



When did you pick up dragon boat paddling & why do you enjoy it?

I started paddling with the "German Dragons Singapore" three years ago. For me, it's a good work-out, balancing the mental work in the office with physical outdoor activity. Besides that, the team spirit is great & you get to know people.

What is required to be a good dragon boat paddler?

You need to be a team player, you need to learn the right technique, you need to be committed to train hard & obviously you need power & stamina to last until the finish line.

How often do you train?

Usually I paddle once a week, but I also cycle & swim to increase my strength & stamina. Before important races I join trainings up to three times a week, to improve the technique & the coordination with the rest of the team.

You are a member of the "German Dragons Singapore". What do you like about the team?

The "German Dragons Singapore" are a very international sports team. Obviously we have quite a number of members from Germany, but many are from Singapore, or even from Austria, Brazil, Canada, China, India, Japan, Malaysia, Netherlands, Philippines, Sweden, USA - Everybody is welcome to join our team!

Have you participated in any competitions & what was your greatest achievement?

Our team regularly participates in the Singapore River Regatta, but also many other races during the year. During the 23rd Singapore River Regatta we won Silver within the International Business Community. Our mixed team is very strong & we missed Gold only by two hundredths of a second!

Besides Singapore, have you participated in competitions overseas?

For me, the most exciting overseas race was in Penang, Malaysia. Our team joined the "Penang International Dragon Boat Festival". It's a totally different experience to paddle against national teams from other Asian countries. Of course our team doesn't stand any chance of winning against them, but it's great fun & a very international atmosphere...

Which is the most beautiful river that you have paddled in?

The Singapore River. Although it is cleaner these days, the Marina Bay area is a mix of fresh water & sea water. If you get water splashed into your mouth or your eyes it's not really pleasant. On the other side, you are rewarded with a really great view from the boat, especially at night. Unluckily the Singapore Dragon Boat Association does not allow paddling at night any more. We hope this will change.

What do you hope to achieve in this sport?

I just paddle for fun, for a good work-out & for socializing. Any medals are just a bonus on top.

What was the most difficult thing about dragon boat paddling when you first started?

There were no difficulties. You just have to get used to the initial blisters, the muscle aching & the tough training schedule. But all this is easy to cope with, especially if you know that you are part of a good team. The reward is a great work-out, good team spirit & friendships.

Are there any principles in dragon boat paddling that you can apply to your working life?

In terms of leadership, strategy development & implementation, yes. You can only have one leader in the boat. During the training period, the team provides feedback to the leader, & strategies are decided together. The strategies have to be clear to everyone in the team. Everyone has to work together, using the same strategy. During a race, only the leader gives instructions & sets the pace. A good team, working together in a coordinated manner, can achieve much more than it could otherwise.

What advice would you give a first time paddler or anyone who wishes to take up the sport?

Age & physical condition do not matter as much as the positive attitude, the commitment & the team spirit. Paddling is a team sport, so you should join a team that suits your needs. Some teams are very focused on winning, others are just paddling for fun. With the "German Dragons Singapore", you can get both. Some of us just join for the fun & some train very hard to win some medals at the races. Depending on your ambitions, commitment & performance, you can be a fun-paddler or a serious paddler. Just try it, it's really fun!