

Wallingford Head

Competitors Instructions

Welcome to Wallingford Rowing Club's fours and eights head. These instructions, together with the event's safety plan and the map of the course are designed to help you get the most out of your day with us. Please help us by reading and complying with the following.

Safety: All coaches, coxes and steersmen must have read the safety plan, these instructions, and the map.

Parking: only vehicles transporting boats will be allowed into the riverside car park. All other vehicles must use the South Oxfordshire District Council offices car park. There is no charge payable for using either car park.

Registration: on arrival please report to Crew Registration in the boat rigging area. You must bring your ARA Licences (points cards) to registration - random checks will be performed before crew numbers are issued to you. Please register as early as possible to ease congestion.

Race numbers: will be issued to you when you register. The large numbers are to go on the backs of bow and the cox so as to be visible both during the race and before. Please use a pin in each corner to avoid the numbers folding in half and not being visible. The smaller self-adhesive numbers should be attached to the forward portion of **both** saxboards. If boats are used in both divisions DO remember to change numbers.

Practice outings: the rafts will be in place from 08:30. You may go out for practice outings but you must be off the river by 09:00. Please note that minimal safety cover will be in place before 09:00 and that OUBC, Oxford Brookes and Wallingford RC may have crews out on the river up to 10:00.

Boating times: the rafts are located immediately downstream of Wallingford Bridge. With such a large entry, adhering to the boating schedule is vital. Two times are given in the schedule - the first is when you should join the queue near the rafts so that your boat can be safety checked. The second time given is when you should be on the water - **crews that are not on the water by this time will NOT be allowed to boat.**

The order has been set to reduce the amount of time that crews will be on the water - even so high numbered boats should expect to be on the water for over 2 hours.

CC Checks: Your boat must have a secure bowball, heel-restraints and hatch covers fitted, and an EA-approved Thames identification number. You should have suitable warm clothing,

and coxes must wear life jackets.

Course: the finish is located at OUBC's boathouse 500m downstream of the rafts, and the start a further 4500m downstream and is just upstream of the islands above the railway bridge at Moulsoford. Beyond the start is another 4km of river to Cleve Lock giving plenty of space to warm up.

Getting to the start: normal river navigation rules apply at all times during the event. Hence to get to the start you must proceed downstream on the **west** half of the river (ie the right-hand side as a cox would look at it, or bow-side blades closer to the bank) keeping a good look out for other river users. The river is not closed to other traffic during the event: please respect their right to enjoy the river just as much as you do.

Marshalling positions: all boats will be marshalled downstream of the railway bridge: use the centre arch when travelling downstream. There will be marshals on the bank and a float to help you find your position. Boats should turn and point upstream, marshalling on the **east** half of the river in number order. Having turned to point upstream, you are again on the correct side of the river if your bow-side blades are the ones closest to the bank!

Start arrangements: once all boats have passed downstream of the bridge, the starter will set crews off at approximately 20 second intervals. Marshals will instruct you to move up towards the start - please make sure you have removed any excess kit and are ready to race well before you reach the start. In the last 100m before the start you may be asked to ease for a few seconds or conversely to row at increased pressure to open or close the gap to 20 seconds on the crew in front. Please listen for and react immediately to any such instruction. Your time will be taken from when you cross the timing line, about 50m (ie 5-10 strokes) upstream of the Starter.

Proper racing line: throughout the race you must keep to the **east** half of the river (bow-side blades closest to the bank again). At certain corners on the course and in the approach to the finish, there are buoys laid in mid river. The hull of your boat must pass to the east/bow-side/right-as-a-cox-would-look-at-it of every buoy.

Overtaking: the Wallingford stretch may be narrower and twistier than you are used to. Good steering is essential as is compliance with the following requirements in order to overtake safely. If being overtaken, in general you should move over to allow the overtaker to follow the shorter line by moving to the centre of the river, or, on a bend, moving to the outside of the bend.

On the straight, and on clockwise/right-handed bends, you are required to move to the centre of the river and to leave space

between you and the east bank for the faster boat to pass. On the three bends marked by buoys (see map) which are anti-clockwise/left-handed bends, you should move to the outside of the bend, ie the east bank, to allow the overtaker to follow the shorter line. This rule is new for 2007, and marshals on the bends (marshal positions 2, 3 and 9) will give appropriate instructions, especially on the approach to these three bends.

If several boats come together in one overtaking manoeuvre, three or even four abreast racing over the whole width of the river is not permitted. If boat 2 is trying to overtake slower boat 1, and simultaneously boat 3 is trying to overtake both, boat 2 should ease off the pressure slightly and remain behind boat 1 in order to allow the faster boat 3 through, then resume the overtaking manoeuvre on boat 1. The principle is always that the fastest boat should be given the clearest run up the course. However if you are the faster crew you also have a responsibility not to force a slower crew into the bank or into a collision with another boat.

Once you have been overtaken, move back onto the east half of the river.

Marshals will give instructions to help overtaking, with safety as their first priority. If there is a conflict between these rules, and the marshal's instructions, always follow the marshals.

The finish: After the finish you must keep paddling at light pressure away from the finish. Note that you must not pass the finish line again until after the last crew has finished, so, for example, you can not return to Oxford Brookes' boathouse until after racing has finished.

Time penalties: you will be given time penalties for failing to comply with marshal's instructions, for being late at the start, for each and every buoy passed on the wrong side, for failing to give way to a faster overtaking boat and/or for any use of language or gestures likely to bring the sport into disrepute. Remember that this event is held in a public place and that there will be spectators who have no connection with rowing. We expect the highest standards of sportsmanship from each and every one of you. Individual penalties will be added together, but the size of any penalty awarded will not be disclosed. In extreme cases, crews will be disqualified.

Refreshments: will be available in the boating area until racing has finished. The bar at Wallingford RC will also be open at 12.

Toilets: there are toilets in the boating area. Toilets and changing facilities are **also** at Wallingford RC.

Results: provisional results will be available at Wallingford RC about 60 minutes after the last crew has crossed the finish line. Results will be posted on the event's website after the event.

Prize-giving: prizes will be presented at WRC at about 4pm.