

WALTON & WEYBRIDGE REGATTA

Safety Rules, Procedures and Instructions to Competitors

The primary consideration in order to make this year's Regatta a successful event is the safety of all crews, officials, spectators and other river users.

CLUB CAPTAINS, COACHES AND ROWING MASTERS PLEASE READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY AND INSTRUCT YOUR CREWS ACCORDINGLY. The risk of any serious incidents occurring will be reduced by the adherence to these instructions of all those involved in the Regatta.

1. Arrival and Parking

Trailers may be brought down Sunbury Lane and into the Trailer Park opposite Walton Rowing Club. Access to the Trailer Park is limited to the following hours:

FRIDAY 22nd May 1600-1900; SATURDAY 23rd May 0700-2000

The Trailer Park will be secure on Friday night, but the Committee accepts no responsibility for any loss or damage to equipment. The Boat Trailer Park **MUST** be vacated by 20:00 on Saturday.

ONLY trailers may be left in this area; towing vehicles **MUST** unhitch and park elsewhere. Please make full use of Waterside Drive (back to the top of Sunbury Lane, turn left then after half a mile turn left at the roundabout – this is Waterside Drive, signposted to Elmbridge Leisure Centre). If you do find a parking space in a residential area, **PLEASE** ensure you will not be causing any obstruction. Drivers of trailer towing vehicles must exercise due caution when manoeuvring in the boat park area and onto the road, giving consideration to using a second person to guide them safely back when reversing.

2. Regatta Control

Competitors **must** report to Regatta Control sited in Walton RC *at least* 1 hour before their first race. Regatta Control will be responsible for:

- Issuing Numbers:** these are to be worn on the back by a single sculler or bow oarsman/woman.

- Weighing Coxswains and issuing weight certificates:** coxswains must keep these with them at all times and produce to any official on request. Coxswains must provide their own dead weight, if required, and this must be something specific, describable and recognisable. Coxswains may be re-weighed after races.

- Checking ARA Racing Licences.** Random checks will be made as crews collect their numbers. No prize will be awarded to a crew that fails to provide a valid Racing Licences. Such crews are liable to disqualification unless the missing information is produced to the Committee within 3 days of the Regatta.

- Issuing Licence plates** to boats not registered with the EA for use on the non-tidal Thames.

- Equipment Check.** The GB Rowing Rules of Racing places a clear obligation on **competitors** to ensure their boats are safe and comply with the ARA Water Safety Code (rule 2-3-8 a). Regatta Control will conduct random checks on boats going afloat. If any deficiency is identified, the crew will be sent away from the landing stage to rectify it and that crew must accept the consequences of late arrival at the start. However, Regatta Control cannot inspect all boats or identify all faults, so *permission to go afloat must not be interpreted as certification of compliance with GB Rowing rules or codes.*

- General safety checks:** these include monitoring the state of the landing stages and their approach to limit avoidable trip hazards such as abandoned trestles.

- Medical Conditions:** As the operation of a safe event is the organising committee's priority, competitors, or the responsible adult in charge of juniors, are advised to notify Regatta Control of any medical conditions that may necessitate a particular course of action in the case of an accident or emergency, e.g. asthma or epilepsy. The information will only be made known to officials on a strictly 'need to know' basis.

3. Boating Area

Except for those arriving and departing on the river from neighbouring clubs, **all** crews **must** boat and disembark from the landing stage in front of Walton Rowing Club and St George's College Boat Club. You will need to provide your own trestles. Space for boats is limited in this area so please co-operate with the Raft Marshals. It is the competitors' own responsibility to boat in sufficient time and it is recommended to allow at least **20 minutes** to get from the landing stage to the start. Please ensure your blades and equipment are ready at the landing stage before carrying your boat there for launching.

Crews should boat BOWS POINTING UPSTREAM and proceed across to the far side of the river and into the Navigation Channel only when they are sure that they will not impede crews finishing a race.

4. Proceeding to the start

Regatta Jurisdiction: Walton Bridge and the Regatta Warning Sign above Sunbury Weir mark the boundaries of Walton Regatta. Within this area umpires, marshals and rescue launch teams will be exercising their skills to minimise risk to you and maximize your safety. There is also sufficient space for adequate warming up and cooling down. Crews that feel they need to paddle above Walton Bridge must clearly understand that they do so entirely at their own risk and that in so doing they are leaving the Regatta Area and the associated safety benefits.

Navigation Channel: Crews paddling to the start are to keep to the starboard (bow) side of the Navigation Channel, proceeding slowly but without stopping or overtaking. The Environment Agency insist that river traffic using the navigation channel must not be unduly impeded; any crew seen to violate these instructions will be given an official warning. There is a small weir (Tumbling Bay) just upstream of Walton Rowing Club and your attention is drawn to it as a potential hazard. Practice starts in the navigation channel are **STRICTLY FORBIDDEN**, but are allowed above the start having due regard for other river traffic. Crews arriving at the Start must proceed past it, keeping to the Middlesex bank, until they are above the Regatta Warning Sign. Then, after careful scrutiny (i.e. keeping a good look out), when safe, cross the river to the Surrey side and wait by the Walton Marina pontoons until called forward by the Start Marshal.

5. Racing

The Start: The start will be a 'stern on' stakeboat start, which will be staggered to take into account the stream, which can favour the Surrey station, and the slight bend which favours Middlesex station. The first named crew in the racing timetable will take the Middlesex station (furthest from towpath). The Start Umpire situated on the launch moored behind the stakeboats will start crews. This Umpire will also umpire the first section of the race.

The Course: The course is 1,000m long and is straight apart from a slight bend at The Anglers Wharf. The course is umpired from the bank by four umpires based (1) at the start, (2) on the Environment Agency pier at Anglers Wharf, (3) on the bank at Thames Valley Skiff Club and, (4) at the finish. There are three lines of buoys on the course: one to separate the course from the navigation channel, another to mark the centre of the course, and a third intermittent line along the Surrey bank, marking particular hazards. Crews **MUST** stay on their station and lines of buoys **MUST NOT** be crossed.

The Finish: The finish is at Miskins' Wharf, 100m before Walton Rowing Club. A bell will sound as the first crew crosses the line. Dead heats will be re-rowed *immediately* from the original start. No delays will be permitted. Crews wishing to wind down after racing must be aware of crews putting out from the landing stage, but thereafter may paddle downstream, turning by the floating Regatta warning sign. For safety reasons, crews paddling beyond the Regatta Warning sign towards Sunbury Weir will be disqualified. On returning to disembark, crews must wait patiently in single file and **MUST NOT** obstruct racing crews winding down or any other river traffic.

Please note: There are large numbers of swans on the Walton Reach, particularly close to the Anglers Hotel. Crews must take all reasonable steps to avoid collision or interference with swans or any wildfowl. Any crew colliding with wildfowl **must inform** a regatta official as soon as practicable. In the event of a competitor being attacked by an aggressive swan, they are advised not to leave their boat, particularly not to jump overboard, but to paddle away as quickly as possible. They should consider heading for the bank or to where there are people able to offer assistance at chasing it away.

6. Accident and Emergency Procedures

Responsibilities

An Umpire or any other regatta official seeing an incident must deal with it as his/her first priority. The Safety Adviser at Race Control must be informed via radio. All parts of the course are under observation by at least one Bank Umpire and all Umpires have radio communication. The nature of the incident and the assistance required must be stated. Rescue 1 will be stationed above the regatta start near Walton Marina and Rescue 2 just below the finish.

Emergency Action

Crews of a Rescue Launch attending an incident are suitably qualified to assess the severity of any injuries to any casualty. In the event of a serious incident resulting in personal injury requiring expert medical attention, the crews are authorised to make contact directly with the emergency services to summon an ambulance. They should inform the Safety Adviser by radio of any actions taken. There are two locations where casualties can be brought ashore with ambulance access:

- Walton Rowing Club and The Anglers Wharf.

If resuscitation is immediately required at the time of rescue, the affected person will be transferred to a safe position on the river bank where CPR will be administered by the trained personnel in the launch and the emergency services called by dialling '999' on a landline or '112' on a mobile telephone.

In the event of a serious incident on land between the boating area and the Regatta Enclosure, assistance should be sought by contacting a Race Official or directly to the St John Ambulance team located near the Race Control tent next to the Enclosure.

Each incident should normally be attended by only one safety launch unless the Safety Adviser directs otherwise, in which case racing would be suspended.

A rescue launch attending an incident must be aware of the effect excessive wash can have on other crews, notably young scullers.

The Safety Adviser, on being informed of any incident, will advise Race Control if measures to be taken necessitate the suspension of racing until the incident is resolved. If a Bank Umpire has not already called out a safety launch, the Safety Adviser may direct a launch to go to the scene of an incident. The Safety Adviser will advise Race Control when racing may recommence.

Telephones

The nearest landline telephones from which emergency '999' calls can be made are located at:

The Anglers pub (01932 223996), Thames Valley Skiff Club (01932 224215) and Walton Rowing Club (01932 224557).

First Aid

St John Ambulance crew the two Safety Launches and also provide a staffed Safety Vehicle next to the Regatta Enclosure. There is also a Regatta Medical Officer who can be contacted through Officials at Race or Regatta Control.

Cycling

Please note that the towpath between Miskins' Wharf and Walton Rowing Club can become congested – cyclists are requested to dismount and push their bikes in this area.

7. General information

Prize Giving: Winning crews should disembark, return their boat to its storage area and report (tidily dressed) to Regatta Control with their racing licences/day tickets. Once these have been checked, crews will be given a certificate and should then report to the Ceremonial Organiser at the Enclosure. Crews will then be advised as to the likely time of their prize giving. Thereafter, the crew must remain in the Enclosure area and listen to the public address system over which presentations will be announced.

Spectators' Enclosure: A good view of the course and finish can be obtained from the enclosure at Miskins' Wharf, where refreshments are available to all.

Child Protection: The Regatta committee takes child welfare very seriously and complies with all current ARA practices. All concerns should be raised with either of the Regatta Child Welfare Officers, Mrs Linda Lee or Mrs Jenny Miller, who can be contacted through Regatta Control.