

Greetings Club SAKE,

Last week, there were a number of news items regarding changes to pandemic guidelines:

- The CDC announced last week that vaccinated people may be indoors and outdoors without masks and without physical distancing. Unvaccinated people must continue to mask and observe physical distance.
- Governor Jay Inslee announced, soon after, that Washington State would be following the CDC guidelines.
- There is still the possibility of infection even when fully vaccinated. However, according to two recent studies, that risk is about 0.05%.
- There is evidence that the vaccines are suitably effective against the current known variants.

With this news, Club SAKE is in the process of opening the dragon boats under the following conditions:

SAKE Phase 1:

- Only fully vaccinated people may attend dragon boat practices. This means you are 2 or more weeks past your second or only dose.
- Members must provide a legible copy of their vaccination record, showing the date of their second/only dose and the name of the vaccine they received, prior to attending practice.
- Vaccine records can be sent by e-mail to Lisa Harkins at lisah@whidbey.com. Alternately, you can send it by text message to 360-632-4129, but this is not the preferred method.
- Updated vaccine records may be required in the future should vaccine boosters come into play.
- Practices are open to current vaccinated members only. No guests, and membership dues must be current, with the current waiver signed.
- Vaccinated members will be identified in Team Cowboy with a "V" after their name, so that coaches and health coaches can easily see that all RSVP'd for practice are vaccinated
- Timely RSVPs are required for all sessions. Members cannot paddle unless they have RSVP'd.
- Tillers are subject to the safety requirements outlined below
- Practice times will be shorter for the first month, to give members and tillers time to ease into the routine, and for coaches to assess their crews for fitness before elevating training.
- Survivor – TSNW is currently assessing their return conditions. Stay tuned for news from your coaches and captains on next steps, In the meantime, you are welcome in SAKE practices if vaccinated.
- Health Coaches – the function of the health coaches will be to verify participant self-health checks, and to take accurate attendance records for contact tracing, aided by Team Cowboy.
- Capsize Drills
 - Drill status was frozen by the Board due to the pandemic
 - If you completed a drill in 2019, you are welcome to paddle if you are vaccinated
 - If you did not complete a drill in 2019, you may not paddle this year until you have completed a drill
 - Drill scheduling is currently in progress
 - All members must complete a drill this year to participate in dragon boat activities in 2022.

SAKE Phase 2: We hope that in the future, fully vaccinated and unvaccinated people will be back on boats together. The Health Advisor will continue to monitor recommendations from health agencies, and advise the Board when this is possible. This will likely be when the COVID-19 infection rate is sustained at a rate comparable to that of other infections we currently tolerate (like the flu). In Phase 2, unvaccinated members will be welcomed back on the dragon boats, and we will no longer need to collect information regarding vaccination status.

Steerspersons - It is expected that steerspersons may be rusty after over a year off the water. For this reason, all steers are required to attend a special session, where they will be assessed for competency by their peers and the coaches.

- The 45-60 minute competency test will consist of:
 - Safety checks and Departure from the dock
 - 20-30 minutes steering in open water
 - Return to the dock and securing of the boat
 - Standard dragon boats only
 - The steering checklist will NOT be the criteria used
 - Anonymous feedback from the assessments will be collected by survey, and the Safety Manager will notify

tillers of results and feedback.

- Tiller assessment sessions will be held over the next two weeks, targeted to those tillers who are immediately available to steer practices. After that, assessment sessions will be ongoing until all steerspersons have been assessed.
- Paddlers for these sessions will consist of other tillers, and coaches, supplementing with paddlers from the membership as needed.
- The assessment sessions will have a minimum of 10 paddlers, and no more than 14.
- Each steersperson will be assessed for competency by a minimum of 3 other steerspersons and/or coaches present in the boat.
- For the first two practices following a positive assessment, there must be one additional steerperson in the boat, as a contingency in the event that endurance has been eroded.
- The thresholds for weather and water conditions will be more conservative until crew fitness has returned to pre-Covid conditions.
- Steerspersons who have not been certified (pre-Covid) may not steer until further notice. We expect to consider this on the first regular evaluation of these policies, after practices have been in session for 2 months.

Timeline:

- Tiller assessment sessions will be held on May 25 (Tuesday), May 29 (Saturday), June 1 (Tuesday), and June 5 (Saturday)
- Assuming enough tillers pass assessment and are available, dragon boat practices will begin June 12 (Saturday)
- To begin with, practices will be held on Saturdays only.

Q&A

- **What does “fully vaccinated” mean?** It means you had your Johnson & Johnson, or your second Pfizer or second Moderna vaccine at least two weeks prior to attending practice.
- **Is SAKE legally allowed to ask for my vaccination record? What about HIPAA?** As a private membership organization, we are not bound by federal or state privacy laws, and we can ask for and track vaccination records.
- **I am vaccinated, but I am immuno-compromised, and I am worried about increased risk for a breakthrough infection.** If you are concerned about participating in a fully-loaded boat, talk to your coach to discuss your needs, e.g. benching with extra space around you.
- **Are we back on the water for good?** SAKE will regularly review and update our requirements and procedures at least every two months. Our activities may be changed by future announcements by public health authorities. We are working hard to develop clear guidelines, but this situation is new to all of us, and we ask for your patience and flexibility if adjustments must be made on short notice.
- **I am not vaccinated for a medical reason. Why can't I get an exception to participate?** The current guidelines are that the unvaccinated, regardless of reason, must be masked and maintain a physical distance of at least six feet. Because of the physical distance requirement, it is not possible to mix the vaccinated and the unvaccinated on the same boat, due to minimums needed for safety and boat balance.
- **I am not vaccinated. Are there SAKE activities that I can do?** Yes. SUP has been open, and their protocols apply regardless of your vaccination status. These protocols also cover other single-person craft, such as kayak or outrigger. Practices for SUP are currently happening on Tuesdays and Sundays, and other single-person craft are welcome to join them. The club also has two OC1 ready for use. Potentially, SAKE is open to continuing some dockside sessions, if there is enough demand for them.
- **When and how can I sign up?** The tiller assessment sessions are available on the Team Cowboy calendar, and if you are interested in helping paddle, you can sign up now. You may have to select the “2021 Practice Schedule” from the drop-down at the top of the calendar. Once tillers and coaches have committed, the remaining slots will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis from the RSVPs/waitlist. *As a reminder, only vaccinated and current members will be able to join dragon boat practices.* Regular practice sessions will be added once we are sure we have enough tillers available and assessed. RSVPs for SUP sessions will continue to be done through the SUP group at Team Cowboy. If you need an invitation to that group, contact Koichi at kkitazum@starbucks.com.
- **What is the deadline for providing my vaccine record?** The sooner the better. You cannot join practices until a copy of your card is received, and the change to your roster name in Team Cowboy is your indicator that you have been verified as vaccinated.

We appreciate your patience and support over these long months, and we can't wait to see you on the water again.