



Dragon Boat Racing Lives in Central Florida...Its Magic!

ORLANDO, FL (October 18, 2009) – Orlando Rowing Club is proud to be the current home of the first **Dragon boat** in Central Florida!!! The boat is sponsored by [Women Playing For T.I.M.E.](#) (WPFT) and [Orlando Health](#), and will keep Dragon boat racing afloat in the Orlando community until next steps are accomplished to purchase and take delivery on our own boat in April. Kudos are due to ORC member Andrea Eliscu for her leadership and tireless efforts to see the fully geared 42 foot, 600 pound Dragon boat now tethered to the ORC dock!!

WPFT sponsored the first Central Florida Pink Dragon Boat Racing Team – [Warriors On Water](#) – at the [Orlando International Dragon Boat Festival](#) held October 17th at Downtown Disney. 1200 paddlers comprising 43 teams from the US and Canada participated in the event. Included were seven Pink Dragon Boat Racing Teams representing Breast Cancer Survivors. An excellent video of the event that explains a bit about Dragon boat racing, the sisterhood of Breast Cancer Survivors involved, and how the Dragon boat came to ORC can be viewed at [GWN TV Video of Orlando International Dragon Boat Festival](#)

The Orlando Rowing Club and Women Playing For T.I.M.E. (technology, immediate diagnosis, mammography and education) created a partnership in April, 2009. This partnership allows WPFT a chance to spread their message to eradicate breast cancer to all the rowers who support ORC and ORC gets to use the WPFT marketing and media leadership and distribution chain to spread the word about the value of rowing and a healthy lifestyle and raise the brand of ORC.

This was never more evident than this past Saturday, October 17, 2009 at the Orlando International Dragon Boat Festival. ORC's WPFT support team, **T.I.M.E. to scORCh** came together as a team for their first event. Captained by Ernesto Esguerra, a top-rate effort was made by the team of 22 men and women





athletes competing in the 500 m sprints. **T.I.M.E. to scORCh** avoided a close capsized in our first heat, won our second heat (almost losing our drummer in the process), and paddled with teamwork, fitness and passion to medal with a 3rd place finish in the Premier Mixed C Division finals! Photos of the event can be viewed at [Dragon Boat Festival 2009 Photos](#).

More than that, the ORC and WPFT partnership took on a very special meaning about 2pm Saturday afternoon in the midst of the competition. WPFT learned they had an opportunity to live their dream of having a Dragon boat here in Central Florida if they could find a location to store the boat by 9am Sunday morning.

If not, all boats would go back to Canada and it would be at least April before we could have access to a boat locally. With the help of Caroline Walter and Sonja Jamilla, two board members on the scORCh team, immediate mobilization took place. ORC's Coach, Laura Riecki and ORC board members were called to see if the Dragon Boat could temporarily be stored at ORC. Within 20 (TWENTY) minutes, we had a resounding YES!!



Sunday by 1pm, with the help of ORC President Jimmy Field, Laura and Robert Hoppenfeld, that Dragon boat was launched on Lake Fairview with members of the Warriors on Water, our first pink Dragon boat team and members of WPFT and ORC standing by to see it happen. We now have use of a leased Dragon boat to create community interest in the sponsorship of purchasing our own WPFT Dragon boat and this also allows our teams and newly forming teams the use of a practice boat. These are partnerships coming alive and are a model to be emulated.

A sidebar to this story: In order to get the Dragon boat off the trailer, we needed to hire a tow truck with an extended arm. After 2 1/2 hours we found Hughes Towing who agreed to meet us on Sunday morning at ORC to assist in getting the Dragon boat to the water - for a fee of \$300.00 which WPFT approved. While the transfer of the trailered boat took place, there was a young couple among many others who were asking all kinds of questions about Dragon boating, breast cancer and ORC. Once the boat was in the water, this couple told us they owned Hughes towing and were so impressed with this partnership and what it stood for, they were donating the towing and there would be no fee.



We had been hearing stories all weekend about the magical power of the Dragon. Could it be that magic visited ORC and WPFT? And as icing on the cake, the owner of Hughes towing is a long time rower, has wanted to get back to rowing and was making arrangements with Jimmy to come down for a row.



More info on Dragon Boat Racing and use of the boat will be coming soon. In the meantime...**Paddles Up!**