

**SPRING HEAD RACE**  
**NORTHWICH ROWING CLUB - 3 APRIL 2016**

**SAFETY PLAN**

**1 THE COMPETITION**

The competition is held under the British Rowing Rules of Racing and the British Rowing Row Safe Guide.

**2 THE COURSE**

The competition takes place on the River Weaver between the Railway Viaduct and Hunts Lock as displayed on the course map.

The width of the river is restricted at the Railway Viaduct, the Blue Bridge, the Narrows (previously site of locks) and past the Boatyard.

**3 WEATHER**

The Race Committee, together with the Safety Adviser, will monitor weather conditions on days prior to and during the competition. In the event of adverse weather conditions competitors may be limited to those with more experience, events may be withdrawn or the competition may be suspended or cancelled. Any Key Race Official may halt racing if safety or fairness are compromised (Rule of Racing 2-2-2)

**3.1 Current**

There are computer controlled overflow sluices at both ends of the section of the River Weaver over which the competition takes place that provide a constant river level. River flow rate depends on recent rainfall over Cheshire.

**3.2 Visibility**

The Weaver Valley is prone to early morning mist. Boating should not commence until the Chairman of the Race Committee is satisfied that race monitors and all launches are in position and the length of the course is visible. It is essential that the competition is finished in the daylight.

**3.3 Thunder and Lightning**

Should thunder and lightning occur the British Rowing 30/30 guidance for clearing the water and seeking shelter will be applied.

**3.4 Ice**

The River Weaver can freeze over during the early spring but this is most unlikely to be a problem for the competition.

**4 BOATING**

**4.1 Late Boating**

In consideration for crews waiting at the start, crews allowing insufficient time to get to the start will not be allowed to boat.

**4.2 Inexperienced Crews**

Crews and coxes are expected to be prepared to compete under the weather conditions prevailing. Race officials may withdraw crews who demonstrate insufficient experience when proceeding to the start.

**4.3 Medical Conditions**

In the interests of safety, competitors with known medical conditions limiting their rowing abilities will be treated sympathetically but should make their situation known to the Chairman of the Race Committee so that appropriate action can be taken should assistance be required eg asthma attack.

**5 CLOTHING**

All competitors must be suitably clothed for the prevailing weather conditions – with particular reference to rowing to and waiting at the start. Control Commission will check to ensure this is adhered to.

## **6 EQUIPMENT**

### **6.1 Boats**

It is the responsibility of all competitors to ensure that their boats are safe and are prepared to the standards required by the British Rowing Row Safe Guide. Control Commission will inspect all boats and will exclude any boat that fails to meet the standard required for bow balls, heel restraints and mechanical condition.

### **6.2 Boat Buoyancy**

As from 1 Oct 2009 all boats entering NWRRC events must have adequate boat buoyancy for the boat type and crew weight. This includes the fitting of additional buoyancy where deemed necessary. Control Commission will inspect all boats to ensure this requirement is complied with.

### **6.3 Boat Numbering**

As from 1 Oct 2009 all boats entering NWRRC events must be identified by a 3 letter code, as issued by British Rowing, together with a 3 digit code as determined by the club. Control Commission will inspect all boats to ensure this requirement is complied with. No number means boat may be excluded.

### **6.4 Personal Floatation Device**

Coxes must wear a personal floatation device (PFD) that is fit for purpose and boat type on top of all clothing. Control Commission will check to ensure this requirement is complied with.

## **7 POTENTIAL COLLISION**

### **7.1 Debris**

The course will be checked for debris by the safety and marshalling launches prior to the commencement of racing. Race Monitors becoming aware of debris becoming a hazard during the day will warn crews as necessary and arrange to have the debris removed.

### **7.2 Circulation Pattern**

Due to the course being relatively narrow in parts boats cannot be permitted to row in opposite directions. This is not a problem for most crews who will either be progressing to the start or racing to the finish. Occasionally it may be necessary for a boat to return to the boating area for repairs. In this situation Race Monitors and launches will be notified by radio and appropriate instructions will be given to the returning crew and warnings given to other crews in the vicinity.

### **7.3 Other River Users**

At times, canal boats and other river users at the boatyard may wish to pass between Vale Royal and Hunts Locks. Such users have been requested not to travel whilst racing is in progress.

### **7.4 Anglers**

The course is a popular location for anglers who regularly hold competitions on this stretch of river. The Club notifies the local Anglers Association of the competition and we reciprocate by suspending competitive rowing for their competitions ie. there should be no anglers present on the day.

### **7.5 Moored Vessels**

There are a number of significant vessels moored at the Boatyard. The Club meets with the boatyard manager to address any concerns and to inform him of race monitoring and buoying arrangements for the competition. A Race Monitor is positioned on one of the moored boats to minimise the risk of collision. Competitors should be aware that if a moored boat is damaged as a result of a collision then the boatyard/boat owner will seek compensation for the cost of repairs.

A safety launch is positioned immediately upstream of the boatyard during racing.

### **7.6 Towpath and Cycling**

There is a towpath on the clubhouse side of the course, part of which is a section of the National Cycle Network. It will become crowded with pedestrians and spectators during racing, especially towards the finish. Cyclists associated with the competition must consider the safety of others at all times.

## **8 SWIMMING AND CAPSIZE**

### **8.1 Swimming Ability**

All persons participating, including coxswains, must be able to swim 50 metres in light clothing and should have undertaken a capsizing drill supervised by their club. Anyone who does not meet this required level of competency should wear a PFD.

### **8.2 Capsize**

Should a capsizing occur competitors must stay with their boat until rescued.

### **8.3 Rescue**

The nearest Key Race Official will take charge of the rescue. All other radio users will maintain radio silence until the incident is declared to be over. Racing will be suspended if necessary.

2 Safety launches are available, one upstream of the Blue Bridge about 750 metres after the Start and the other at the Narrows about 600m before the Finish.

Safety launch drivers should be trained to RYA level 2.

In the event of an accident to which an ambulance is summoned, the safety launch will, if required, convey the injured parties to a point on the bank closest to the appropriate Ambulance Access Point.

Competing crews are required to give way to a safety launch attending an incident at all times. 2 marshalling launches will provide safety support in an emergency if deemed necessary.

### **8.4 Safety Equipment**

All launches are equipped with rescue kits with contents as specified by British Rowing which includes thermal blankets.

All launch drivers and passengers must wear a PFD.

Race Monitors are issued with throw lines.

## **9 INCIDENT REPORTING**

Incidents occurring during the competition should be recorded by the Organising Committee and reviewed at the Competition wash-up meeting.

A Club(s) involved in an incident during the competition must enter all details of the incident into the British Rowing on-line incident reporting system within 24 hours of the days event finishing. This includes both near incidents and land-based incidents.

## **10 COMMUNICATIONS**

### **10.1 Radios**

All Key Race Officials and launches are provided with radios that are operated to a recognised procedure. In addition, radios are supplemented by mobile phones.

### **10.2 Megaphones**

Race Monitors and launches are provided with megaphones.

### **10.3 Clubhouse Telephone**

The Clubhouse Telephone Number is: **01606 49461**

## **11 SAFETY AND MEDICAL COVER**

### **11.1 Safety Adviser**

The Competition Safety Adviser can be contacted on the radio network.

### **11.2 Medical Adviser**

First aid will be provided by St John Ambulance personnel who will be available at the Northwich Rowing Club Clubhouse. The Medical Adviser can be contacted via the Entries Desk who will have a radio.

## **12 EMERGENCY PROCEDURE**

If ambulance services are required the Competition Emergency Procedure should be followed.

## **13 COXES/SCULLERS BRIEFING**

Safety considerations can change from day-to-day and between Divisions, therefore it is essential that representatives of all crews, however familiar they may consider themselves to be with the course, attend the briefing session relevant to their Division.