

Publication: Miami Herald
Published: Monday, August 29, 2005
Section: Business Monday
Page: 29G

DRAGON BOATS ROW THEIR WAY INTO THE CORPORATE FIELD

Herald Staff

Dragon boat racing is all about group dynamics. The speed and efficiency required for the sport translate well from the water to the office, local experts say.

The off-site corporate retreat arena has a new player. **Dragon boat** racing has become one of the latest entries into the field of corporate team-building activities, according to local experts in the sport. In greater numbers, companies seeking to foster cooperation, communications and team spirit are handing out paddles to staff members.

It's all about group dynamics, speed and efficiency, traits that travel well from the water to the office. **Dragon boats** are typically propelled by 20 paddlers, in a two-by-two formation. To succeed, participants must focus on a common goal.

"When you all paddle together, the boat goes faster. You can liken it to your business," says Nancy Gates, president of The Competitive Paddlers Association of Florida and marketing director for Cleveland Clinic of Florida. "It's the best team-building sport."

To accommodate corporations and other organizations, local **dragon boat** racers are offering assistance and a playing field. Along with the general public, corporations both large and small are invited to schedule practice sessions at the Miami Rowing Club at Key Biscayne. Companies such as Ocean Bank, Swire Properties, BellSouth and others have paddled into the **dragon boat** racing arena, according to officials from the Miami Hong Kong **Dragon Boat** Festival.

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