

Trafford Head of the Bridgewater 2022

Coxes' and steerers' briefing: outline

Purpose

- To make sure steerers are aware of the provisions of the safety plan which affect them.
- To give them some helpful hints, in case they're new to our course.

Overview of the canal

- Narrow but just wide enough in selected parts to allow scullers to pass if they're very skilled and very careful. We don't assume anyone is that skilled; we'll talk about **overtaking** later.
- Towpath on the clubhouse side is continuous and *mostly* free of obstructions.
- The opposite side goes in and out randomly, has overhanging trees and reedbeds.
- Navigate with reference to the towpath side (stroke side, port side, on rower's right hand, on cox's left hand).
- The canal is officially closed. If a canal barge comes from the opposite direction when you are rowing to the start, you must give way to let it pass. Pull in to the towpath (on starboard/bow side when heading towards the start), with blades on the bank. Do this when the oncoming narrow boat is no less than 100 metres away

Overview of the short course

It's a 1km straight. Stay in the middle and put the throttle down!

Overview of the long course

- There's a map of the course on a board outside the boathouse.
- Divides into three equal-sized pieces just over a kilometre each.
- Between each of the three pieces there's a bend and a slight obstruction (Manchester Road bridge, Narrows and Timperley Marina bridge). They are all left-hand bends ("pull left hand", "help it round bow side").
- There's a marshal in the middle of each section and at each of the bends.

Emergency procedure

- If you need assistance pull in to the towpath. The closest marshal will come to help.
- If you capsize the marshal will come running and make sure that the crew is safe. You may be permitted to empty out and continue rowing.
- If you hear a marshal shouting "stop", or something like it, look round immediately and be prepared to hold up.

Overtaking

- Crews are seeded so overtaking is the exception rather than the rule.
- Marshal will make the decision and will yell loudly at the leading crew.
- If you're pulled in you **must** comply. The marshal's decision is final.
- When pulling in, get as much way off the boat as you can, then steer towards the tow path. Stroke side (port side/right hand) blades up as you reach the side, and run parallel to the bank as the speed bleeds off.
- Marshal will help you to push out again, as soon as it's safe to do so.

Safety

- We assume you've all read and will comply with BR's "Row Safe".
- Make sure your heel-release cords are within specification; our scrutineers *will reject* cords that are too long, frayed or not attached firmly enough.
- Make sure you are wearing enough clothing for the conditions. There is a facility for scullers to hand spare kit to someone at the start and have it transferred down to the finish. Not for other boat classes, sorry: practicality.

Boating

- Know your boating time.
- Make sure you've taken your blades down to the stage before carrying your boat.
- When your name is called start walking down towards the scrutineers: there may be a queue but there's no excuse not to be in it!
- Please be aware that this year's head will be boated in a slightly different manner in order to try and reduce the amount of time competitors are waiting for the start of the event:-
 - Competitors in the short-course events will boat first, turn under supervision and pull into the towpath bank, all under marshal supervision.
 - Once the last long-course boat has gone past Timperley marina, short-course racing can immediately start.
 - Long course crew will be boated in numerical order (not in reverse order as in the past), and as soon as the last long-course boat has cleared the green crane the first long-course race can start (subject to confirmation from Timperley that the last short-course crew is adequately clear), with the lowest-numbered crew (who rowed up first).