

Safety Plan and Risk Assessment

The following notes are distributed to clubs racing at Wallingford Head of the River for distribution to competitors, their coaches, organisers, marshals, umpires and safety personnel and are available on the event website.

They must be read by every person taking part together with the [Competitors' Instructions](#), Row Safe: A Guide to Good Practice in Rowing ("Row Safe") and the Course Map. **Regatta Safety Advisor**

The Organising committee has appointed Ted Bowler as the Safety Advisor. He is a member of the Organising Committee and has produced this document and updated the risk assessment which is annexed in this document.

Race committee

A race committee chaired by Dave Hancock will undertake the duties detailed in the British Rowing Rules of Racing. In particular, they will decide whether weather conditions are too dangerous to permit racing to continue.

Race Safety

Wallingford Head of the River is run in accordance with the British Rowing Rules of Racing ("Rules of Racing"). It is compulsory that all competitors comply fully with the Rules of Racing and all aspects of Row Safe.

It cannot be emphasised too strongly that it is the responsibility of Clubs, their athletes and coaches to ensure that their equipment complies in all regards with the requirements of Row Safe.

Race officials will inspect boats chosen at random. Boats that fail to comply with Row Safe and the Rules of Racing will be excluded from the event. All crews attending Wallingford Long Distance Sculls must comply fully with the rules as laid out in the [Competitors' Instructions](#). Specific attention is drawn to competitors and coaches that boats designed to have watertight hatches and/or bungs must have these in place and fitted correctly.

Please note the recent update to the "rules of racing" where Rule 2-3-8b has been amended to bring it in line with FISA standards requiring each heel to be restrained to prevent it from rising higher than 7cm measured at right angles from the footplate.

All club/crew coaches are to ensure that their athletes are correctly briefed on Row Safe, in particular in relation to capsizing procedures.

Participants who have any potential health problems that might cause problems to themselves or other competitors (e.g. epilepsy) must advise the Race Officials of their condition prior to going afloat. The Race Committee retains the right not to allow a competitor to go afloat if, in their opinion, the health condition constitutes an unacceptable risk.

Suspending/Stopping the Race

The primary duty of every Race Official is to care for the safety of competitors and others. It may be necessary to stop the race should conditions alter significantly through the course of the race or a major event occurs (e.g. multiple collisions). Racing will be abandoned or postponed if the Safety Advisor and/or a Race Umpire decide that conditions are unsafe. The Safety Advisor and/or Race Umpire making the decision to abandon or suspend the race shall immediately inform all Marshals and Umpires using the event radio network.

Marshals, mainly club members with knowledge of the river, will immediately instruct racing boats to stop by shouting "STOP RACING" on megaphones and guiding boats into the most sheltered part of the river



adjacent to one of the banks. If conditions are equal on each bank, preference should be given to bringing crews in to the towpath bank where assistance can be given more easily.

Launches are to stay in position so as to give cover over the entire course and drivers are to be vigilant and respond to any request for help from Marshals. All launches are equipped with Safety Boxes which include emergency foil blankets which should be used to ensure scullers remain warm.

The Safety Advisor and the Chief Umpire shall decide on terminating the event or re-starting if conditions improve.

Safety cover, incidents, and emergencies

All launches will carry radios and safety equipment as specified by Row Safe. Safety cover will be provided for the reach bounded by the old Wallingford Bridge and the marshalling position of the last boat in each division. Cover will commence 90 minutes before the start of each division, with limited cover provided by safety boats initially. Full cover will be in place 20 minutes before the start of each division. Boats going outside this area do so at their own risk.

Bank marshals will be in place to provide line of sight cover for the whole course from 20 minutes prior to the start of the division, until the last boat in that division has cleared the area for which that Marshal is responsible. A safety launch will follow the last crew in each division. On the water safety cover will terminate for each division as the last crew arrives at the rafts.

First aid kits are located at Wallingford Rowing Club, with the catering facility in the boating area and on board all launches.

A radio system will be in operation. The radio system covers the bank marshals along the course, the start, the safety boats along the course and the finish. This is supplemented by use of officials' mobile phones as a backup in the event of radio failure.

In the event of an on the water incident, competitors should firstly ensure their own safety, and then ensure a Race Official is aware of the problem and offer assistance if required.

If any persons suffer any injuries, the nearest Race Official will determine whether these are minor and are treatable by the event's first aid staff, or whether they are serious enough to require the emergency services via a 999 call.

Persons suffering minor injuries will be taken by rescue launch to Wallingford Rowing Club or the nearest landing stage, notifying race control by radio or by phone. Race Control will then organise appropriate medical support. First Aid kits are in all launches, at the Finish, at Wallingford Rowing Club and at Registration.

In the event of a person being injured on land, Race Control should be informed. Qualified first aiders or the duty medical staff will be called to assist. Further medical assistance may be summoned through race control.

All accidents, collisions or capsize must be reported to Race Control and a BR incident report form filled in prior to leaving the event. Copies of Incident Forms will be held at Race Control.

In a serious incident call the Emergency Services on 999. Do not wait for the event's first aiders or Medical Officer to arrive.

Please note that a conventional Ambulance may not be able to get close to the riverbank. Do not hesitate to ask for the Air Ambulance if you are at a position inaccessible by road. Safe landing areas, clear of obstructions are shown on the Course Map.

Clothing



Do think of conditions and the fact that you may be sat at the start area for some time. Ensure that scullers have suitable clothing, particularly juniors.

Annex: Safety Risk assessment

Instructions for competitors, officials, visitors, and coaches are available online at www.wallingfordhead.org.uk from a minimum of 14 days prior to the event. Instructions detail such items as circulation patterns for vehicles and boats, location of facilities etc.

All Boat Movements on the Water are covered by Row Safe: A Guide to Good Practice in Rowing (“The Code”) as published by British Rowing. The Code applies to all participants, who are responsible for selfpolicing the code. Further, coaches, marshals, umpires and all officials enforce the code.

Failure to comply with any part of that code in relation to equipment or behaviour will lead to the crew or participants not being able to go afloat and /or race.

Hazard	Potential Outcome	Likelihood	Measures to Reduce Risk	Overall Risk
VEHICLE & CYCLE MOVEMENTS & USE:				
Hazard while navigating to parking area.	Injury to rowers and spectators	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marshalls to advise drivers on parking locations. Speed limits to be maintained using signs and marshals 	Low
Hazard for pedestrians when proceeding to racing and spectating	Injury to rowers and spectators or pedestrians	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speed limits to be maintained using signs and marshals. 	Low
Fall hazard while unloading boats	Injury to rowers and /or damage to boats	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reliance on competency of crews and coaches. British Rowing provides guidelines on trailers and towing 	Low / Moderate
Collision hazard due to trailers, boats and cars	Injury to rowers and /or damage to boats	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Car park marshals to ensure trailers and cars are parked to allow adequate space to manoeuvre boats and people and that no speeding is allowed Traffic to trailer park buildings is restricted to trailers and cars with boats No spectator cars are allowed into the trailer car parks, but directed to alternative parking under marshal supervision 	Low



Hazard	Potential Outcome	Likelihood	Measures to Reduce Risk	Overall Risk
LANDING STAGES:				
Slip hazard due to muddy slope leading to rafts	Injury to rowers, and/or damage to boats	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slope will be treated or covered in straw to provide a non-slip surface 	Low
Trip hazard due to items being left on landing stages	Injury to rowers, and/or damage to boats	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raft marshals instructed to minimise time crew equipment is left on staging Blade storage is provided at the sandy bank to keep blades off the floating stages Shoes to be cleared from the stages by coaches and raft marshals 	Low
PRIOR TO RACE START:				
Collision with other boats on way to start or in marshalling area	Injury to rowers and/or damage to boats	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On water safety cover provided from 20 minutes prior to start Reliance on competency of crews and coaches, and compliance with the Code Traffic rules are circulated to athletes prior to the event, non-compliance may lead to race penalties being applied 	Low
Long wait in marshalling area prior to start	Potential for hypothermia	Low, varies according to September weather	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reliance on competency of crews and coaches supported by British Rowing Coach education programme Raft marshals to advise crews, especially coxes, thought to have inadequate protection for the current conditions 	Low



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DURING A RACE:				
Incidents involving other race crews	Injury to rowers and /or damage to boats	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All racing is carried out under British Rowing Rules of Racing and in compliance with the Code. All races are observed by marshals at all times Bank marshals along the course will advise boats to move as necessary if there is a safety issue No warm-up on the course and warming up is restricted to the marshalling area under strict instructions of the bank marshals 	Low
Capsize	Potential for hypothermia	Low (no small boats)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Umpires and marshals along the course can summon safety boats with emergency blankets 	Low
THUNDER STORMS:				
Lightning	Severe injury, death or damage to equipment and structures	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Race Committee to apply 30 second/10 minute rule. When gap between visible lightning and thunder is 30 seconds or less, racing to be stopped, water to be cleared. All tents are to be evacuated, and all spectators to be advised to get into vehicles, to close doors and windows. Then await the all clear All clear when lightning /thunder gap exceeds 30 seconds for 10 minutes In the case of lightning, all blades MUST be put flat on the ground and not held by athletes or coaches 	Very Low



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ON THE COURSE:				
Overhanging trees on the race line	Injury to rowers and/or damage to boats	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overhanging trees have been cut back to minimise the possibility of interference Marshals to warn boats if safety may be compromised 	Low
Cruisers, long boats and other river traffic	Injury to rowers and/or damage to boats	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lock Keepers at Benson Lock and Cleeve Lock will be given hand-outs for boats entering the rowing reach and giving advice Marshals will ensure that the bends are clear before start of racing and keep particularly vigilant in guiding cruisers etc. in the area of the bends 	Low
Bends (1km into race)	Injury to rowers and/or damage to boats	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extra marshals allocated to keep crews visible at all times and advise on safe line 	Low
Four-arches Railway Bridge	Injury to rowers and/or damage to boats	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take care going through narrow arches and under control of marshals 	Low
INCLEMENT WEATHER:				
Squalls, heavy rain, sleet, snow, fog, severe crosswinds, etc.	Severe injury, death or damage to equipment and structures.	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Race Committee to assess race conditions and agree time delay(s), postponement of racing, cancellation of all racing, or cancellation of classes of crews felt to be at particular risk in the conditions Participants will be advised of the situation over the public address system. 	Low