



Sons of Norway
HERITAGE PROGRAMS



IdeaBank#46

SONS OF NORWAY VIKING BOATS

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Sons of Norway Viking Boat Guidelines

The objectives of these guidelines are to assure safety, fun, and fraternalism for all “Viking Boat” event participants and observers.

BOAT SPECIFICATIONS

Hull

Each hull must be an original fiberglass hull produced from the same mold or an exact replica with length, width, weight, materials, etc., to their exact specifications. See Exhibit A, page six. In keeping with the Ottering designation, all boats must maintain a configuration for accommodating eight (8) oarsmen, including four (4) two-person seats and eight (8) oarlocks. The seats may be moved within reason to accommodate the various sizes of crew members, but none may be eliminated. Floorboards and Styrofoam flotation were provided with the original boats, but may be removed at the option of individual lodges. Gunwales may also be extended, if desired. A non-conforming hull may be permitted to participate in individual events at the discretion of host lodges, but no provision is made for their competition.

Mast

The standard mast height is 16' with the top of the pulley bolted at 15'10" from the bottom of the mast. The mast may be extended beyond 16', but the pulley used during competitions must always be set at the standard height. The only material approved for the mast is wood.

Oars

Oars must be made of wood. Length is optional, with the present range being 8'-10'. Maximum width of the oar blade is 6". Blade shape and length are optional.

Boom

Mast must be made of wood with a maximum length of 13'6". Non-wood booms are expressly prohibited.

Sail

Sail must be a square-rigged, rectangular sail which is flat as hung, with a maximum area of 120 square feet. Fabric choice is optional with current ones being nylon or Dacron.

Oar Locks

Each boat must have eight (8) oarlocks made of wood. Exact size and shape are optional. Non-wood oarlocks are expressly prohibited.

Rudder

Size and shape of the rudder are optional. Approved materials are wood and fiberglass. Metal rudders are expressly prohibited.

Tiller

Tiller must be traditional offset tiller made of wood.

Rigging

Both mast and sail rigging are optional.

Note

It is intended that the competing “Viking Boats” essentially conform to the specifications of the original Ottering brought from Norway in the 1970s. However, it has been determined through experience that certain modifications may increase safety or comfort, or just be more practical without significantly affecting performance. This has been well-illustrated by the existing variations which have not appeared to give any boat any obvious advantage. The specifications are incorporated for reference by boat-owners (Exhibit A). This lodge is still selling reproductions and is the owner of the mold. Inclusion in this document does not authorize use of this technical data to independently reproduce the boats.

Equipment

All participating boats must be equipped according to U.S. Coast Guard specifications in effect at the time of the event. This will include at least having on board an approved personal flotation device for each crew member and an audible signal device such as a horn or whistle. Additional equipment required must be determined by each lodge and provided prior to each event.

Responsibility

All race participants are required to exercise caution and follow safe boating practices at all times. Each participant is responsible for his/her own safety and for evaluating, and not exceeding, his/her own physical limitations. Neither Sons of Norway Home Office, any of its individual lodges, officers, nor members accepts responsibility or liability for loss of life, injury or illness to event participants, or for the loss or damage to any vessel.

Crew Size

Maximum crew size is eight (8) oarsmen and one (1) helmsman. There is no restriction on minimum crew size.

Crew Eligibility

In the spirit of fraternalism, it is intended that boat crews be comprised of Sons of Norway members. A maximum of two (2) nonmembers will be permitted per boat in any race. A nonmember participant must be a legitimate potential member and may participate in only one event before becoming a member. Races designated as “women’s” are limited to female crew members. “General” or “men’s” races permit both male and female participants, in any combination.

RACE RULES

Starts

In all events in which the first leg is to be rowed, all boats must begin from a standing stop behind the start line. Boats are to be lined up so all have approximate equal distance to first mark. The lowest number drawn for the starting line-up is normally assigned to the inside position on the course, with the highest number on the outside. Starting signals will normally be as follows:

WARNING: Two (2) minutes before start—white flag and short audible signal.

PREPARATORY: One (1) minute before start—blue flag and two short audible signals.

START: Red flag and one long audible signal or starting gun.

Passing

An overtaking boat has the right-of-way to pass on the inside of another boat as long as the lead boat is at least two (2) boat lengths (approximately 50 feet) from the next mark when the bow of the overtaking boat passes the stern (back) of the leading boat. If less than two boat-lengths from the mark, the lead boat has the right-of-way. Having the right-of-way means being able to round the mark without interference and without yielding any space. The overtaking boat captain must shout his intentions to the leading boat as soon as he is in the qualified position to pass. This position is called “overlap.”

Marks

If a boat misses a mark, either at the start or during the race, it may make a complete circle to pass the mark correctly, then continue the race. Otherwise, it will be disqualified. As soon as any part of the boat passes a mark, the switch may be made from oars to sail or vice-versa. However, all oars must be in the boat before raising the sail, and the sail must be down before any oars are put into the water. A mark may not be touched by any part of the boat hull. Accidentally touching a mark with an oar will not cause a penalty, but intentionally pushing a mark out the way is not permitted.

Sportsmanship

Participants should always remember that the main objective of the various boating events is fun for all participants and observers. Short tempers are inappropriate and profanity is unacceptable. The “Golden Rule” should govern everyone’s actions. Minor accidental collisions and other errors are inevitable from time to time, and everyone is reminded to take these in stride, in the spirit of fraternalism. Consideration should always be given to all participants and unsportsmanlike actions are not permissible.

Protests

A boat wishing to file a protest must do so by notifying the Race Committee within fifteen (15) minutes of the finish of the last boat in any race/heat. Decisions of the Race Committee will be final.

Lodge/Event Variations

Any host lodge may establish additional event limits or variations. However, it is essential that they give reasonable advance notice to all potential participants. Race course configurations are left to the discretion of each host lodge, but they should be designed with safety and fairness in mind, such as allowing ample space for each boat at the start line (at least 25 feet), and taking into account weather conditions at the time of each race. For reference purposes only, the predominant race course used has been trapezoidal in shape, starting and ending with a rowing leg, and with two (2) sailing legs in between. Splitting boats into two (2) heats has proven beneficial when there are more than four or five entries, and a staggered start, with the second heat beginning as the first heat rounds the first mark, is gaining popularity. Host lodges are asked to mark courses clearly with high, bright flags or other highly visible markings. It is desirable to have a race official at as many marks as possible to avoid disputes and misunderstandings.

Captains’ Meetings

A captains’ meeting will be held for each racing event at a time and place designated by the host lodge. All participating lodges must be given adequate notice and each lodge must send an appropriate representative. The purpose of the meeting will be to review event variations, explain the race course, and draw for starting positions.

Note

Individual participating lodges are responsible for conveying these guidelines to their own crew members prior to any event. In keeping with the fraternal spirit, all participants are expected to abide by the rules “on their honor,” and to do their best to avoid disputes.

EXHIBIT A—SONS OF NORWAY VIKING BOAT GUIDELINES

It is our understanding that your lodge is interested in having a Viking Ottering boat built. Having had in-depth conferences and negotiations with several reputable builders of fiberglass boats in this area, we are now in a position to offer you a boat made to the original specifications matching the old wood Ottering from which we made the mold.

The boat is 23' long and will be made to the following specifications:

1. Lay-up Sequence: 23 mils polyester gelcoat, 1–12 oz. mat, 24/15 fab-mat double-lapped at keelson, layed in G/P Polyester resin.
2. Bonding and encapsulating: Minimum—two 1–1/2 oz. mat.
3. Gunwales: One 1 x 4" pine inside and one outside, screwed together through the hull and encapsulated in F.R.P.
4. Keelson and Stems: 2 x 3" pine, encapsulated in F.R.P.
5. Seats: One 1–1/2 oz. mat, one 24/15 fabmat, two encapsulated 2 x 2 pine.

A “seat” for the mast will be molded into the bottom of the boat. The boat will consist only of what comes out of the mold, plus the seats and gunwales. Included also will be the necessary stainless steel hardware for mounting a rudder.

It will be up to the purchaser to create the rudder and the eight oarlocks that will be necessary. Templates and specifications for the rudder and the oarlocks will be furnished by us. The purchaser will also have to fashion a 16' mast, to be 4 x 4" at the bottom and tapered to the top. Also, the purchaser will have to fashion a boom for the top of the sail. The boom is to be 13' 6" long and be made of a good grade of ash, or a similar wood. It should be about 2-1/2" square.

You will also have to have a sail made. The design as at your option, but the size must not exceed 13' wide by 9' high. A good grade of a light Nylon is recommended.

Suitable oars are available from the Swanson Boat Oar Company, 58 Bradish Avenue, Albion, PA 16401; Attention: Mr. James Swanson. Best buy for our purposes is the Trojan Grade 9' oar, sealed and varnished. They have been giving a 40 percent discount to our lodges, so be sure to mention Sons of Norway when you contact them.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if there is anything further you would like to know about the boat, or arrangements for purchase. I can be reached at 407-466-1542.

Fraternally yours,

Stanley Isaksen