons

PRINCETON

As the Gilas were celebrating their 20th anniversary in 2022, the club decided to pick an extraordinary destination location to mark this special milestone in Gila history. Hawaii was tossed out as the original destination idea, but due to the lingering aftermath of Covid, Hawaii DB race organizers decided to postpone the festival for another year. Princeton, New Jersey, was then suggested by Coach Peter, as it represented a location that the Gila's have never traveled to, and its proximity to NYC made it a very attractive trip for a celebration trip at the same time!

Coach Peter pointed out that many elite East Coast and Canadian Clubs (e.g., IDBF Premiere Team Head Coach Bob McNamara's PDBA club team from Philly, Catch-22 from NYC) would be in attendance and that we needed to bring our best A-game to even compete with some of these teams. The Gila's were entered into the Community Division 500m Mixed Division which is designated for clubs that compete in 3 or fewer festivals/races a year. The Gilas came in a respectable 3rd and 2nd in their preliminary heats, which earned them a spot in the A-Division Grand Final. It was a close race in the finals as only 2.5 seconds separated the first and last-place boats in the field of five. But these power-house east coast teams proved to be too much to overcome, and the Gilas did not medal. Still, we learned a great deal from the defeat and vowed that we would be back even better and stronger.

The next day, the Gilas organized an E-Bike ride through Manhattan, which many don't realize is only a 6 x 6-mile square. The group started off in Central Park, then bobbed and weaved south through NYC traffic, dodging cars and pedestrians with unnerving aplomb. Long-time transplanted Gila, Eric Mueller, astutely pointed out that in order to survive in NY, you need to pretend like you own the place (be confident and not timid). It was a fun and adventurous ride as we stopped at random brew pubs in fine Gila fashion, then stopped for lunch at Lombardi's, which is America's first(oldest) Pizzeria. The group wound all the way down to Battery Park, near Ellis Island (great view of the Statue of Liberty), visited High Line Park (situated directly above an elevated set of train tracks), stopped at the One World Trade Center, and got a chance to view the 9/11 memorial fountains.

-Ben Choi



Though the Gila's did not medal, the group came away with an amazing experience, got a first-hand taste of what east-coast Dragon Boat power is all about, then had a little bit of fun in celebration to wrap up their 20th-anniversary highlight trip for 2022.

SAN DIEGO

In the final competition for the 2022 season, the **AZ Gila Dragons captured the Mixed B-Division Gold** at the San Diego International Dragon Boat Race!

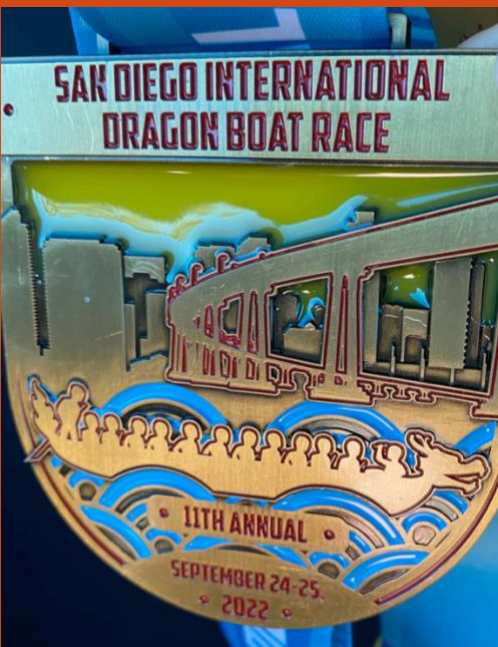
Having traveled back from Princeton NJ, the weekend before for our 20th-anniversary highlight trip, many Gila's couldn't make the San Diego race the very next weekend. We were still able to bring enough Gilas to enter the small (10-person) boat Mixed category on Saturday.

The conditions were windy and choppy that day, with some challenging gusts by late morning. Many teams' boats were flipping over throughout the day (11 boats in all) due to the wind and rough water conditions. A huge shout-out goes to our San Diego festival steerer (Karen), who steered for us the entire day and kept us calm and even-keeled in the boat! Being a resilient bunch, the Gila's made the best of it, adjusting the line-ups to compensate for the changing conditions.

We took home the Gold medal in the Mixed B division, getting the 2nd best time across all boats and across divisions A, B, C, D, E, and F in the Finals!

Congrats to the San Diego Gila Crew for finishing out the 2022 race season in grand style! It was a great celebration of our 20th anniversary as a club!

-Emily Sedillo





Dragon Boat at ASU

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY DRAGON BOAT CLUB

Hey everyone, it's Dragon Boat at ASU again! We would love to share our updates from the last few months!!

Most recently, a group of ASU Paddlers have just returned from College Cup – taking home a Bronze in Men's Division A and Silver in Women's Division A. Combining with LA, they fought hard and made our team proud. While this group was racing in San Francisco, our remaining paddlers went to practice Saturday morning to prepare for the Tempe Town Lake Festival. We have been training hard for these coming Tempe races and the new paddlers are excited to experience their first festival!

We also had our first fundraiser in club history at Panda Express. We will be holding more fundraisers in the next coming months so come out and support if you can! They will be posted on our new instagram handle – @dragonboat_asu

Leadership wise, we have undergone dramatic changes, each one moving our club forward. We are sad to announce our Head Coach, Chester Ho, has stepped down from his position. We wish him well in his future ventures. With this in mind, we are excited to announce our new Head Coach, Zachary Butler! Zach has been a long-time paddler, even getting onto the U24 team, and we are therefore eager to see Zach taking on the mantle of Head Coach! Additionally, an old ASU President, Queena Ly, has been promoted to Assistant Coach of our club. Past student paddlers such as Queena have set us up for success and continue to help our club in more ways than we can count. They show dedication and love for the club past their terms as students and set up a strong foundation for the new paddlers.

Our club has taken major strides this year and it continues to evolve and grow. If you're ever interested in joining in on practices, everyone is most certainly welcome!! Our practices are Saturdays 9 am and Mondays 6 pm. We have an open door policy all year round so don't be shy!!! DM us on our instagram with any questions.



ARIZONA'S YOUTH DRAGON BOAT TEAM



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AZDBA's

Youth Program

On October 1st, the CrAZy Cuddlefish competed in the LA County Dragon Boat Festival, their first race since the pandemic. This was also the very first race for many of our paddlers, so bringing home a silver medal was an awesome experience. They were so happy and had such an amazing time, that they are officially hooked to the sport! We are pleased that our team continues to recover and rebuild from the long break due to the pandemic. We are currently at 24 active paddlers and are eager to grow and continue to build AZDBA's youth program.

Recently, we had a group from the Foundation of Blind Children join us at one of our practices. It was a great time for the group of guest children

and their parents, as well as for our team, as this was a new experience for all of us. We are always recruiting new paddlers, but other youth groups are always welcome to attend any of our practices to give the sport a try. We practice on Sundays at 8:30 a.m.-10:30 a.m. during the cooler months and 7:30 a.m.-9:30 a.m. during the hotter months.

We could use more help to build our youth program, so if you love kids and are interested in helping even in the smallest way, we'd love to hear from you! If you are interested in joining or helping out with the team, please reach out to crazycuddlefish@gmail.com. Go Cuddlefish!





PFD
Phoenix Fire Dragons

Phoenix Fire Dragons returned to the water and to competition in 2022 in our usual fashion – small but mighty. We advanced to the Mixed Division A finals as a team for the first time at home at the 17th Annual Arizona Dragon Boat Festival. We also attended the San Diego International Dragon Boat Race, where we entered small boats in open, women, and mixed.

For our open and women division teams, we combined with some ASU dragon boaters and worked together to earn bronze in both Division A Open and Division B Women.

We’ve added some enthusiastic new members and enjoyed getting back together to train with our friends. As we wrap up our year, we will take December off from practices as usual, and work on team building through off-water activities, including a 5k run benefiting St Jude’s Children’s Research Hospital.





Team Blue

Team Blue is back at weekly Monday night practice and getting ready for the next AZDBA Festival in March 2023. Team Blue members are also volunteering for both the full and half Iron Man races to help AZDBA fundraise through volunteer hours.

SANTA FE

Team Blue attended the Santa Fe Dam festival October 1st. While there wasn't a specific division for adaptive paddlers, Team Blue competed in both the Public Works and Corporate divisions. Team Blue won third place in Public Service's Division A race and received medals. Our time in that 200 m race was 1.24.174 minutes. Special shout out to ASU, BCS and SunGi paddlers who joined Team Blue that day to help fill or balance our boats—we appreciate you!



FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS

The Festival of Lights Boat Parade at Tempe Town Lake is coming up on December 10th. Dragon boats always lead the yearly event's procession and this year the boats will be decked in a holiday Star Wars theme! We'll be decorating the boat in the afternoon and then start paddling at dusk. Coach Michele Laye is leading the fun so contact her if you'd like to help and paddle with us in the parade!

-Danica Tuxbury



Give to AZDBA

BOARD REQUEST

Don't forget to add **Arizona Dragon Boat Association** to your Amazon Smile! It doesn't cost you anything more. All you do is shop as you normally do, and Amazon will donate 0.5% of the prices of your eligible purchases to AZDBA.

For those of you who already have it selected, be sure that it is turned on. You must renew it every six months or it won't continue to donate to AZDBA. It's simple to setup. For your convenience, here are the step-by-step instructions on how to set it up.

From any web browser, go to [Smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com). Click on "Get started." This can also be done on your mobile device by following these instructions: Open your Amazon App. On the homepage of the app, click on the 3 horizontal lines on the bottom right corner of the screen. Scroll down and click on "settings" and then click on AmazonSmile. Scroll down and click on "settings" and then click on AmazonSmile.

You're all set! **Start your shopping from Smile.Amazon.com** and don't forget to go back and click the **ON button every six months** so that Amazon continues to donate to AZDBA. Every little bit adds up! Thank you all for your continued support of AZDBA!

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