

# YORK CITY ROWING CLUB

## YORK SMALL BOATS HEAD 2018

### SAFETY PLAN

This plan is made available to all participating clubs and is on display in York City boathouse and online at [www.ycrc.co.uk](http://www.ycrc.co.uk).

#### 1. THE COURSE

The course is identified on the Course and Safety Map and is approx 3,000m long, the start is at Fulford Landing and the finish at Kings Staithe.

York Small Boats Head takes place with the full knowledge and co-operation of the Canal & River Trust, North Yorkshire Police, Yorkshire Ambulance Service, York Fire Station and York District Hospital.

Prior to the event York City Cruises, users of York Marina, and members of the York Motor Yacht Club and York and District Amalgamation of Anglers are informed in writing of the location and timing of the event.

Prior to the commencement of the event the course is inspected for debris or submerged hazards, any hazards are cleared or buoyed off. Monitors to notify the nearest launch of any debris coming onto the course to have it cleared away

#### 2. DECISION MAKING PROCESS FOR INCLEMENT CONDITIONS

In view of the fact that the event takes place during the early autumn when there is a chance of floods and poor weather in the area, the organisers have developed a system for monitoring these conditions for the overall benefit and safety of the competitors.

**a) FLOODS** - The organisers are in communication with the local Environment Agency who operate a monitoring system for the River Ouse and its tributaries. They are able to advise and predict the height of the river along the course for the day and duration of the race.

Long-standing members of York City Rowing Club with local river knowledge, rowing experience and a good understanding of the event, besides the Leeds Meteorological Office for weather prediction, are consulted before the organisers decide on the appropriate action which will be taken by 6.00 p.m. on the Friday prior to the race :-

- i) Run the event in full.
- ii) Cancellation of specific categories e.g. Juniors, Novices.
- iii) Cancellation of a Division.
- iv) Cancellation of the whole event.

**b) INCLEMENT WEATHER** - Local weather forecasts are consulted in the days leading up to the event to ascertain any need to advise competitors of potential difficulties.

c) **FOG** - The organisers will take action deemed necessary to cope with foggy conditions. This may be putting in additional monitors at key points on the course, cancelling certain events (eg Coxless), delaying the start of racing until conditions are clearer or any combination of these or cancelling the entire event

d) **ELECTRICAL STORMS (Lightning)** - The organisers will monitor the forecasts and current weather conditions for electrical activity and either cancel the event or notify the competitors of the possibility of a thunderstorm. If thunder is heard within 30 seconds of a flash of lightning, the organisers will assess the risk with a view to stopping the event. Restarting the event will be after 30 minutes from the last clap of thunder. The umpires instructions give clear guidance for the procedures to be adopted if a thunderstorm is in the vicinity.

e) **MECHANISM OF COMMUNICATION** - Entrants will be advised in the most practical timescale of any adjustments or cancellations. These will take the form of:-

- i) Advising of potential problems when confirming entries and requesting competitors to check a website or phone a given number during the Friday evening prior to the competition.
- ii) Contacting entering clubs individually by phone and email prior to the competition.
- iii) In extreme cases of sudden difficulty, withholding racing numbers of affected crews, thereby preventing embarkation.

### **3. RULES APPLYING TO THIS EVENT**

- a) The event is run under British Rowing Rules of Racing.
- b) Local rules are written up as Race instructions, made available on the York City Rowing Club website in advance and given to every crew on collection of their race number.
- c) Foss and Ouse Bye Laws apply only in a general way and are not published for competitors.

### **4. COMMUNICATIONS**

a) **MOBILE RADIOS** - Communication between monitors, safety launches, start, finish and control is by specifically tuned radios. Use of radios will be in accordance with Row Safe procedure. 'Mayday' will be used in emergency and 'Pan Pan' for urgent situations (non-life threatening)

b) **MOBILE TELEPHONES** - Are used as a backup and the appropriate numbers installed prior to the competition.

c) **A RACE CONTROLLER** is appointed to overhear all communications and is the person responsible for coordinating any action which needs to be taken in the event of accident or emergency.

If conditions limit the distance for communication such that the coordinator cannot contact all stations, then s/he will instruct one of the stations to act as a relay.

#### **d) TELEPHONES**

- i) The Event Safety Adviser/Race Controller (Andy Wilkinson) has the use of a mobile telephone which can be used to contact or for contacting emergency services in the event of emergency - Mobile Number 07753 604469
- ii) York City Rowing Club has a public telephone situated outside the bar - Number 01904 623959.

#### **e) OTHER TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

- i) EMERGENCY - 999 or 112
- WATER RESCUE UNIT launched from King's Staithe, York - 999, or 112
- ii) Ambulance Headquarters - 01904 666000.
- iii) Fire Brigade Headquarters - 01609 780150 (non emergency).
- iv) Police Headquarters, Fulford Road, York YO1 4BY - 0845 60 60 247
- v) York District Hospital, Wigginton Road, York, YO3 7HE. - 01904 631313.
- vi) Head Secretary / Race Coordinator, Chris Polack mobile 07851 019274.
- vii) Event Safety Adviser, Andy Wilkinson, Mobile 07753 604469.
- viii) Event Medical Adviser Duty Phone 07927 605671
- ix) Yorkshire Rowing Council, Region Safety Advisor: Howard Holmes, Mobile 07968 524149
- x) Canal and Rivers Trust, Ferns Wharfe, Neptune Street, Leeds LS9 8PB - 0800 4799947
- xi) National Electricity Grid, emergency no. 0800 404090
- xii) Rail Authority - 01904 644252
- xiii) NEDL - 0800 668877
- xiv) York City Cruises - 01904 628324

### **5. MEDICAL AND FIRST AID**

- a) **FIRST AID COVER** - First aid cover will be provided by a professional first aid group who will be situated at York City Rowing Club
- b) **WARM AREAS** - Will be provided in York City Rowing Club along with warm showers and refreshments. In addition, a car equipped with blankets will be used to provide a warm area at the Start
- c) **HOSPITAL** - All accident and emergencies are taken to York District Hospital, Wigginton Road, York.

### **6. EMERGENCY ACTION PLANS**

IN THE EVENT OF AN ACCIDENT THE APPOINTED RACE CONTROLLER WHO WILL BE SITUATED AT MILLENNIUM BRIDGE WILL RECEIVE ALL REQUESTS FOR AND MAKE THE DECISIONS AS TO THE LEVEL OF EMERGENCY RESPONSE REQUIRED i.e. USE OF SAFETY LAUNCHES, NEED FOR FIRST AID GROUP, NEED FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES. THE CONTROLLER WILL HAVE RADIO AND MOBILE TELEPHONE

## 7. COMMUNICATION.

a) **ACCIDENTS ON THE WATER** - In the event of competitors being injured, capsizing or becoming ill whilst rowing the quickest way of rescue and access to emergency service is by safety launch. Although there are several access points from main roads safety launches can transport competitors to meet either the stand-by ambulance or the emergency services ambulance at the following points :-

- EM11 Lendal Landing
- EM10 Queens Staithe
- EM9 Kings Staithe (Finish)
- EM8 Blue Bridge Lane
- EM7 Terry Avenue
- EM6 Hospital Fields Road
- EM5 York Motor Yacht Club
- F4 Millennium Way Footpath (Start-designated person to meet ambulance at Fulford Road entrance)

b) **ACCIDENTS ON LAND** - The nearest marshal will call for any advice and assistance necessary. At the start or finish, the chief marshal will be "in charge" of the incident. At other places the relevant marshal will be. At boathouses where there is no marshal contact must be made to summon help by land or launch as appropriate.

c) **SAFETY LAUNCHES** - There are 4 safety launches, each with two crew. Their responsibility is :-

- i) To patrol the river whilst competitors are making their way to the start. This includes the marshalling area where congestion can cause accidents.
- ii) To ensure that the course is clear for the races to proceed.
- iii) To be positioned along the course between land observation and where quick response can be made to any part of the course.
- iv) To make contact with any river traffic intending to travel along any part of the course, to request that they wait until racing is finished before travelling on the course. Loudhailers and radios are provided.
- v) To warn officials and crews of any dangers whilst the race is in progress e.g. any boats / launches refusing to wait until racing is finished before traveling on the course.
- vi) To sweep the course at the end of each division to ensure all competitors have completed safely.

Each safety launch is fitted with a propeller guard and a kill cord, and carries a British Rowing Launch Rescue Kit containing a lifejacket, throw bag, thermal blankets, knife, whistle and first aid kit. A loudhailer and radio communication is also provided for each launch. The crews of the launches are experienced in launch control and understand how to use the kill cord. All safety crew will wear life jackets and the driver will have the kill cord attached. The driver of each launch will be a RYA level 2 powerboat driver or considered sufficiently experienced by the Safety Launch Co-ordinator.

## **8. START AND FINISH**

a) **START MARSHALS** - Start marshals are coordinated by a chief marshal who briefs them on procedures. Part of these procedures is to act as safety lookouts to avoid collisions and arrange the crews in a safe position close to the bank facing upstream awaiting the signal to turn. One marshal is positioned approx. every 40 metres. Loudhailers and radios provided.

b) **FINISH MARSHALS** - The finish marshals ensure that crews continue to proceed upstream without stopping to reduce any hazard to those still racing. They also ensure crews follow the correct circulation pattern for returning to the landing stages

## **9. RACE MONITORS**

Race Monitors are positioned along the course so that between them they can observe the course in its entirety. Some positions along the river have the monitors in boats (not safety launches), special instructions are issued to these boats on safety protocols as they cannot safely extract any crew from the water. They are provided with loudhailers and radios to give instructions to crews to avert collisions and to summon rescue if necessary. The positioning of Monitors is indicated on the plan of the course. A Team Leader is appointed to brief the Monitors prior to the competition.

## **10. RACE CONTROLLER**

A Race Controller is situated at Millennium Bridge with radio communication. The Controller has contact with the Chief Start Marshall, all the Race Monitors, the safety launches and the Control Centre at York City Rowing Club. The duties of the Race Controller are to instruct the starter when it is safe to start the race, summon safety launches in the event of an accident, halt racing if a situation demands it and implement the Emergency Action Plan if required.

All officials and volunteers to be familiar with this Safety Plan, Competitors Instructions and Circulation Plan. Clothing and footwear must be appropriate for the role and weather conditions. Designated Team Leaders to be responsible for ensuring wellbeing of all members of their team. Alcohol consumption will not take place by race officials until such time as their duties are complete.

# CLUBS' AND COMPETITORS' GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

## 1) EQUIPMENT

ALL CLUBS MUST ensure that the equipment being used by its members is in good condition and suitable for the conditions. This is not only for racing, but at all times for training or recreation. Marshals will be making random checks on boats looking in particular at :-

- a) Heel restraints, bow balls, buoyancy compartments/canvasses, rudder lines and the general security of fixings.
- b) Stage marshals who will be helping crews onto the water will also be giving visual checks.
- c) Any boat that is considered not to fulfil the minimum standards will not be allowed to race.

## 2) ABILITY TO SWIM

Clubs must ensure that its rowing members are able to swim at least 50 metres clothed as part of its procedure for election.

**3) CAPSIZE PROCEDURE** - As part of its safety training clubs should advise its rowing members to hold on to the boat in the event of a capsize where it is safe to do so and await assistance.

**4) COXSWAINS** - Clubs must be aware that it is highly irresponsible to place an inexperienced coxswain with a crew of inexperienced novices. This can lead to dangerous situations not only for the crew, but also other competitors.

**5) CLOTHING** - Clubs must ensure that ALL competitors are suitably dressed for wet and cold conditions that can be encountered at the end of November. Marshals and Monitors are instructed to assess ALL crews going to the start and, if necessary, depending on conditions turn back those who may be at risk from cold or wet conditions, because of inadequate clothing protection, particularly whilst waiting at the start. Single scullers and oarspersons rowing at bow in crewed boats are encouraged to wear light coloured or high visibility clothing over their rowing strip.

## 6) CLUBS MUST ALSO ENSURE THAT ALL COXSWAINS :-

- a) Are suitably dressed for the cold/wet conditions that can prevail at the end of November.
- b) Wear on top of their clothing (have checked and know how to operate) a lifejacket conforming to relevant national EN standard and carry CE mark of approval.
- c) In front (bow) loader boats, only use manually operated life jackets.
- d) Know of the safety procedures, instructions to competitors and potential hazards on the course.

**7) KNOWLEDGE OF THE INSTRUCTIONS TO COMPETITORS, SAFETY PROCEDURES AND POTENTIAL HAZARDS** - It is not only the coxswain or steersperson who must be conversant with the above, the whole crew must be aware of the instructions etc. and be prepared to put them into practice.

**8) CONSIDERATION OF OTHER COMPETITORS** - Dangerous situations, damage to equipment and injuries can occur through thoughtless acts. Every year there are several complaints about a crew's chances of winning being ruined when other competitors have deliberately not given way the racing line, barked, steered across etc. There have also been examples of crews having finished the race and when returning to the landing stages have impeded racing crews through ineptness and lack of concern for others. There are however instances each year when dangerous situations have been avoided through warnings being shouted by competitors to other crews, particularly in coxless craft.

**9) CONSIDERATION TO OTHER PEOPLE** - When handling boats to/from the trailer, care must be taken to ensure passers-by are not injured, the cox or responsible person should give instruction to the handlers so as to avoid any accidents. Every effort must be made to keep walkways and cycle paths clear during the handling of boats off the water. The river is not closed to normal river traffic. Marshals will ensure the racing course is kept clear and warn racing crews of other river traffic on the course. Non-racing boats will be asked by marshals to pull in to allow other river users to pass.

- Motor craft may use horn signals to alert competitors

One short blast	The signal made by a vessel intending to turn to the starboard.
Two blasts	The signal made by a vessel intending to turn to the port.
Three blasts	The signal made by a vessel running engines in reverse.

- Crews must not stop under bridges

**10) IF AN ACCIDENT OCCURS** - Competitors can help in the case where an accident occurs by :-

- a) Continuing down the course and informing a safety launch or marshal who will have radio contact.
- b) Stopping to give assistance where there is someone in difficulty in the water, unconscious, or in danger of being run down by oncoming crews. It is a difficult decision to stop racing, but the priority of us all is the safety and wellbeing of our fellow rowers and scullers.

**11) OTHER POSSIBLE HAZARDS**

Waterborne Diseases - Leptospirosis, Bugs or Blooms, Algae, Bio Hazards including bird guano. Keep water and skin contact to minimum, remove contaminated clothing and wash contacted skin areas. If in doubt seek first aid attention.

Footwear - Due to the event taking place in public areas, it is strongly advised that suitable footwear should be worn to avoid an accident.  
All competitors must be familiar with the instruction to competitors, safety plan and any potential hazards and be able to act upon them.