



ROYAL CHESTER ROWING CLUB



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North of England Head of the River Race

Sunday 15th March 2020

INSTRUCTIONS TO COMPETITORS

(INCLUDING LOCAL NAVIGATIONAL RULES AND REGULATIONS)

1. Organisation

The Race is conducted under British Rowing RowSafe and the Rules for Processional (Head) Events.

Chairman of the Committee of Management: Jack McGarva

Entries Secretary: Paul Johnson

Race Safety: Andy Morriss

Welfare officer Karin Wolff

Chairman of the Race Committee: Tim Williams

Morning Division: Race starts 10-30am Boating 8-45am prompt

Afternoon Division: Race starts 2-30pm Boating 12-45pm

2. Safety

ALL COMPETITORS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR OWN SAFETY AND THAT OF OTHERS.

RACE CONTROL IS AT THE RCRC CLUBHOUSE CH1 1SD

LAND LINE TELEPHONE NUMBER 01244 322468

Competitors prior to racing must check their boats and ensure they comply with the guidance in Rowsafe.



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All boats should have a bow ball firmly affixed to its bow; riggers and hatch covers will be secure, shoe heels will be restrained and capable of being removed with one hand, boats will meet buoyancy standards, fours without sealed bulkheads will carry buoyancy bags.

Eights and Quads/Fours should have backstays fitted to the bow riggers.

Whilst not as yet compulsory, it is recommended that blades are painted in club colours.

There will be random checks of boats at embarkation using the British Rowing Control Commission Checklist and boats not complying will not be allowed to race.

Crews will be asked what checks they have carried out on their boats; coxes are required to have suitable lifejackets.

Crews will not be allowed to boat until the safety boats are in place.

Competitors will be properly dressed; they should be prepared to wait for 30 minutes or so at the start and clothing should be suitable to protect competitors from sunstroke or hypothermia.

Competitors deemed not to be suitably dressed will not be allowed to race.

Crews must obey instructions from the marshals and umpires; instructions will be given to prevent collisions both on the way up to the start and during racing to prevent collisions and to ensure fair racing.

Details of the circulation pattern at the finish are included in this document and must be obeyed to prevent injury and damage to property; there will be 2 launch-based marshals positioned at the Boathouse pub and the suspension bridge to enforce the circulation plan and their instructions must be obeyed [failure to comply with the circulation plan may lead to a time penalty/disqualification].

The event safety officer is Andy Morriss.

Please refer to the safety plan and course maps for full details of safety arrangements.

THE RIVER WILL NOT BE CLOSED TO OTHER CRAFT.

On race day, commercial craft will be required to steer a specific course on the river.



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Please be aware that other river users not connected with the race may be on the water and not know the rules of the river. There will be a rowing club member stationed on large commercial boats to advise the captain and to notify the Safety Officer/Chief Umpire of any incidents or near misses.

Competitors are discouraged from practising outside the published boating times as safety boat cover will not be in place.

Save for exceptional circumstances, crews and scullers should not paddle back down the course (they should do so only in the event of equipment failure or medical emergency and should follow any instructions given to them by the marshals).

Please make sure your rowers are familiar with the course map which is displayed on the RCRC website; the map shows the 3 ambulance accessible emergency evacuation points at Eccleston, Sandy Lane and the Groves.

St John's Ambulance will be stationed at the RCRC Clubhouse and will cover The Groves and Queen's Park. The nearest Accident and Emergency Department is at The Countess of Chester Hospital, Liverpool Road, Chester, CH2 1UL. (About 15 minutes drive from the boating areas).

Waterborne diseases are a hazard to all rowers. Generally the River Dee is a clean river however there are rats and other wildlife which live in and around the River which may transmit infectious diseases such as Weil's disease.

Symptoms of Weil's disease include; high fever, headache, chills, muscle aches, vomiting, jaundice, red eyes and abdominal pains; if any competitor exhibits any of those symptoms they should consider seeing their Doctor.

Competitors should be aware that there are occasionally discharges of sewage into the River Dee; if this occurs we will consider whether it is necessary to cancel the event.

Competitors should not drink river water; cuts and grazes should be covered with waterproof dressings and take care to wash their hands before eating.

IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO KEEP A LOOKOUT.



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3. Trailer Parking & Boat Assembly

Due to the likelihood of roadworks on The Groves, road access will be via Souters Lane ONLY, not Dee Lane.

You will be notified of your trailer parking area in advance of the event after the draw has been made.

Boats may be assembled along the length of the Groves, however plenty of space should be allowed for vehicles to pass through the Groves. Additional space known as Hickory's is provided on the Groves between Souters Lane and Lower Bridge Street. A road closure will operate on the day of the event.

This area should be entered and exited via Souters lane. Please park trailers on the road only.

Please follow instructions from Marshals when parking vehicles and assembling/moving boats.

For those boating from QPHS, trailer parking has been provided as normal onsite.

4. Visitor and Competitor Car Parking

Car parking for visitors and competitors is normally available on the roadside in Queens Park (on the Meadows side of the river, cross over the suspension footbridge to return to the Groves), or within the various public car parks in Chester city centre.

There is no parking provision for cars on The Groves, and only restricted car parking available in Dee Lane.

There is no car parking at RCRC on the day for competitors, visitors or club members. Parking is reserved for umpires and other officials.

5. Registration

Registration for **ALL CREWS** is in the main RCRC clubhouse.

On arrival, crews should immediately register with the entries secretary, confirm any substitutions with British Rowing cards and collect their race numbers.



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Numbers should be securely pinned to the back of the sculler or crew member in the bow seat and be clearly visible during racing.

Two number stickers will be supplied to be fixed to both sax boards near the bow seat (we have monitors on both sides of the river, so both must be affixed)

6. Competitors' Briefing

Morning Division: 8:30am at RCRC clubhouse

Afternoon Division: 12:30pm at RCRC clubhouse

The briefing will confirm these instructions and also give information on any hazards which may be present on the river on the day and also on any alternative arrangements for the race which are decided on race day.

**** Coaches, it is your responsibility to ensure your competitors are fully briefed ****

7. Boating

Morning division: Boating from 8-45am prompt

Race start at 10:30am.

Afternoon division: Boating from 12:45pm prompt

Race start at 2:30pm

The draw indicates from where crews must boat and boating times.

Crews boating in The Groves or Hickory's will use the landing stages near the bandstand; some may be directed to Grosvenor RC.

Blades and equipment should be brought close to the stages to reduce boating time.

There are only 2 landing stages at The Groves and there is only limited time for crew to get afloat.

In previous years, crews were unable to race as they did not get afloat on time. It is unfair to the crews which do boat on time to be kept waiting. It is also unfair on crews boating later who may be prevented from racing.



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We want everyone to have an enjoyable race so please help us to ensure this happens by being well organised and boating in plenty of time.

All crews must boat at their allocated times. Crews attempting to boat late may be refused permission to boat. Crew call will be in operation on the Groves (See separate document).

If the Umpires deem a crew is unlikely to get to the start ahead of the published race time then that crew may be sent back.

Crews should allow a minimum of 30 minutes time on the water to get past the start at Eccleston Ferry; inexperienced crews may need longer.

Crews/scullers who ignore instructions from Umpires/marshals are liable to be disqualified.

Decisions as to whether any crew is allowed to race will be made by the start umpire in conjunction with the coordinating umpire.

7. Getting up to the start

Boats should proceed upstream on The Meadows side of the river, i.e. keep to the cox's right / scullers left.

Boats may overtake on the way up, moving towards the centre of the river. Crews and scullers must obey instructions from Marshals/umpires.

Crews and scullers must paddle light and proceed with care as they approach and row through the marshalling area which begins at Eccleston Ferry.

8. Start assembly

Crews should proceed past the start to the marshalling point designated on the draw, remain bows pointing upstream and position themselves in numerical order in the relevant area as follows:

- even numbers along the Eccleston / Meadows bank
- odd numbers along the Huntington bank

Crews should not turn until instructed to do so. There will be start marshals both on the river bank and in a launch. The start order has been designed to reduce overtaking by starting faster crews and scullers first and allowing gaps in the start order to prevent bunching.



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Because it is likely to be cold single sculls which are slower will start before the crew boats with a gap in between to prevent clashes.

9. Starting

Competitors must obey the instructions of the Start Marshall at all times.

When instructed to turn, boats should turn and paddle downstream maintaining numerical sequence and 3 - 4 lengths of clear water. Crews will be started by the command "*Number ...Go*".

Timing will commence as each boat passes the start line.

10. Racing

All crews must comply with instructions of umpires.

Boats being overtaken must give way in good time to allow faster boats to follow their proper racing course. Failure to obey this and other instructions from Umpires may result in penalty or disqualification.

Time bonuses will not be awarded, but penalties may. Complaints of interference must be registered with the chief umpire.

The early sections of the race from Eccleston to the road bridge and Heron Bridge are narrower and so overtaking is more difficult. Marshals and umpires are stationed in those areas and will give instructions to crews if they feel it necessary to avoid a collision; those instructions must be obeyed.

Crews should be aware of other river traffic not involved in the race. Once crews have passed the Red House pub (large glass-fronted building - refer to course map), ***all crews must race on the Meadows (cox's left hand, scullers right hand) side of the river, and overtake towards the middle of the river without straying towards the opposite bank.***

Crews must remain on the Meadows' side of the river throughout the final bend, and heed any directions given by marshals.

We have an agreement with commercial boats that they will use the City side of the river. Please be aware that other river users not connected with the race may be on the water and may not know the rules.



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12. After the race

The race finish is by the **stone steps at the bottom of Dee Lane**. There will be no signal. As soon as a boat has passed the finish line, competitors should wind down to light pressure and continue paddling. **DO NOT STOP**. Finish marshals in launches will guide returning crews.

Crews should bear in mind that just downstream of the finish there is a line of moored boats on the Royal Chester Clubhouse side of the river with which they could collide if they do not take care – crews should remain on the Meadows side of the river as they cross the finish line.

Boats must then

- Continue on The Meadows (cox's left / scullers right) side of the river
- Crews returning to Grosvenor RC, Kings, RCRC, and QPHS should spin at the buoy at the suspension bridge, and proceed back to their stages. QPHS returning crews must seek the permission of a return marshal before crossing the river and complying at all times with the circulation plan.
- Crews returning to the Groves should spin below the suspension bridge and paddle into the stage, crew members should disembark immediately and move the boat alongside the stage to allow following boats to do the same at all times remembering to comply with the circulation plan.

Competitors should bear in mind that there is a large weir just below the suspension bridge which is clearly marked by large yellow warning signs. Crews are advised not to paddle below the bandstand.

Failure to comply strictly with the above rules and marshals instructions will render crews liable to disqualification or such other penalty, including a time penalty, as may be deemed appropriate.

13. Results and Medals

Provisional results will be posted outside RCRC as soon as possible and copies will be distributed as soon as possible. Results will also be posted on the Internet at www.royalchesterrowingclub.co.uk within 24 hours of the race.



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Appeals with respect to timings must be made to the chief timekeeper immediately after publication of results.

Medals and other prizes may be collected from the Entries desk at RCRC at the end of the days racing (This may involve presentations and/or publicity photographs being taken).

Please bring your British Rowing racing licences as they will be required to collect medals. Please note, we do not forward medals by post after the event. To prevent misrepresentation random roll calls will be carried out at boating; crews who do not match the entries on BROE will not be allowed to race without making substitutions as allowed within the British Rowing Rules of Racing.

14. Immediate disqualifications

Due to a very small number of past incidents, the event secretary would like to draw your attention to the following rules which will be enforced throughout the event.

ALL BOATS MUST SECURE THE SUPPLIED CREW ID ON BOW AND STROKE SIDES OF THEIR BOATS SUCH THAT IT IS VISIBLE TO COURSE UMPIRES, STARTERS AND FINISH JUDGES. ANY BOAT NOT COMPLYING SHALL BE DISQUALIFIED.

ANY UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT, ABUSIVE OR FOUL LANGUAGE MAY RESULT IN INSTANT DISQUALIFICATION ; THIS WOULD ALSO INCLUDE ROWERS WHO CHOOSE TO RELIEVE THEMSELVES IN PUBLIC BEFORE THE START OF THE RACE .

15. Alternative Arrangements Plan

In the days leading up to the event, the organising committee will monitor river conditions, stream, tide levels, presence of debris and weather forecasts for wind speeds, rain, high or low temperatures.

Traffic access arrangements will also be reviewed due to long term roadworks on The Groves.

Any recent heavy rainfall may have an impact on river levels on the day of the event.



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If the combination of conditions is such that the race needs to be cancelled then every effort will be made to make that decision by 12 noon on Friday 13th March to avoid competitors and officials having a wasted journey.

It should be appreciated that forecasts change and so safety may demand a cancellation on the day.

Consideration will be given to rowing a shorter course and also restricting the race to more experienced and competent competitors if those adjustments would allow the race to go ahead safely.

Alternative arrangements will be communicated by Race control on the day and at the competitor's safety briefings before each division boats.

Occasionally following heavy rain there are discharges of raw sewage into the river; in that event the organising committee will consider whether it is necessary to cancel the event.