

This plan is made available to all participating clubs and is also available on the ARC website

1. The Course

The 2km course is identified on the attached plan, racing upstream, finishing at Abingdon Town Centre; the start is down river towards Culham. Prior to the commencement of the event the course is inspected for debris and submerged hazards, it is then cleared or buoyed off. The Finish Marshals notify the nearest launch of any debris coming onto the course during the start marshalling procedures to have it cleared away.

2. Decision Making Process for Inclement Conditions

In view of the fact that the event takes place during the early spring when there is a chance of floods and poor weather in the area, the organisers have developed a system for monitoring these conditions for the overall benefit and safety of the competitors.

a) FLOODS - The organisers, in communication with the local Environment Agency, are able to advise and predict the height of the river along the course for the day and duration of the race. The Head Committee will decide by 6.00 p.m. on the Saturday prior to the race to

- i) Run the event in full.
- ii) Cancellation of specific categories, e.g. Juniors, Novices
- iii) Cancellation of a Division
- iv) Cancellation of the whole event

b) INCLEMENT WEATHER - Local weather forecasts are consulted in the days leading up to the event to ascertain any need to advise competitors of potential difficulties.

c) ELECTRICAL STORMS (Lightning) - The organisers will monitor the forecasts and current weather conditions for electrical activity and either cancel the event or notify the competitors of the possibility of a thunderstorm. If thunder is heard within 30 seconds of a flash of lightning, the organisers will assess the risk with a view to stopping the event. Restarting the event will be after thirty minutes from the last clap of thunder. The Competitors Instructions give clear guidance for the procedures to be adopted if a thunderstorm is in the vicinity. If rowers are on the water assess the safest way to get rowers off the water.

d) MECHANISM OF COMMUNICATION - Entrants will be advised in the most practical timescale of any adjustments or cancellations. These will take the form of:

- i) Advising of potential problems when confirming entries and requesting competitors to check the ARC website (<http://head.abingdonrc.org.uk/>) on the Saturday evening prior to the race.
- ii) Contacting entrants individually by phone and/or email prior to the race.
- iii) In extreme cases of sudden difficulty, withholding racing numbers of affected crews, thereby preventing embarkation.

3. Rules Applying to this Event

- a) The event is run under the BR Rules of racing.
- b) Local rules are written up as Competitors Instructions and sent to each participating club, as well as posted on the ARC website.
- c) The BR Row Safe Guidance is used as a basis for this plan.

4. Communications

- a) MOBILE RADIOS - Communication between marshals, umpires, safety teams, start/ finish timing and race control is by specifically tuned radios. Positioning is as shown on the Safety Plan map together with those in the three safety launches which patrol the length of the course.
- b) A Race Co-ordinator is appointed to overhear all communications and is the person responsible for co-ordinating any action which needs to be taken in the event of accident or emergency.
- c) When conditions limit the distance for communication such that the Race co-ordinator cannot contact all stations then he or she will instruct one of the stations to act as a relay.

5. Locations of First Aid and Rescue Equipment on the Course

- a) A map is provided as a reference to locations.
- b) First Aid is provided by St John's Ambulance located in the main boating area at Rye Farm Meadow.
- c) For more significant injuries or illnesses, attendance at Abingdon Minor Injuries Unit or John Radcliffe hospital Emergency Department may be advised. If necessary, ambulance transport will be summoned.
- d) In cases of significant threat to life or limb, do not delay; summon an emergency ambulance by dialling 999.
- e) There will be three safety launches positioned along the length of the river which will all be issued with buoyancy aids, line throwing equipment, thermal blankets, first aid equipment, knife, paddle, anchor and line and radio communication to Race Control.

6. SAFETY on the River

- a) Boating marshals will be making random checks on boats looking in particular at: heel release mechanisms, bow balls, buoyancy compartments/canvasses, rudder lines and the general security of fixings. Stage marshals who will be helping crews onto the water will also be giving visual checks. Any boat that is unsafe will not be allowed to race.
- b) When leaving the landing stages before their race, crews must boat with bows pointing upstream. Crews must then paddle past the blue buoy located approx. 100m upstream of the landing stages, spin, and proceed downstream through the bridge to the racing area.
- c) Competitors must obey instruction given by the river or bank side marshals at all times and stay clear of the weir downstream of the marshalling area at the start of the race.
- d) Competitors should keep to the right of the river at all times whether racing or otherwise.
- e) During the race, slower boats should move to the centre of the river to allow the overtaking boats to pass.
- f) In an emergency competitors should stay with their boat and await rescue, which will be carried out as quickly as possible by the safety teams positioned along the course. Other craft will be instructed to keep well clear. Casualties will be returned to the boating area upstream of the finish as quickly as possible. If injuries are serious, information must be sent to Race Control as quickly as possible by radio so that medical help can be requested. **DO NOT ASSUME SOMEONE ELSE HAS DONE IT;** it is better to be informed more than once than not at all!
- g) All competitors when finished must continue paddling upstream to the boating area and disembark as soon as possible. Boats waiting in the finish area are a hazard to other competitors.

7. Emergency Action Plan

- a) **ACCIDENTS ON THE WATER** - In the event of competitors being injured, capsizing or becoming ill whilst rowing the quickest way of rescue and access to emergency service is by safety launch. Although there are several access points from the local roads, safety launches should transport competitors to meet an emergency services ambulance at the following points and should make it clear by radio to where they are transporting the casualty(ies):
 - i) Boating area at Rye Farm Meadow where First Aid will be available
 - ii) Redline Cruisers, Wilsham Road
 - iii) Slipway at St Helens Road next to St Helens Church
 - iv) Culham Lock
 - v) Abingdon Rowing Club boathouse
- b) **ACCIDENTS ON LAND** - Competitors and supporters congregate around the landing stage where the control, administration, results, prize giving, food and drink is situated. At this point there is radio communication to summon help either from the Emergency Services through the Race Co-ordinator.
- c) **SAFETY TEAMS** - There are three safety launches and two Swift Water Rescue Teams positioned along the course. Their responsibilities are:
 - i) To patrol the river whilst competitors are making their way to the start. This includes the marshalling area where congestion can cause accidents.
 - ii) To ensure that the course is clear for the races to proceed.
 - iii) To be positioned along the course between land observation and where quick response can be made to any part of the course.
 - iv) To warn officials and crews of any dangers whilst the race is in progress e.g. commercial or private boats/launches refusing to wait until racing is finished before travelling on the course.
 - v) To sweep the course at the end of each division to ensure all competitors have completed safely.Each safety launch carries buoyancy aids, line throwing equipment, thermal blankets, first aid equipment, knife, paddle, anchor and line, simple hand holds fixed to the side and radio communication to Race Control (on the umpires net). The crews of the launches have in most part previous experience or a qualification in launch control, an appointed safety launch co-ordinator holds a briefing meeting about procedures etc. before embarkation.

8. Start and Finish

a) **START MARSHALS** - Start marshals are co-ordinated by a chief marshal who briefs them on procedures. Part of these procedures is to act as safety lookouts to avoid collisions and arrange the crews in a safe position close to the bank facing upstream awaiting the signal to turn. Loudhailers provided.

b) **FINISH MARSHALS** - The finish marshals ensure that crews continue to proceed downstream past Redline Cruisers without stopping to reduce any hazard to those still racing. They also ensure crews proceed upstream to the landing stages. Loudhailers provided.

9. Race Controller

The Race Controller is the Chief Umpire who has contact with the Chief Start Marshall, all the Race Monitors and Race Control the safety launches. The duties of the Race Controller are to instruct the starter when it is safe to start the race, summon safety launches in the event of an accident, halt racing if a situation demands it and through the control centre summon emergency services. If he is not available a deputy will be appointed and be at Position 10.

10. Welfare Plan

Abingdon Rowing Club has endorsed the BR Child Protection Policy. In particular:

- i) The club has appointed a Club Welfare Officer (CWO) whose contact details together with an outline of responsibilities will be displayed at the Event.
- ii) The CWO and all ARC coaches who work with children are subjected to a Disclosure Baring Service (DBS) check
- iii) The Club, whenever reasonably possible, communicates with children through their parents.
- iv) The Club maintains appropriate levels of supervision for children's activities within the Club.
- v) The Club judges its treatment of children against criterion akin to the actions of "a reasonably prudent parent".

a) WELFARE: ARC will seek to ensure that there are no opportunities for Junior participants to find themselves isolated and unguarded and that they are supervised by at least two known volunteer adults. The location for the event does not provide access to changing facilities, and is open air on public land. Instructions will be passed to all volunteers, coaches and attending adults from all competing clubs to maintain watch, remain vigilant and report anything suspicious such as someone unknown to crews hanging around or tampering with equipment.

b) MISSING PARTICIPANTS. A list of emergency contact numbers of persons responsible for each competing crew will be compiled through information captured in BROE and on the day, and held by the Event Secretary. Numbers can be used to reunite separated coaches and crew members through the Event Secretary. In the event that a young person goes missing, this should be reported to the Event Secretary immediately together with a description of the individual. This information will be forwarded to the CWO and Race Co-ordinator and cascaded out to all ARC event volunteers. All endeavours will be made to locate and reunite the missing person in question. If a young person is missing for more than 20 minutes the Police will be informed.