

Rules of Racing

**An Overview for Competitors
(based on 2023 Rules)**



Agenda

- Preparation
- Before You Race
- The Race
- After Racing



Preparation

Preparing for a Race Meeting



Entries

- You are representing your club.
- The entry is in the name of the club.
- Only authorised club officials are allowed to make entries on behalf of the club.
- Be patient waiting for the draw. Organisers are very busy and will not have time to respond to trivial questions.



Local Rules, Maps & Instructions

- Inspect local rules, maps and competitor / safety instructions.
- Steersmen should familiarise themselves with the course.
- Consider walking the course on unfamiliar waters.



Crew Kit

Rule 7-2-5.b

- Clubs representing a single club shall wear a uniform racing strip.
- This rules shall only apply to the outermost garment worn above the waist;
- Garments worn below the waist, and any secondary garment under the racing strip shall not be subject to this rule unless specifically required by the particular competition's regulations. ...
- ... In exceptional circumstances crew members may wear a plain, either white or a colour similar to the normal racing strip. This is at the competition/umpires discretion.



Before You Race

On the Race Day



Registration / Check-in

- Turn up in good time & register your crew.
- Coxwains & lightweights must weigh-in prior to racing.
- The competitors instructions will detail the weigh-in regime.
- Lightweights need to weigh-in between 1 and 2 hours prior to the first race in their event.
- Keep your weight certificate with you when boating.
- A coxbox is NOT part of the coxwains weight/dead-weight.
- From April 2023 coxwain minimum weight rules change.
 - Crews entered in junior 15 and under events – 45kg.
 - All other events – 55kg.
 - The separate weight for women's crews is no longer.



Substitutions

- Prior to official close of entries all crew members may be substituted.
- A maximum of half of the originally entered oarspeople plus cox may be substituted after close of entries.
- Substitutions must be notified to Race Control prior to racing.
 - Or via BROE prior to race day (if allowed by the event admins).
- Substitutes must be members of the originally entered clubs.
- Substitute coxes may come from other clubs.
- After a sculler/crew's first race a substitution may only be made on medical grounds and must be pre-approved by the Race Committee.



Masters Crew Substitutions

- As per other crews – plus...
- Substitute crew members in a Masters event, may come from other clubs.
- A substitute shall not be permitted if it would result in the lowering of the age category of the crew.
- The substituted crew must race at the age category on the draw.



Equipment Check

- Clubs are responsible for ensuring that equipment is safe and follows Row Safe guidance.
- Umpires only help to audit compliance.
- They **WILL** prevent obviously non-compliant boats from being used.

Boating / Marshalling

- Boat in good time for your race.
- In general present yourself to the start marshals at least 5 minutes before the race start time.
- But read local rules for additional regulations that are in force.



Timeliness

- It is the crew's responsibility to report to the start on time.
- You should take circulation patterns / likely traffic into consideration.
- If your crew has a problem make sure that race control and the starter are aware of any delays. They may be able to delay the start. But do not interrupt ongoing start procedures.
- The umpires may start a race without the delayed crew being present.



The Race



Official Warnings

- A crew may be awarded official warnings for a number of transgressions.
- Official warnings will be applied at the start of a crew's next race.
- Two official warnings will result in a crew being disqualified.
- Sources of warnings include:
 - Being responsible for making a false start.
 - Lateness or delaying of the start.
 - Crew circulation plan transgressions.



Reporting at the Start

- Each crew is responsible for being at the Start and ready to race two minutes before the scheduled time of the race.
- You should have removed outer garments and be prepared to race before you are called to attach to the stakeboats at the start.
- When calling crews to the start the Umpire will announce:
 - The race;
 - The competing crews;
 - Their stations;
 - And where practicable the time remaining to the start of the race.



Start Procedure

- At 2 minutes or when all crews are attached...
- The Starter will announce any “Official Warnings” and ask for warned crews to acknowledge.
- The Start will:
 - re-announce the race number;
 - Event; and
 - Outcome (who goes through the next round).
- Crews should now be actively keeping their boat straight and be ready to race.



Getting Straight

- Steersman raises hand to signal that a crew is NOT “straight and ready to race”.
- Each crew is responsible for being straight and ready to race at the end of the “Roll Call”.
- The Umpire is NOT responsible for ensuring your boat is straight.
- If you are not actively getting straight or are incapable of getting straight the umpire may start the race or exclude you.



The Start

- The Starter will carry out the “Roll Call” by naming each crew.
- After the “Roll Call” the race will be started by:
 - Saying “Attention”;
 - The red flag will be raised slowly / deliberately (and “Red Flag” said for races involving crews with visual impairments);
 - Followed by a distinct / variable pause; and
 - Then saying “Go” / dropping the red flag.
- A false start will be signalled by a bell ringing.
 - All crews should stop and return to the start as directed by the Starter.



The Race

- Each crew should remain on its proper course throughout the race and it should NOT:
 - Encroach on the proper course of other competitors;
 - “interfere” with other crews; or
 - Leave the limits of the course.



Steering

- Each crew is responsible for its own steering.
- The Umpire will only warn crews about steering if they are about to:
 - Interfere with or foul a competing crew;
 - Risk disqualification; or
 - Collide with a temporary / permanent obstruction.



Bells & Stopping

- A ringing bell / waved red flag means that ALL crews in a race should STOP rowing.
- Individual crews may be stopped if directly instructed by an Umpire.
 - No bell will be used in this case.

Port / Starboard

- Umpires use Port and Starboard to give steering instructions.
- Port (red) – left in the direction of travel. a.k.a. strokeside.
- Starboard (green) – right in the direction of travel. a.k.a. bowside.
- Coaches should teach crews these terms. They are nautical terms used worldwide!



Foul / Interference

- A “Foul” is defined as any collision or contact between boats, oars, sculls or persons in the same race.
- “Interference” is defined as conduct by a crew which impedes the legitimate progress of an opponent who is on his proper course.
- A “Foul” (without warning) or repeated “Interference” (with warning) could result in disqualification.



Outside Assistance / Coaching during Races

- Assistance from outside of the boat using an unaided voice is allowed.
- Any use of megaphones, radios, telephones etc. is NOT allowed.
- Unapproved boats or launches are not allowed to follow or pace a crew during a race.



The Finish

- The Finish Judges will declare a result after approval from the Race Umpires.
- Crossing the finish line first does not mean you have won.
- Incidents during the race may cause other verdicts to be declared.



Protests

- The steersman should signal any protests to the finish judges by raising a hand immediately after crossing the finish line.
- An Umpire's decision is final.
- An unresolved protest may be escalated to the Race Committee.
- The Race Committee cannot overturn an Umpire's decision.
- However they can draw attention to information that the Umpire was previously unaware of.
- Any formal appeals against umpires/event decisions should be made by the entering club's Captain.
- Typically the club Captain would decide whether an appeal is appropriate



Politeness Rules!

- Shouting is unlikely to help your cause.
- A polite, reasoned appeal against a decision is more likely to result in a favourable outcome.
- But ... don't flog a dead horse. Accept any decision in good grace.



Points to Note



Umpire vs Marshal

- Only licensed Umpire's may disqualify crews or give official warnings.
- Marshals assist with the running of the Regatta but otherwise have limited powers.



Unsportsmanlike Behaviour

- This is NOT tolerated and will likely result in a disqualification at a minimum.
- Note that supporters / coaches could cause a crew / whole club to be sanctioned.



More Information

- This guide provides a very concise summary of some of the rules.
- You should refer to the full Rules of Racing on the British Rowing website or in the British Rowing Almanac for a definitive guide.
- Umpires are happy to advise on specific aspects of the rules.
- Your Regional Umpiring Committee can put you in touch with Umpires who would be willing to come and talk to club members and answer questions.

