

Bedford Amateur Regatta

Safety Plan

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1. Introduction

Welcome to **Bedford Amateur Regatta**. We hope that you have an enjoyable and successful day's racing. With your help and co-operation we (and our equipment) should survive the day intact.

This Safety Plan incorporates the key points of the British Rowing publication 'Row Safe: A Guide to Good Practice in Rowing', and should be read by every cox and crew member. This plan is a local extension, for the duration of the Bedford Regatta, of **British Rowing's Guide to Safe Practice in Rowing**.

A copy of the Safety Plan is lodged with British Rowing, police, EA, and our Medical Professionals.

Medical professionals, "AMS Services" will be present during the whole Regatta.

Safety boats crewed by trained personnel will be patrolling the course throughout the regatta.

Umpires are equipped with loudhailers and basic safety equipment; throw-bags and emergency blankets.

Safety boats, umpires and other regatta officials are provided with radios operating on the Umpires' channel for communication.

2. Safety Procedures & Preventive Measures

2.1 Safety Instructions & Information for Competitors

Equipment:

It is the responsibility of each crew to ensure that the equipment that they are using is safe and compliant with the requirements of ***British Rowing's Rules of Racing*** and ***Guide to Safe Practice in Rowing***. **Coxes arriving at the start without lifejackets will be disqualified.** Coxes of front-loading boats should ensure that their life jackets allow for a quick escape from their boat.

All boats must have secure bow balls, heel restraints and watertight buoyancy chambers. Coxswains must wear a life jacket or buoyancy aid in the correct manner and be familiar with the method of operation. In "front-loader" boats coxswains must wear manually operated gas inflation life jackets (Rule 2-3-7a). Inspections will be conducted and omissions may lead to disqualification.

Coxes

All coxes should be familiar with the method of operation of their life jacket.

Boat Identification

As of 1st April 2011, all boats MUST have clearly visible Boat ID, as specified in Rules of British Rowing Section L 'Boat Identification'. Boats not showing an ID on both sides of the boat will receive an official warning for that race and if they progress to the next round must have boat ID for the next race (using tape or whatever).

Swimming Ability:

Every competitor is expected to be in good health and able to swim for a minimum of 100 metres in kit. Although the river is fairly narrow and access from the bank relatively good, there are areas of dangerous undercurrent, especially in the area downstream of the Town Bridge by Bedford Rowing Club.

Competitors' Responsibility

While we endeavour to provide a safe system at this event, each competitor and competing club also has a duty of care to themselves and others.

- ♦ Their own safety, remembering that they have a duty of care to themselves and any third party both on the water and on land.
- ♦ Ensuring that any equipment (e.g. boats, blades, buoyancy aids, etc.) are safe and prepared to the standards as required under the 'Rules of Racing' and 'RowSafe'. Spot checks may be made by marshals to check on bow ball, heel restraints or other quick-release mechanisms and coxes' life jackets.
- ♦ Ensuring that their boats comply with the buoyancy requirements of section 2.3 of 'Row Safe'.
- ♦ The strict observance of any 'local rule' or traffic/circulation pattern along with 'RowSafe' provisions.
- ♦ Deciding whether or not they are competent to use the water course in the prevailing weather conditions; this decision may be taken by the individual or with their coach/crew.
- ♦ Adequate clothing / protection is worn suitable to the conditions on the day.

River Hazards

Beware of the island just beyond Bedford RC, pontoons projecting from the Schools' Boathouse and the DSD work boat moored upstream of that boathouse. Crews are advised to keep in the middle of the river after passing Bedford RC in order to keep well clear of the main weir. Expect some weed when Spring has been warm.

A plan of the course is prominently displayed at the Enclosure.

Town Bridge

Only the main arches of Town Bridge may be used during racing. See illustration below;



In the event of capsize:

The whole course is visible by umpires and marshals. Umpires' positions are equipped with throwing lines and safety boats patrol the course. In the event of a capsize on the course please stay with your boat as getting out of the river in many areas is difficult due to the high banks.

Know the rules:

British Rowing's Rules of Racing will be used. The marshalling rules are straightforward – see the Regatta circulation plan - umpires will stop racing if an unsafe situation develops. In particular, keep well into the bank on the way up to the start and keep a constant lookout for crews racing. Give yourself plenty of time to boat before your race time, as the marshalling area can become very congested and slow moving and it may take you some time to get to the start (allow at least 20 minutes to get to the start from the main boating area at Longholme Island). Listen for start marshals' instructions - they are all experienced in the job and know the event and the river well.

If you see an accident:

Please report to the nearest official immediately, who will take action or alert the rescue services by radio as necessary.

Umpires, marshals and officials will be the initial public contact points for reporting of emergencies. Marshals will wear a high visibility jacket for identification at all times.

This Safety Plan is distributed to umpires and other regatta officials by the Regatta Controller.

Safety Boats

At least one Safety Boat will be available at all times, positioned at either the Start, finish or Bedford Rowing Club dependant on conditions. These shall be equipped with competent people, radios, throw lines, safety blankets and first aid equipment.

First Aid

First Aid cover is provided at Bedford Rowing Club, the Control Commission and at the Schools' Boathouse.

Emergency

The nearest A&E unit is Bedford Hospital (South Wing), accessed via Amptill Road (A6).

Emergency: Fire, Police, Ambulance: 999 from any telephone.

Key Personnel

Person in charge on the day:	Hugh Maltby, contact via control or mobile:	07787 517480
Safety Officer:	John Impey, contact via control or mobile:	07952 485113

Chairman of the Race Committee:	Simon Clark, contact via control or mobile:	07974 356147
Regatta First Aiders:	AMS Services, contact via control or via any official. (Adrian Hirons & Steve Reece)	07554 736344
Welfare Officer:	Sue Lamb, contact via control or mobile:	07719 799846

Key Telephone Numbers

Telephones are situated at Bedford Rowing Club, Star Club, Schools' Boat House and public telephones on the north side of the Town Bridge on the Star Club side and at Russell Park, opposite the Schools' boathouse.

All positions are in radio contact with control, the rescue services and the Chief Umpire.

Contact numbers:

- Event Mobile: 07787 517480 (Regatta Secretary)
- Schools' Boathouse: 01234 359076
- Bedford RC Clubhouse: 01234 353183
- Star Clubhouse: 01234 212070

Please ensure you give sufficient access for an ambulance to get through along the path by Longholme boating lake.

2.2 Incidents – Collisions & Capsizes

Above the start/below the finish: Get any boat that is damaged and unable to proceed to the side.

On the course: Get any boat that is damaged and unable to proceed to the side, preferably on the Star Club bank. It should be noted that the only normal entry and exit points to the river is from the banks below the finish, Bedford Rowing Club, Schools boathouse and Star Club.

Umpires and marshals: Shall pay particular attention to any incident on the river. Should a crew be involved in a collision or suffer any injury that requires assistance, or a crew member falls out of a boat, the official shall summon a safety launch by radio. If the course is blocked, the official shall also advise the start that no further races shall be started.

Capsize: The whole course is visible to marshals. Every marshalling position is equipped with throwing lines and a radio to inform Race Control. **STAY WITH THE BOAT!**

2.3 Incidents – Extreme weather conditions & other threats

The Safety Advisor or Chairman of the Race Committee shall consider the forecast weather conditions when recruiting stake-boat volunteers, who must be physically strong enough to hold an eight in expected cross winds and stream conditions.

Start marshals shall arrange for sun-protection, water and relief stake-boat volunteers in excessively hot weather.

Where extreme weather conditions or other situations that could require the cancellation or postponement of racing, either for the day or until the conditions change, the decision will be the responsibility of the Chairman of the Race Committee. The Chairman of the Race Committee or the Safety Advisor also reserve the right to amend this plan if weather or competition conditions on the day make this necessary. Amendments, postponement or cancellation will be published at Race Control and announced over the public address system.

In the case of lightning a risk warning will be broadcast advising participants already on land to avoid moving boats and oars during the period of the storm. The message shall make clear whether or not racing could be resumed if conditions improve and whether crews

already on the water should return immediately or complete their race first. As soon as the decision is made, every effort will be made to get all competitors and Safety boat crews ashore and safe as quickly as possible.

As for determining when things are safe, use the 30-30 rule. After you see lightning flash, count the number of seconds it takes until you can hear thunder crack. If the time is less than 30 seconds, you are still in danger and should stay in a safe place. Similarly, a person should wait 30 minutes after seeing the last flash of lightning as it may linger after a storm. Nearly half of the deaths caused by lightning strikes occur after a storm has passed.

NOTE: If a marshal considers that it is unsafe for a crew to race in the prevailing conditions (wind or stream) then that crew may be stopped and withdrawn from the race in the interest of their own safety and the safety of other crews and officials.

2.4 Protecting children

The organisers of Bedford Amateur Regatta believe that the welfare and wellbeing of all children is paramount. All junior competitors have a right to safety and protection. All suspicions, concerns and allegations of harm will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

The Regatta Welfare Officer, Sue Lamb will be in attendance and will be available to assist should the occasion arise. Her contact telephone number is 07719 799846. For further information please refer to the Regatta "Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy" and "Welfare Plan".

It is expected that the welfare of junior competitors is primarily the responsibility of the competing clubs own coaches and officers, or individual parents accompanying the children.

In the event of a junior being involved in any incident, the responsible adult will be identified from the competitor's entry form. The named person will be called over the public address system and contacted by the mobile phone number given on the entry form.

It is the responsibility of the coach or parent accompanying juniors to monitor their whereabouts. In the event of any junior crew member going missing the responsible adult must take appropriate action. In the first instance a call may be broadcast over the PA, by contacting Race Control. The named adult, or in their absence, the Regatta Chairman, is responsible for deciding whether the local police should be contacted in the case of any incident

No individual will have access to personal contact details of junior competitors. Only Regatta Officials / Teachers / Coaches who are CRB checked coordinate the use of contact details for stake boat children or there is parent liaison.

2.5 Pre-inspection

Approximately 1 hour before the start of the race the Safety Advisor along with the Chairman of the Race Committee will inspect the course and surroundings for any obstructions or likely problems and assess the weather conditions. A Checklist shall be completed by the Safety Advisor at this time. Decisions on postponement or cancellation will be considered.

2.6 Instructions

Marshals, Safety Boats and other officials will be issued with all relevant safety documentation prior to the event. Specific safety information may be issued on the day.

Competitors will receive details of the arrangements and instructions prior to the event.

3. Communications

Safety boats are provided with radios operating on the umpires' channel, to maintain contact with umpires when needed.

Radio etiquette shall be maintained at all times and only relevant event information shall be relayed by radio.

The PA system shall also be used to make emergency and public announcements if necessary. Back up is provided via megaphones.

4. Circulation Pattern

The majority of visiting crews will boat from Longholme island. All boats should stay on the starboard (bowside) side of the river when making their way to the start (that's the cox's right). There is an island between Star Club and County Bridge - all crews moving upstream must stay to the right (bowside) of the Island. Be aware that some crews will be boating from Star Club.

5. Emergency Action Plan

5.1 Purpose

This Emergency Action Plan sets out mitigation and procedures in relation to an emergency which represents a general threat to Regatta participants.

5.2 Responsibility

Responsibility for actions in the event of an emergency rests with the Race Committee. These individuals will carry mobile phones at all times.

5.3 Actions in the event of a medical emergency

The nearest radio equipped Race official on the scene take initial control and will assess the situation. (If necessary, he/she will call emergency services.) As soon as immediate life saving measures are in hand Race Control (if not aware) will be notified. If emergency assistance is required the Official will call PAN, PAN, PAN on his radio and all other radio users will observe radio silence and follow instructions given by that official.

The initial incident report should briefly include;

- ◆ Where.
- ◆ What has happened.
- ◆ The number of casualties.
- ◆ The severity of injuries or illness.
- ◆ Any support required.
- ◆ If racing needs to be suspended.

As soon as an incident is reported, all stations on radio are to minimise their communications. Absolute priority is to be given to Race Control and those responding directly to the incident.

In the event of any accident or emergency beyond that detailed in the safety plan and outside the capabilities of the regatta first aid and safety facilities, the emergency services will be called using 112 or 999 by mobile phone, or if necessary from fixed lines available at Bedford Rowing Club, Schools Boathouse or Star Club.

Emergency services not familiar with the embankment and requiring detailed information about an incident location can contact Race Control for grid references & post codes.

5.4 Fire

If anybody discovers a fire in a Rowing Club or the Enclosure, he/she will assess the situation and tackle the fire only if they are confident to do so and initially order local evacuation. If the emergency may require the stopping of racing or general evacuation, he/she will inform the Regatta Chairman. They will agree appropriate action.

5.5 Equipment failure

Should there be a Radio failure during the event, Safety Boats and marshals etc shall use mobile phones & loudhailers to raise alarm, providing the radio is to be replaced hastily. If this is not possible Race Control shall be informed and racing shall be halted.

In the event of Safety Boat failure during the event then this must be reported to Race Control straight away to consider if racing should be halted.

5.6 Floating Hazard

Any significant floating debris or "hazard" seen on the water shall be reported to Race Control immediately. A Safety Boat shall be deployed to clear the water and racing shall be suspended.

5.7 Anti-social Behaviour

A serious public disorder or violent behaviour shall be reported to Race Control immediately. If necessary, racing shall be suspended and the police shall be called.

5.8 Terrorist Threat

Any news that could be deemed a serious threat to life should be reported to the Police immediately. Evacuation of any area believed to be in threat shall be organised in the first instance by Regatta officials.

6. Reporting of incidents

Any witnessed incidents should be reported to Race Control for recording purposes.

7. Emergency Services Access

Emergency vehicle access to the Schools boathouse area is via the small white foot bridge close to Longholme Way. The electric bollard will be locked in the down position for the duration.

8. Feedback

If you have any comments that may help us improve the plan for future events, then please let us know via Race Control. Further information that makes up the full Regatta safety plan is contained in separate documents sent to clubs and available on the Regatta website, namely circulation plan, access and parking arrangements.