

# NORTH OF ENGLAND HEAD OF THE RIVER RACE and CHESTER LONG DISTANCE SCULLS

## SAFETY PLAN

### 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document identifies the risks involved in the event and outlines the steps to be taken by the organisers, officials and competitors to minimize those risks.
- 1.2 The race can be subject to extremely cold weather. The speed of the current can be affected by heavy rainfall or snowmelt higher up the catchment. In addition the race can be affected by high tides.
- 1.3 The first part of the course runs through farmland. Any restrictions currently in force on movements through farmland will be complied with.

### 2 WEATHER & WATER CONDITIONS

- 2.1 The weather can create cold wet conditions for competitors and difficult water - particularly if a strong wind is blowing against a fast current. Icy or foggy conditions can also arise.
- 2.2 High tides which come over the weir can carry large quantities floating debris upstream.
- 2.3 The conditions will be assessed on the day of the event and the Race Committee will decide upon the appropriate action to be taken, viz:
  - run the event as planned
  - cancel specific classifications
  - cancel the morning or afternoon race
  - cancel the whole event
  - run the event over a revised course
- 2.4 If the prevailing weather conditions are such that the event may possibly have to be cancelled, the Race Committee will inspect the course on the day prior to the event and if cancellation is inevitable will advise competitors by telephoning them as quickly as possible thereafter.
- 2.6 If adverse conditions arise on the day of the event and the event is cancelled, then the competitors' race numbers will not be issued and Stage Marshals will not allow crews to go afloat.
- 2.7 Prior to crews boating, the course will be patrolled by a Safety Launch to remove or secure off the course any floating debris and to check that no new hazards have arisen overnight.

### 3 RULES APPLYING TO THE EVENTS

- 3.1 The events are organised under the A.R.A. Rules of Racing.
- 3.2 The ARA Water Safety Code has been used as the basis for this plan.
- 3.3 The local rules governing the race are sent to each competing club under the heading "Notes for

Competitors", together with a copy the draw, detailing embarkation time and point. Separate "Notes for Officials" are sent to everyone involved in supervising the race

### 4 COMMUNICATIONS

- 4.1 Race Monitors stationed at key points on the course are equipped with radios tuned to a dedicated frequency. In addition radios on the same frequency are held by the drivers of the Colwick Park Life Savers launches, Race Medical Adviser, St John Ambulance, the Safety Officer and Race Control.
- 4.2 Mobile telephones are held by the timekeepers at the start and finish and by Race Control.
- 4.3 **In the event of an EMERGENCY, the nearest official will call, "PAN, PAN, PAN," on his radio and all other radio users will observe radio silence and follow the instructions given by that official.**
- 4.4 The telephone in Royal Chester Rowing Club, 01244 322468, is situated in the entrance to the club bar. There is also a telephone in The King's School R.C. adjacent to R.C.R.C. and a pay phone in the Riverside Bar of The Boathouse Inn.

### 5 RESCUE, MEDICAL AND FIRST AID

- 5.1 Colwick Park Life Saving Club will provide water-borne rescue services.
- 5.2 Their high speed rigid inflatable launches will be stationed at the quarter points of the race, viz; - one at Gypsy Hill to cover the section from the Start to Road Bridge, one at Heron Bridge to cover the section from below the Road Bridge to the Red House and one near Sandy Lane to cover the section from the Red House to the Finish.
- 5.3 A medical adviser, will be stationed at Race Control.
- 5.4 First Aid cover will be provided by St John Ambulance stationed adjacent to the RCRC.
- 5.5 Anyone requiring further medical assistance will be transferred to the Countess of Chester Hospital. Liverpool Road, Chester.

### 6 EMERGENCY ACTION PLANS

- 6.1 **ACCIDENTS ON WATER**  
In the event of a capsized, a collision, a competitor being injured or otherwise becoming ill, the nearest Race Monitor will immediately advise all other Race Monitors and the Colwick Park Rescue Launches by radio.
- 6.2 At the same time the nearest Race Monitor will decide whether or not to stop the race.

6.3 He will also offer help and assistance pending the arrival of the rescue boat.

6.4 Casualties will be taken directly to the Royal Chester Rowing Club stage. En route the rescue launch will advise the duty doctor or the nature of the injury/illness and the doctor will decide whether or not the emergency services need to be called. If necessary a launch at R.C.R.C. will take the Race Doctor to the casualty.

#### 6.5 **ACCIDENTS ON LAND**

Competitors embark and disembark from the landing stages at Royal Chester Rowing Club, Grosvenor Rowing Club, the King's School Rowing Club, The Groves, and Queen's Park High School Rowing Club and Sandy Lane.

6.6 Telephones and emergency services (including the event doctor) are available to competitors at R.C.R.C. A telephone is available at Grosvenor RC and it is a short walk for the doctor and St John's personnel to Grosvenor RC and a further 200 metres walk to the Groves.

6.7 A public telephone is available at The Groves.

6.8 For competitors boating from Queen's Park High School RC, there is radio contact with the emergency services across the river. The doctor and First Aid staff can be transported to the Queen's Park boathouse by launch.

6.9 The launches carrying Race Monitors will proceed upriver in advance crews so as to provide safety cover to competitors progressing upstream to the Start. In addition the launches will sweep the river to ensure that there is no debris or other hazard to crews on the course.

6.10 The Race Monitors will warn Race Control immediately they observe any floating debris or hazard that they are unable to deal with so that all crews can be warned and/or other parties despatched to remove the hazard.

6.11 Race Monitors will warn each other and Race Control of any dangers or hazards occurring during the race.

6.12 At the end of each race the Race Monitors will check the course to ensure that all competitors have completed the course.

6.13 Should a Race Monitor decide to stop the race, he will then:

- Advise all Race Monitors by radio that the race should be stopped.
- He, and all Race Monitors upstream of his station shall stop crews racing.
- When the Starter hears that the race is to be stopped he will not allow any more crews to start.

## 7 **EMBARKATION, START AND FINISH**

7.1 Stage marshals on duty at each embarkation point will carry out safety checks on bow balls, heel restraints compartment hatches and coxes' buoyancy aids. Boats that are improperly equipped or unsafe will not be allowed to race.

7.2 The Chief Marshal at Eccleston will direct his Marshals so as to ensure that crews are held in a safe position prior to the start of the race.

7.3 Crews will turn only on the instructions of the Marshals who will then ensure that crews proceed to the start in a safe, orderly manner.

7.4 At the Finish all crews must proceed beyond the Suspension Bridge keeping to the QPHS bank before turning to return to their embarkation point and paddling back upstream on the RCRC bank.

Crews disembarking at the QPHS stage should wait near the RCRC stage until crossing under the instruction of a Marshal when the river is clear.

Finish Marshals will ensure that this rule is adhered to.

## 8 **COMPETITORS' AND CLUBS' RESPONSIBILITIES**

8.1 Personnel- it is the duty of clubs to ensure that the competitors are competent to complete the course.

8.2 Equipment – It is the duty of competitors to ensure that their equipment is safe and fit for racing.

8.3 **Clothing - All competitors should be appropriately dressed to protect themselves against the weather, particularly while marshalling at the start.**

8.4 All competitors should be trained in capsize drill - in the event of a capsize they should hold onto their boat pending the arrival of the rescue launch.

8.5 All competitors should familiarise themselves with the rules of the race set out in "Notes for competitors"

## 9 **COURSE PLAN**

9.1 A plan of the course showing all known hazards will be sent to each competing crew. A copy will be available for inspection at R.C.R.C.

# NORTH OF ENGLAND HEAD and CHESTER LONG DISTANCE SCULLS

## *Notes for Competitors and Local Rules*

The Royal Chester Rowing Club Open Events Committee thanks you for your entry, and asks you to take note of the following instructions:

### **TRAILER PARKING AND BOAT ASSEMBLY**

Parking is available for boat trailers **ONLY** on the Groves between Souter's Lane and the Old Dee Bridge (see enclosed map); **access is via Souter's Lane, NOT Dee Lane**. Trailers should leave via Dee Lane, NOT Souter's Lane. The nearest public parking for other vehicles is the NCP car park on Pepper Street. Towing vehicles must not park in the Groves. Free parking permits to the Little Roodee Car Park will be issued on the day at the Groves.

Boats must be assembled and dismantled on the hardstanding areas, NOT on the road itself, which must be left clear for emergency access. **The Cycleway must also be kept clear.**

### **CREWS' NUMBERS**

**The race starts at 10:15 am.** You should collect your crews' numbers from the Race Offices at Royal Chester RC and **QPHS for crews boating from there**. Numbers should be collected at least 30 minutes before the embarkation time (see enclosed list).

**Numbers must be clearly visible from the bank.** One number is worn by bow and must be securely pinned, **with 4 pins**. There are **2** boat numbers they must be displayed clearly one on each side of the boat adjacent to bow seat.

### **BOATING AND THE START**

Crews should leave the boating area at their allocated embarkation time. You **WILL NOT** be called to do so by marshals. **Crews arriving**

**late at the start may be disqualified or given a time penalty.** Crews on their way to the start must have passed the **RED HOUSE PUB** (2.5 kilometres from the Groves boating areas ) at least **35** mins before the start time. **Crews failing to do so will be stopped and return to their boating area.** Crews must also pass the **ROAD BRIDGE** (4k from the Groves boating areas) at least **20**mins before the start)time, **crews failing to do so will be stopped and held there by the umpire.**

Crews must assemble above the start with their bows facing upstream with ODD numbers on the LEFT bank, EVEN numbers on the RIGHT (towpath/Eccleston) bank. Marshalls on the LEFT bank will indicate to crews the required staging positions.

It is inevitable that there will be some waiting at the start. Please ensure that your crews are dressed for the conditions.

It is **IMPERATIVE** that the race start promptly.

### **STARTING**

*Competitors must obey the instructions of the start marshals at all times.*

The chief start marshal will signal groups of crews to turn into the centre of the river, maintaining their numerical sequence. When instructed, crews must row downstream keeping 1-2 lengths of clear water from the boat ahead, until they reach the starter on the towpath bank about 50 metres above the start line.

The starter will release each crew with the words "Number .... Go!". Timing will commence as each boat crosses the start line.

The procedure will be repeated for each group.

## THE RACE

*Any crew being overtaken must give way, giving the overtaking crew a clear passage. Failure to do so may result in a time penalty or a disqualification.*

*Any crew failing to obey the instructions of the Umpires may be disqualified or suffer a time penalty.*

*Complaints by competitors about interference must be reported to Race Control within 10 minutes of disembarking. Time bonuses will not be awarded to impeded crews; offending crews may incur time penalties.*

## THE FINISH

Competitors will be timed as their bows pass the finish **100m upstream of Royal Chester RC**. Crews remain under the jurisdiction of the Finish Umpire until they reach the suspension bridge. ***They MUST paddle under the bridge keeping to the QPHS bank WITHOUT STOPPING. Turn below the suspension bridge and paddle back upstream keeping to the RCRC bank. Crews disembarking at the QPHS Stage should paddle as far as RCRC before crossing under the direction of a marshal when the river is clear.*** Failure to comply may result in disqualification.

Only competitors boating from Sandy Lane may return upstream beyond the finish on the Royal Chester RC side of the river, taking care not to impede racing crews.

## RESULTS

Provisional results will be displayed at Royal Chester RC as soon as possible after racing is over, and copies will be available after presentation of the prizes. Please leave a stamped addressed envelope when you collect your numbers if you wish results sheets to be sent to you.

Any appeals about timings must be made to the Chief Timekeeper immediately after the publication of results.

## WATER SAFETY

Water safety is of vital importance, and we would like you to pay particular attention to the following points, and to the attached **Safety Plan**.

This event is run according to the ARA Water Safety Code and **coxes must wear life jackets**. Crews not following the safety code will not be allowed to boat.

There is no River Closure during the race, so please be on the look out for pleasure craft on the lower reaches of the river, particularly if the weather is good. Operators of the larger pleasure craft will be in radio contact with race officials and so will be aware of race status, ***but it is your responsibility to keep a look out for such boats.***

ABOVE ALL, HAVE A SAFE AND ENJOYABLE DAY ON THE NORTH-WEST'S BEST ROWING VENUE!

ROYAL CHESTER RC WILL BE OPEN FOR REFRESHMENTS.

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