



Oxford University Rowing Clubs

Event and Safety Plan

Summer Eights 2023

Introduction

Summer Eights is a rowing event comprising four days racing from Wednesday to Saturday of 5th week in Trinity term, with a qualifying session (Rowing On) held the preceding Saturday. This year Summer Eights will occur from the 24th – 27th May, with Rowing On ideally held on the 20th May. We would also ask for a provisional day on Sunday 21st May to run Rowing On, should conditions be unsuitable on the Saturday. If conditions are unsuitable on both Rowing On dates, Summer Eights shall run without Rowing On divisions.

Rowing On: This is a timed race from Longbridges to Christ Church Meadow. The event is run as a processional race, with crews set off at regular intervals in divisions (subject to entry levels), with the first division usually starting at 1:30pm. The fastest crews covering the course then qualify for Summer Eights proper.

Summer Eights: Racing occurs between 12:15pm and 7:15pm (last race starts at 6:45pm), except on Saturday when racing occurs between 11:15am and 6:15pm (last race starts at 5:45pm). The course is upstream within the stretch from Iffley Lock to Folly Bridge. Racing is split into 14 divisions, normally each of 13 boats, racing at approximately 30 minute intervals. The aim of racing is to catch up with the boat in front and gain a ‘bump’. Pairs of crews involved in a bump move out of the way and cease racing. Other boats must continue racing until the finish line.

This plan details the logistics of both events - Rowing On and Summer Eights - and the precautions taken to ensure smooth and safe running. Precautions are made based on Risk Assessments which identify all possible hazards and resulting risks, highlight the controls in place to reduce the risks, and identify those responsible for ensuring the controls are in place. These Risk Assessments are attached as *Appendix A (Rowing On)* and *Appendix B (Summer Eights)* of this Event Plan.

This event plan exists in addition to the OURCs General Rules of Racing and rules of Bumping Races. The event plan and risk assessments will be reviewed annually by the Rowing Sabbatical Officer, Race Secretary, and the Senior Umpires before submission to the University of Oxford authorities and the Environment Agency.

Race Management

Summary of Race Officials

The races – both Rowing On and Summer Eights - are run by the OURCs Committee, using the following system:

- i) **Race Secretary** - coordinates racing and is responsible for event and race safety. For this event, the Race Secretary will be Q Sun, who can be contacted at secretary@ourcs.co.uk.
- ii) **Event Committee** - helps the Race Secretary with coordination of racing and event safety.

- iii) **Race Desk** – location: Longbridges Boat House; will oversee the marshals and assist the SU. An Event Committee member, usually the Race Secretary, will be present at Race Desk at all times, and can be contacted by mobile phone (07341-500865) or by two-way radio.
- iv) **Incident Coordinator (IC)** — typically the Rowing Sabbatical Officer (07917-643030). The IC coordinates post-incident operations (See Emergency Action Plan, Appendix E). The IC must have due regard for the demands of data protection and confidentiality. Responsibilities to include working in close cooperation with the following people:
 - Injured person (if applicable). Their welfare, liaising with the regatta medical staff, senior umpires, marshals and other relevant parties (e.g. medical staff, family or friends of injured party, taxi) and to gather information that must be included in the incident record and possible legal reports.
 - Other involved persons such as witnesses and medical staff - To gather additional information that must be included in the incident record and possible legal reports
 - Where applicable, to ensure incident is duly reported to appropriate bodies/persons such as Sports Safety Officer (call ASAP for severe incidents/injuries including immersion of a non-rower), College if student and British Rowing
- v) **Senior Umpire (SU)** — situated near the start line for Rowing On, and in the bunglines area for Summer Eights. Ensures the safe and timely start of races, and oversees safety on the water during racing hours, and collaborates with the Race Secretary on the safe running of the event.
- vi) **Incident Manager** – either the on-duty Senior Umpire or someone to whom they have delegated the role, such as a non-duty SU or a senior member of the Event Committee. The Incident Manager coordinates the resolution of any on-water incidents or those which have temporarily obstructed water traffic. This may include rescuing non-injured crew members in broken or stuck boats, removing and repatriating boats stuck in the bank, and deciding when normal river traffic, including warm-up for the next race, may recommence in any area of the river.
- vii) **Marshals** — work with the Race Secretary and the SU to ensure the safe and smooth running of the event. Details of the role of the marshals are given below.
- viii) **[Rowing On] Timers** — act as impartial race observers for Rowing On at the Start and Finish lines and record the time each crew passes their position.
- ix) **[Summer Eights] Umpires** - act as impartial race observers for the bumping races.

The SU, marshals, and umpires will be marked out by coloured bibs, usually:

Yellow high visibility for the SU.

Yellow high-visibility for river marshals.

Orange high-visibility for towpath marshals *[Summer Eights only]*.

Red for umpires.

The consumption of alcohol by officials is strictly prohibited.

Race Secretary

The Race Secretary is the event organiser and has overall responsibility for the event, in accordance with this event plan, which they must do safely. This event plan does not restrict the Race Secretary, working with the Senior Umpire, from halting racing at any time or from making necessary alterations to ensure the safety of competitors, organisers and members of the public. The Race Secretary, as event organiser, should appoint the Senior Umpire and members of the Event Committee. The Race Secretary shall inform other river groups of the event.

The Race Secretary is responsible for coordinating racing and so should direct members of the Event Committee; tasking them as needed and as appropriate. The Race Secretary may delegate responsibilities as is appropriate. The Race Secretary consults with the SU about issues and risk mitigation affecting the safe running of the races.

The Race Secretary should make contact with the EA if they are at the river on the day of the race. The Coordinating Senior Umpire will have contact details for the EA if they are not at the river.

Senior Umpire

Senior Umpires are appointed by the Race Secretary, from those who have been ratified in an OURCs Captains' Meeting in the current academic year. This ensures that those appointed have the necessary skill and experience to conduct their duties. Given the nature of the event, there is no formal qualification appropriate to the task, but the existing team of Senior Umpires will make sure sufficient new members are recruited to cover the job, and will ensure that new recruits are fully briefed and trained in the role. A ratified trainee Senior Umpire may control races and act as Senior Umpire under the direct supervision of a fully qualified SU.

The principal duty of the Senior Umpire is to ensure that each race is safe to start, and then to start that race in a safe fashion under the OURCs Rules of Racing, and to ensure that racing only continues while conditions are sufficiently safe. To this end, the Senior Umpire on duty will conduct river checks as appropriate, using the marshals to report any traffic on the river or any obstruction in the river. The SU will conduct a full river check at least once before each race begins and repeat at their discretion sufficiently to ensure that they are satisfied the river is clear to start the race. The SU will consider the following (below) when starting each race, and will relate it to the nature of bumps racing and the quality and competence of the crews involved, as far as is reasonably practicable:

- The local stream conditions.
- The local weather conditions.
- Whether the race course is sufficiently clear of racing traffic, non-racing traffic, debris or any other obstruction.
- Whether the safety launches are in a suitable position and ready to respond.
- Whether sufficient marshals are in place and in communication with the SU and Racedesk, to provide full coverage of the stretch.

The SU has the full operational responsibility of starting racing, and so will try to start each division in a timely fashion in accordance with the rules of racing, where circumstances and safety allow. Any other party (including but not limited to the Race Secretary, the Environment Agency and the University) which believes that there is a good reason not to start a race, should be encouraged to inform the SU immediately. The SU may halt racing on the grounds of safety and recommend any mitigating action to the Race Secretary which might allow racing to continue.

The first Senior Umpire of the day has responsibility for checking and approving the river as sufficiently safe to open to crews for their warm-up, at a point approximately half an hour before the first division. If at any point in the day the SU considers the river to be unsafe even for warming-up crews, they will close the river to student traffic and suspend racing. Before opening the river, the first SU of the day will be satisfied that:

1. Sufficient marshals are in place and providing full coverage of the stretch with working two-way radios.
2. The stream conditions are sufficiently safe.
3. The weather conditions are sufficiently safe.
4. Medical personnel are at the river and ready to provide cover.
5. Any non-racing traffic already on the stretch has been spoken to and is aware of the event and circulation pattern.
6. A demonstration klaxon firing has been carried out over the radio.
7. The Race Secretary and their team are ready and happy that the river be opened.

In the same manner, the final SU of the day will close the river at the end of racing, will dismiss the marshals (in stages) once they are satisfied that all racing traffic is clear of the relevant areas, and will reopen the river to non-racing circulation.

As part of the preparations for the regatta, the coordinating SU for the team will liaise with the Environment Agency, the Rowing Sabbatical Officer (in their safety role) and the Race Secretary, to determine any special measures to be taken to allow racing under the risk assessment in more challenging conditions such as high stream or wind. These measures may include, but are not limited to: restrictions on coxing status; use of higher bunglines; restrictions on racing divisions; use of half-divisions; changes in warm-up time between divisions; and provision of extra safety launches. The coordinating SU will consult with the whole SU team as available to bring their collective experience to bear in making such decisions. The coordinating SU will ensure that the decisions are agreed with the Event Committee (via the Race Sec. and/or Rowing Sabbatical) and will communicate them in a timely fashion to the racing clubs. The Rowing Sabbatical Officer will ensure that other interested parties (such as the Proctors and/or Sports Federation and the boatmen) are kept informed of the measures being used, as far as necessary, and that information on the measures is available to all college boat club members, including Senior Members. The coordinating SU will also ensure that the Race Secretary has a copy of the SU roster and mobile phone numbers. During the event, a coordinating SU will be appointed each night to coordinate overnight decisions and coordinate the team for any appeals or changes in conditions.

Marshals

This section will outline the marshalling for Summer Eights. The marshalling for Rowing On is slightly different and these differences are highlighted at the end of this section.

Briefing: Initial marshal briefings, covering individual marshalling duties, safety procedures, and summary notes of specific duties, where appropriate, will be provided online. Marshals must have attended one of these briefings prior to the start of Bumps.

Overseeing of marshals: A member of the Event Committee will give a short briefing to all marshals on the day, so that they are aware of their specific duties. This does not act as a substitute, only as a refresher for the material delivered online.

Equipment: All river marshals are issued with a high-visibility jacket, a radio, a copy of the circulation plan, and a starting order. River marshals on the race course are issued a klaxon. All towpath marshals are issued with a high-visibility jacket. Personnel in key positions are also given a megaphone.

Stations: Marshals will be stationed along the river at points marked on the Placement of Marshals maps, attached as *Appendix C (Rowing On)* and *Appendix D (Summer Eights)* of this plan. Additional marshals may be stationed on the day by the Event Committee and/or the SU as needs dictate. These stations ensure that the marshals' line of sight provides full coverage of the race course.

General duties

All marshals listed below, except the Bike marshal and Towpath marshals, perform river checks, the process by which the SU can ascertain whether the river is clear of obstructions. In particular this process must be done, and show that the river is clear of obstructions, before a division can be started. When a river check is called the marshals will look for boats, swans, floating debris, and anything else which would impede the safe running of racing on their stretch of the river. Then, in the order in which they are listed below, report back to the SU. During racing, marshals should radio and if necessary stop the race with the use of their klaxon should the course become unsafe to continue.

Marshals' primary role is the safe running of the event.

In the event of the river becoming unsafe to continue racing for whatever reason, attending marshals will open their radios and sound the safety klaxons for at least 10 seconds in order to transmit the klaxon as rapidly as possible. Any

marshal on hearing a klaxon should fire their klaxon for 10 seconds or until all racing crews around them have stopped (whichever takes longer). Races should be halted using the klaxons in any event that makes the continuation of racing unsafe, for example: the channel becoming blocked by racing or other traffic, a person in the water with racing crews approaching and putting them in danger, or an injury which requires medical personnel. As crews hear the klaxons they will stop racing immediately as instructed in the coxing meetings (see later section). Crews halted by klaxon should remain stationary to allow safe access by medical personnel and Event Committee until the Senior Umpire gives permission for them to move.

All marshals monitor that crews on the water are keeping to the circulation pattern, informing crews if they are in incorrect circulation. During racing marshals encourage crews who have been bumped or bumped out to move so that there is a channel wide enough for racing crews to pass safely. Usually this will be asking crews to pull into one of the banks. Once the following launch has passed, marshals encourage crews to then paddle behind the following launch back to their boathouse.

A secondary role is to report to Racedesk and Senior Umpire any crews on the water where the boat is lacking a bow-ball or the cox is lacking a lifejacket over their outermost layer, and to instruct them to remedy this.

A tertiary role is to report to Racedesk if any significant numbers of pedestrians are present, and to request towpath marshal support if appropriate.

During the race itself, marshals act as observers, facilitating a safe and fair contest. They will also warn members of the public of approaching cyclists, although this role will primarily be taken by the Bike marshal.

Duties for raft marshals (Boathouses A and B, Univ, Longbridges, [Donnington Bridge]):

Raft marshals perform checks on each boat to ensure they conform to British Rowing and EA regulations. In particular they are asked to check that each boat has a securely attached bow-ball, heel restraints are fitted correctly, backstays are present and correctly affixed, that the boat has hatch covers if appropriate, and that the cox has their lifejacket fastened over their outermost layer. The raft marshals should also check that suitable lights are attached when appropriate. The later divisions which require lights will be marked on the start order, but the SU may require lights for other divisions as well in the event of poor visibility.

The raft marshals facilitate the timely starting of divisions by encouraging crews to wait until the boats of the previous division of the same boat has landed and cleared the rafts before they put their shells on the water, and asking crews to push off promptly after the last racing crew has passed, so that the landing stages are clear for the returning crews.

Where possible, they keep track of which crews have pushed off from the rafts they are monitoring. They will often field questions from competitors, radioing Racedesk when they are unsure.

Particular duties:

In addition to the general duties, each marshal has particular duties dependent on their designated position on the river bank, as detailed below (refer to the Placement of Marshals map, attached as *Appendix D* to this plan).

Marshals who are normally given a megaphone to assist with their duties are marked ▼, and those who take part in river checks are marked †.

- 1) **Head (of the River) ▼ †:** (by the grey footbridge) Communicates with river traffic entering the course from under Folly Bridge, and liaises with the SU about this; instructs crews who have finished racing on where to wait to prevent a build-up of crews above the finish line and when to spin; ensures crews returning to their boathouses keep tucked into the City side bank; warns non-event pedestrians and cyclists coming down the towpath that an event is occurring.

2) **Finish ▼ †**: (by Cox's stone) Operates the finish clacker over the STERN of the boats to inform crews when they have finished racing; instructs crews to move upstream to clear the finish line, radios Racedesk when the last racing crew crosses the line; ensures crews returning to their boathouses keep tucked into the City side bank.

3) **Boathouse A †**: (on Boathouse Island, covering boathouses from St Anne's to Keble inclusive) Acts as a raft marshal for crews boating from Boathouse Island; Communicates with river traffic entering the course from under the humpback bridge, and liaises with the SU about this.

4) **Boathouse B †**: (on Boathouse Island, covering boathouses from Exeter to Christ Church inclusive) Acts as a raft marshal for crews boating from Boathouse Island; Communicates with river traffic entering the course from the Cherwell cut next to Christ Church Boathouse and liaises with the SU about this.

5) **Univ †**: (outside Univ boathouse) Acts as a raft marshal for crews boating from Univ boathouse. Should also be monitoring the raft, and instruct crews to move any equipment on the may impede racing.

6) *[Optional]* **Green Bank †**: (halfway between Univ and Longbridges Boathouses) Encourages crews warming up above the Gut to be through it with at least 5 minutes to go; ensures that crews that are paddling back after bumping out or returning to their boathouse stick to the circulation pattern. Monitor traffic exiting the Cherwell cut next to ChCh boathouse.

7) **Longbridges †**: (outside Longbridges Boathouse) Acts as a raft marshal for crews boating from Longbridges and liaises with river traffic either passing through the Gut or planning to moor temporarily at Mooring Point B.

8) **Top Gut ▼ †**: (at the upstream Gut exit) Keeps a record of which boats have passed downstream to be able to inform the SU of the progress of crews to the start; it shouldn't be the case that crews are going through the Gut in opposite directions, but watches the Gut exit to ensure that crews change circulation pattern safely; pays particular attention during racing as a lot of bumps occur in the Gut.

9) **Middle Gut †**: (mid-way between Top Gut and Bottom Gut) Pays particular attention during racing, as a lot of bumps occur in the Gut; encourages crews who have bumped out to move to ensure that there is room for racing crews to pass safely, which may mean the crew needs to paddle out of the Gut and pull in near Longbridges.

10) **Bottom Gut ▼ †**: (on the bend between the Sea Scouts and Falcon) Pays particular attention during racing as a lot of bumps occur in the Gut. Encourages crews who have bumped out to move to ensure that there is room for racing crews to pass safely.

11) **Donnington Bridge †**: (by Donnington Bridge on the City Side) Acts as a raft marshal for crews boating from Falcon or CORC; pays particular attention during racing as a lot of bumps occur in the Gut; deals with local river traffic and swans.

12) **Top Bunglines †**: (covering bunglines 1-7) monitors that crews are sticking to the circulation pattern during the warm-up and checks that crews overtake sensibly; assists crews spinning onto their bunglines so as to keep the far bank clear for cruisers; keeps a record of which crews are attached to their bunglines; reports to the SU if the umpires have not shown up, or if there is no possible way for a crew in the section to get attached to their bungline; generally assists the SU as required. May also be required to communicate to crews any additional information such as delays. Will cover bunglines 1-4 if half-divisions are used.

13) **Bottom Bunglines ▼ †**: (covering bunglines 8-13) communicates with river traffic coming up through Iffley Lock, and liaises with the SU about this; monitors that crews are sticking to the circulation pattern during the warm-up and checks that crews overtake sensibly; assists crews spinning onto their bunglines so as to keep

the far bank clear for cruisers; keeps a record of which crews are attached to their bunglines; reports to the SU if the umpires have not shown up, or if there is no possible way for a crew in the section to be attached to their bungline; generally assists the SU as required. May also be required to communicate to crews any additional information such as delays. Alerts cyclists and pedestrians coming up the towpath of an imminent division start and after the one minute gun politely advises cyclists to wait until the division has gone by before proceeding on their way. Will cover bunglines 5-7 if half-divisions are used.

14) Bike Marshal: advised to equip their bike with a bell and they wear a high visibility vest, to cycle along the Towpath, cycles directly ahead of each divisions first bankrider with the sole aim of providing additional warning to spectators and members of the general public on the towpath if significant numbers of pedestrians and bystanders are present. They should report to Racedesk between each division, and may be used to ferry equipment, such as a replacement radio, to other race officials between races. The bike marshal will ensure bank riders and umpires that their bikes are suitably equipped before each division commences.

15) [Optional] Bike Marshal #2: advised to equip their bike with a bell and they wear a high visibility vest. They will set off at approximately 1 minute before the 1 minute gun and proceed slowly up the towpath, taking time to stop and specifically caution groups, vulnerable users, or those who are milling over the path. This marshal will use best endeavours to remain approximately 1 minute ahead of racing crews, delaying at the Racedesk if necessary.

Towpath Marshalling

Additional marshals may be used as well as or instead of large signs to inform towpath users of racing and as a mitigating action against collisions with spectators. These marshals have a primary duty of communication with towpath users. Secondly, they may support marshals nearby if required during an on-water incident. They will wear an orange high visibility jacket and may have a radio.

Marshals that may be used depending on the levels of towpath traffic are positioned as follows:

- i. At the Head (by the pedestrian footbridge upstream of the course),
- ii. Just downstream of Univ Boathouse by the footpath entrance to the towpath,
- iii. Just upstream of Donnington Bridge,
- iv. Just downstream of Donnington Bridge (these two at the entrances to the towpath)
- v. At the Isis Farmhouse to keep an eye on pedestrians entering from the pub, the lock or across the fields.

The Bottom Bunglines marshal will also be encouraged to speak to pedestrians when not engaged in their other duties, particularly when there is no Isis Farmhouse towpath marshal present.

The Event Committee and Senior Umpires will assess the levels of towpath traffic throughout the day and deploy towpath marshals if they deem it to be required.

The towpath marshals will talk politely to all towpath users, informing them of the event and, briefly, of the format of racing. They will encourage pedestrians to walk on the landward side of the towpath, or if they wish to spectate to stand on the bank, leaving the centre as clear as possible for cyclists. They will alert towpath users to the signage, the race times and the likelihood of cyclists following races, encouraging them to pause to allow the cyclists past. They will pay particular attention to warning any vulnerable users (e.g. the infirm or those with young children or dogs). Cyclists who are travelling downstream, in particular around race start time, should be encouraged but not instructed to dismount or to delay their journey for a few minutes.

Marshalling for Rowing On:

A slightly different marshal line-up is used for Rowing On. Most of their specific duties are the same as the Summer Eights marshals, the differences are stated below:

Raft Marshals: There are no restrictions on when crews may put their boats on the rafts.

1. **Head**
2. **Finish:** drops the clacker on the BOW of the boat
3. **Boathouse A**
4. **Boathouse B**
5. **Univ**
6. *[Optional]* **Green Bank**
7. **Longbridges**
8. **Top Gut:** rather than monitoring racing, marshals crews paddling from the marshalling area to the start line.
9. **Bottom Gut:** keeps a note of which crews are correctly marshalled in the marshalling area; rather than monitoring racing, marshals crews paddling from the marshalling area to the start line.
10. **Donnington Bridge:** keeps track of which crews are correctly marshalled in the marshalling area; rather than monitoring racing, marshals crews in the marshalling area.
11. **Start:** (located at the lowest point the SU will allow crews to spin) communicates with river traffic coming up through Iffley Lock, and liaises with the SU about this; stops crews spinning too low; marshals crews in the marshalling area; keeps a record of which crews are correctly marshalled in the marshalling area.
12. *[Optional]* **Bike**

Changing Marshals

Marshals should not leave their posts unless their fully-briefed replacement is there waiting to take over. No changeover should occur within 10 minutes of the next racing division. Outgoing marshals are expected to pass on any experience or relevant information from their shift to their replacement. At the end of the day, marshals must stay in place until the SU dismisses them.

Bankriders

Each crew may be accompanied by one cyclist, Wed-Fri, who must wear an authorised racing bib. Cyclists are prohibited from using any device (including hand-held cameras or phones) which prevents them using all available hands on the handlebars of their bicycle and giving due care and attention to the path ahead of them. Only conventional one-seater bikes may be used. Bankrider bibs will be issued only to bankriders who have either attended a pre-regatta safety and conduct briefing or have undertaken such a briefing individually with a suitable member of the Event Committee prior to their race. The names of bankriders who have been briefed will be recorded and they will need only be briefed every eighteen months. While bankriders will wish to closely accompany their crews, they are reminded that safety comes first, other towpath users have an equal right to use the towpath and that their personal conduct is subject to both OURCs rules and national legislation. They should ride with due care and attention and be aware that any conduct which falls short of this may be penalised by both OURCs (to the crew concerned) and/or by the police (with cyclists retaining full personal responsibility for their choice to cycle alongside the race). Cyclists are strongly encouraged to wear a helmet and to have a working bell on their bike. Cyclists must have lights in low visibility.

During racing, any bankrider involved in an incident on the towpath must stop and provide initial assistance and/or information as required, alerting the nearest marshal and informing Racedesk via the marshal if the crew's cox is novice. If an incident occurs shortly before racing begins, Racedesk may send a substitute bankrider for a Novice status cox. If an incident occurs during the race, the bankrider must stop and the crew should continue racing. If the cox is Novice status, the crew will be held at the finish until the bankrider can join them to accompany them back to their raft (provided they are no longer needed at the accident). If the cox is not Novice status, the crew can proceed unaccompanied while the bankrider ensures that their part in the incident has been logged along with their contact details. Marshals will relay information via the radio network.

During warm-up and return to the boathouse, any bankrider involved in an incident on the towpath must stop, as must their crew. The bankrider must alert the nearest marshal and proceed as above, with Racedesk expediting substitute bankriders if the crew is yet to race.

Marshals shall be responsible for reporting unsafe behaviour of accompanying cyclists. Captains will be made aware that they are responsible for the conduct of their coaches, and sanctions will be employed in the case of dangerous or inappropriate behaviour. In the event of an accident, Marshals will report to Racedesk, which will take appropriate action.

Crews should ensure any accompanying cyclists must give way to pedestrians and make safety a priority.

Circulation Pattern

To ensure the safety of river traffic and the smooth running of Rowing On and Summer Eights, strict non-racing circulation patterns are enforced. These are illustrated on the Circulation Pattern maps, attached as *Appendix C* (Rowing On) and *Appendix D* (Summer Eights) to this plan.

In the following explanatory notes, left and right refers to the course of the boat as seen by the coxswain, i.e. port (strokeside) and starboard (bowside) respectively.

For both Summer Eights and Rowing On warming up crews, and crews returning to their boathouses are expected to keep tight to the banks leaving a clear central passage for cruisers and other river traffic. For the avoidance of doubt, all other river traffic pass each other in accordance with normal regulations. Warming up crews may overtake other crews, but coxes must be certain to check for oncoming river traffic, especially cruisers both above and below the Gut. Any crew wishing to boat from CORC, Academics or Falcon should seek permission from the Race Secretary (in advance) or the Senior Umpire (on the day).

Racing crews may take whatever line across the course that they wish, though are advised to keep to the ideal racing line, avoiding obstructions.

Other River Traffic

Races are never started until the river is sufficiently completely clear of river traffic and other obstructions. During Summer Eights, other craft may appear on the river. When the locks at either end of the stretch (Iffley Lock, downstream end and Osney Lock, upstream end) are manned, river traffic is given verbal notice from the EA as they approach the Isis. Marshals are briefed to speak to other river users who appear on the Isis and keep the SU notified of their appearance on the course.

Signs are displayed at the Head and Foot of the river to alert other river users to the regatta in progress in accordance with the EA guidance.

Craft proceeding along the course take the centre of the river and pass one another port side to port side. Marshals are briefed to monitor crews during the warm-up and make sure they stay clear of cruisers, and also to be ready to provide the SU with information as to the position of cruisers on the course. The Circulation Patterns (see *Appendix C & D*) show the positions of three temporary mooring points, labelled A, B, and C. If waiting for a craft to clear the course will delay the next race excessively, they will be asked to moor at one of these points, and wait until the division has passed before continuing. Craft proceeding upstream may be encouraged to follow a division, staying behind the following launch.

Rowing On Circulation

For Rowing On crews may not do laps on the water to warm up. They should proceed through the Gut, and then spin and marshal in their correct position when it is safe to do so.

Warm up circulation - crews boating upstream of the Gut:

Boat with bow-balls pointing downstream, keeping close to the bank from which they boated down to the entrance of the Gut. (Longbridges crews should proceed directly through the Gut, unless instructed otherwise by the SU.)

When they get to the Top Gut marshal they should cross if necessary to the towpath side (bowside bank) when it is safe to do so.

They should proceed through the Gut staying on the towpath side and then join the circulation pattern for crews boating from below the Gut.

Crews must not overtake while traversing the Gut.

Warm up circulation - crews boating downstream of the Gut:

Boat with bows pointing upstream. Crews from the Isis Boathouse should cross to the non-towpath side (their bowside bank). Crews from CORC and Falcon rafts should proceed upstream and spin in the area upstream of the Falcon raft.

After they have spun, when it is safe to do so, they should cross to the towpath bank and proceed keeping right of centre (to their bowside bank).

Crews may spin in either direction when it is safe to do so, and under the direction of the SU or a marshal.

Marshalling crews will be asked to keep tucked into a particular bank, as instructed by the SU and marshals. Crews will be started by the Senior Umpire, and marshalling crews should move up towards the Senior Umpire as each crew is set off.

Racing crews:

Slower crews should move to give way to a faster overtaking crew.

As they cross the finish line they should wind down and move to the towpath side and proceed upstream well clear of the finish line under the instruction of the Finish and Head marshal to make room for other crews. Crews should not spin until told to do so by the Head marshal.

Return Circulation - crews landing on Boat House Island:

Crews returning to Boathouse Island should stay on the non-towpath side and land downstream without doing any further laps.

Return Circulation - crews landing at Univ and Longbridges:

Crews returning to Univ and Longbridges should cross to the towpath side immediately downstream of the finish line, and then proceed along the towpath bank to land downstream without doing any further laps. If there is a strong stream at Longbridges, then crews landing at Longbridges may spin upstream of their raft, and drift back to land.

Return Circulation - crews landing below the Gut:

Crews returning to boathouses downstream of the Gut should cross to the towpath side immediately downstream of the finish line. They should proceed through the Gut and then land in normal training circulation.

Summer Eights Circulation

For Summer Eights, the basic circulation pattern between divisions is a figure of eight.

Above the Gut, all crews observe reverse circulation thus keeping to the left of the river.

Below the Gut, the normal pattern is followed and crews keep to the right.

When entering the Gut, the crossover point is at the Top Gut marshal.

Boating:

Crews boating above the Gut should boat with their bow-ball pointing left (opposite to normal training). Crews boating from Longbridges may, if permission has been granted by the raft marshal, boat pointing downstream if they are headed straight through the Gut. They must take extra care to check that the river is clear before pushing off. Any crew stationed at Falcon or City of Oxford Rowing Club should boat as normal.

Warming up:

Of the 13 crews in each division, the top 6 will warm up above the Gut and the bottom 6 below the Gut. The crew on bungline 7 may choose to warm up either above or below the Gut but not both. The change from left to right hand circulation happens at the top entrance to the Gut as crews move down toward the start, under direction of the Longbridges and Top Gut marshals. Any crew which is given permission by the Event Committee to boat from below the Gut must warm up between Falcon and Haystacks without entering the Gut until they are racing.

The Bungline marshals assist crews with spinning onto their bunglines; either reverse or normal spin is allowed with the aim of leaving the far bank clear if cruisers are passing. Crews warming up above the Gut should spin directly onto their bungline after proceeding through the Gut. The top 7 crews should spin directly onto their bungline after proceeding through the Gut.

Spinning:

Unlike normal training, crews may spin wherever they like provided they do not cause obstruction to oncoming river traffic, and so are advised not to spin in boating areas if possible. Below the Gut, crews warming up on the lower stretch may spin wherever it is safe to do so. Crews who warmed up above the Gut should not spin below their bunglines.

During the race:

No vessels other than the racing boats and the following safety launch will be on the course when a race is in progress. Crews may take whichever route up the river they choose. In Summer Eights, in the event of a 'bump', the crew being bumped and the crew gaining the bump move to clear a channel for racing crews to safely pass and stop. Crews that have not gained a 'bump' race as far as the finish post, opposite Christ Church Meadow.

After racing:

Once past the finish line, crews wind down and move upstream, clear of the finish, where they wait for instructions on spinning from the Head marshal. In Summer Eights, crews who 'bump out' follow the following safety launch up the river, observing the warm-up circulation pattern. Crews that 'bump out' beyond their boathouse join the warm-up circulation pattern and land at their raft when they pass it on the correct side of the river. Crews 'bumping out' before their boathouse may go straight in provided it is clear to do so and under instructions from the marshals, with the exception of the top half of Boathouse Island, St. Anne's to Keble, who must re-join the circulation pattern.

Crews for the next division may boat when the following launch passes their raft, as announced by Racedesk via marshals and/or the public address system.

Communications

At least 50 two-way radios are needed (with approximately 37 used at any one time), used for communication between Racedesk, the SU, the EA launch if present, Salter's Cruisers, Oxford River Cruisers, the Iffley Lockkeeper, the safety launches, the marshals, and the medical personnel.

Call signs are assigned according to position and are explained at the relevant marshalling meeting, and on the day at Racedesk.

In addition to radio communication, OURCs has the use of mobile phones held by: Racedesk (Racedesk phone: **07341-500865**, Sabbatical's Mobile **07917-643030**), the SU and Medical personnel. The Iffley Lock keeper also has a landline (**01865-777277**). An emergency (999 calls only) telephone is located in the back of Longbridges Boathouse. Mobile phones can also be used for emergency calls. The phone number of Christ Church Lodge (**01865-276150**) will be kept at Racedesk to secure emergency access to Christ Church Meadow.

A public address system based at Racedesk can address all competitors and bystanders from Christ Church Meadow to Longbridges Boathouse. During Summer Eights, pre-scripted notices over the public address system will be used to highlight the impending races to towpath users.

Safety

Event Management

Note – In the event of a serious incident, the Emergency Action Plan (Appendix E) should be followed.

Marshals are thoroughly briefed on their duties (as described above) prior to the event online, and also given a refresher briefing on the day, by members of the Event Committee. The SU is responsible for ensuring that racing starts only when conditions are safe, subject to satisfactory reports from the marshals and Racedesk. If any incident occurs that could potentially jeopardise the safety of crews, marshals sound klaxons, bringing all racing to an immediate halt.

All participating crews shall observe the OURCs rules, which encompass the safety advice of British Rowing and EA regulations. Clubs that have not submitted a safety audit may not race. Crews infringing these rules or acting in an unsafe manner may be subject to fines, penalty bumps, removal of unsafe crew members or bankriders, or disqualification from the event.

Coxes of all crews must attend a briefing meeting (organised by the OURCs Captain of Coxes) covering the event and safety management issues covered in this document. If any cox does not attend, they will not be permitted to compete unless given express permission by the OURCs Captain of Coxes. The meeting will include a briefing for coxes who have done Oxford college bumps before, for those who have not, and a briefing for those who are steering Rowing On.

Race Start – Cannon Use

The races will be started by means of a cannon which is fired twice to give warning of the start (at five and one minutes to go) and fired once to signal the start of the race. The cannon is fired by the Senior Umpire giving a visual signal to a competent person who is in charge of the cannons. The Senior Umpire retains complete control of the starting sequence and may delay or abort it at any time in accordance with the Rules of Racing. An aborted start shall be restarted from the one-minute gun. The cannons are held under the control of a competent person and their operation is supervised by a firearms licence holder. The transport, storage, maintenance and usage of the cannons is done under the direction of a firearms licence holder and they retain responsibility for ensuring that all regulations are adhered to.

Complex racing incidents

In the event of a racing or warm-up on-water incident resulting in boats damaged and/or blocking the river or stuck in the bank, the Incident Manager will go to the site of the incident and immediately take control of resolution to help speed treatment of any casualties, liberation of boats, and reduction of confusion.

Weather

Stream Conditions:

In the event that the river is running faster or higher than usual, the SU liaises with people including the Iffley Lockkeeper, the Race Secretary, the boatmen and the EA to decide how to proceed. The SU must consider the proximity between racing crews and the weirs at Iffley Lock, (or Hinksey if appropriate), as well as the competence of the crews to deal with the conditions. OURCs has developed a contingency plan to allow some racing to continue (included in the attached Risk Assessments). Options include moving the bunglines further away from the lock, cancelling racing for less experienced crews, requiring crews to race with Experienced/Senior status coxes, running part divisions and cancelling the entire day's racing.

Precipitation & Cold:

Rain will not typically halt racing, but the SU must consider if it threatens to swamp racing crews or pose a significant risk of hypothermia. Snow and cold conditions pose a further threat that might jeopardise the safety of competitors and so halting racing. Hail is particularly dangerous given the injury that can be done to equipment and persons. The SU must decide whether it is possible for competitors to complete the race, including warm-up and warm-down, in a safe fashion, considering the facilities available to them. The heightened risk involved with any participant entering the water must also be considered.

Poor Visibility:

In the instance of poor visibility the SU will make the decision as to whether racing may start or continue. The SU will, as a matter of course, state which divisions should boat with two static bright white lights on their boat at bow and stern. These lights must each be visible though at least 180°. Marshals will check this as part of the boat checks.

High Winds:

High winds make navigation difficult for crews and may also threaten swamping, although the Isis stretch of the Thames is rarely affected by any significant disturbance of the surface of the water. The SU must consider if enforcing only Experienced/Senior status coxes is appropriate, or other mitigating action.

Lightning:

All marshals and race officials will be responsible for watching out for lightning and if it is seen it will be reported to Racedesk. Racedesk will then approximate the distance of the storm by using the "30 – 30 rule" (comparing the time difference between lightning and thunder). If the storm is felt to be within approximately 10km (30 seconds between lightning and thunder) then crews will be taken off the water as soon as possible and advised to seek proper shelter in the boathouses.

Once all crews have returned to their boathouses, a river check will be coordinated by Racedesk. Once all crews are off the water the marshals will be advised to seek shelter. Launches will return to the nearest raft and the drivers should seek shelter in the nearest boathouse. The public address system will be used to warn spectators and other competitors.

Following the suspension of racing, racing will only resume 30 minutes after the last lightning. This will be announced over the public address system.

Medical Emergency - Medical personnel

First aid cover for the event will be provided by a minimum of two medical staff. The First Aid unit will have a tent at Boathouse Island but the launch set aside for the medical staff will be headquartered at Longbridges Boathouse. The medical staff are responsible for checking relevant qualifications are in place and up to date. The medical staff will have first aid response as their sole responsibility and will have full access to the facilities of Racedesk, including safety launches and radios, for the purposes of providing cover and response to an emergency. Medics will be informed through

their agents of the nature of the event and have the risk assessment made available to them. All medical staff engaged are done so on the basis of their qualification and professed skill. They are required to hold liability insurance of their own, or through their employer. They are responsible from when the SU declares the river open for racing until the SU has declared the river open for non-racing circulation at the end of the day. Medical personnel will remain at the event until 30 minutes after the SU has declared the river open for non-racing circulation at the end of the day.

First Aid kits are present in all boathouses and safety launches. Defibrillators are available at Balliol Boathouse Balliol Boat House (///ally.pilots.cloth), University Boat House (///nation.bunks.levels), Longbridges Boat House (///normal.when.sings), and Riverside Centre (///rider.burst.vouch)

The designated point to transfer a casualty to an ambulance is at Riverside Centre off Donnington Bridge (postcode - OX4 4AZ, ///copy.bath.ridge) or at University Boathouse (postcode OX1 4PS, ///nation.bunks.levels). In case this is not possible, access to Christ Church Meadow (///scrap.wiring.mixed) and Longbridges for emergency vehicles is arranged in advance: a key to the slip road from Donnington Bridge (///causes.gets.scars) is kept at Racedesk, and barriers normally preventing access to Christ Church Meadow are lowered by arrangement. The Rowing Sabbatical Officer will be available by telephone to give access advice.

If a casualty who is a member of the University is taken to hospital, an official of the college (chosen under advice from the SU) will be contacted.

Safety Boats

During Rowing On and Summer Eights, a minimum of two launches are used by OURCs. The boats fulfil distinct roles:

Following Launch: which follows the races to the Christ Church Cut, or elsewhere as directed by the SU, which is ready to help participants. Between divisions this launch helps to marshal crews in the start area. This launch must be driven at all times by qualified personnel (RYA level 2, or equivalent).

Responding Launch: usually stationed at Longbridges Boat House, for the use of the First Aid team. This launch must be driven at all times by qualified personnel (RYA level 2, or equivalent).

Spare Launch: OURCs may obtain a third launch, particularly if the racing is conducted under a high flag, to act as back-up and to carry out non-medical tasks as required such as removing debris from the course or transporting people or equipment. During the hours of racing the spare launch must be driven by someone with an RYA level 2 (or equivalent) qualification. Outside the hours of racing, in roles which do not involve transporting medical personnel or assisting crews, this launch may be driven by a launch driver who has been trained in and demonstrated the required competencies to safely handle a launch in this role and river conditions.

Bystander Safety

OURCs does not invite spectators to watch the event, nor take any responsibility for the safety of the public beyond ensuring that our event does not negatively impact their health or safety. All members of the public have a right to use the towpath as a public right-of-way and OURCs will not impede this in any way. Marshals will be briefed to report to the SU and Racedesk if they believe that the safety of members of the public may be compromised, particularly in the build-up of spectators along the Towpath. Should there be any imminent danger to members of the public who are in the water (and/or river users), the nearest marshal is to be made aware immediately. **If this happens during racing, and the member of public is likely to be collided into by a crew, the klaxon is to be sounded to bring racing to an immediate halt.**

In the event of a serious incident, the Emergency Action Plan (Appendix E) is to be followed.

The Race Secretary should consider the options available to minimise the risks of potential harm to members of the public and act accordingly. Possible solutions include using the nearest marshal to warn members of the public (as long as the safety of river users is in itself not compromised), additional tannoy announcement(s) where possible, sending a senior individual from the Event Committee to assess potential difficulties and, liaising with the Race Secretary and Senior Umpire, deal with accordingly.

Notices about the regatta will be placed at entry points on the Isis for the benefit of water and towpath users. Large signs and/or Towpath marshals will be deployed at the main access points to the towpath to alert members of the public, including cycling commuters, about the event to mitigate potential risks from cyclists accompanying crews.

Where possible, tannoy announcements will be made along the race route warning towpath users (including spectators) that cyclists will be heading upstream on the towpath following the race. Such riders are advised to stay left. Bankriders and Umpires are advised to equip their bikes with bells.

In the event of unsafe or disruptive behaviour by spectators, marshals will report to Racedesk, who will take action as per the Risk Assessment.

First Aid personnel will not be prevented from attending to members of the public.

The EA normally chooses to exercise their rights under a Harbourmaster's notice to prohibit mooring and swimming along the course.

Bomb Threat/Suspicious Package

In the event of a threat:

- Person receiving information about a bomb threat or suspect package at the river should remain calm.
- If possible, key information can be recorded, particularly if over the phone. Document and preserve as much evidence as possible whether the threat is over the phone, over social media, or face to face.
- Alert Incident Coordinator to call 999 and keep the caller talking if possible.
- Call Security Services on 01865 289999.
- Incident Coordinator to brief Racedesk, Marshals and Senior Umpires. **RADIOS AND MOBILE PHONES MUST NOT BE USED WITHIN 25 METRES OF AFFECTED AREA. TANNOY ALSO NOT TO BE USED. All racing to be suspended until clearance given by medical staff, emergency services and Security Services.**
- Consider evacuation away from the affected area. To be done in a calm manner.
- Keep medical staff and Security Services up to date with any new developments.

Firearms or Knife Attack

Run/Tell/Hide principles:

RUN: Escape if you can; consider the safest options; is there a safe route? RUN if not HIDE; do not put selves in danger; insist others leave with you; leave belongings behind

HIDE: If you cannot RUN, HIDE; find cover from gunfire e.g. substantial brickwork/heavy reinforced walls; do not approach gunman or knifeman; be aware of your exits; try not to get trapped; be quiet, silence your phone and turn off vibrate; lock / barricade yourself in if in a building and move away from doors.

TELL: **Call 999 – Police;** where are the suspects?; where were suspects last seen?; describe attacker, numbers, features, clothing, weapons etc.; casualties, type of injury, building information, entrances, exits, hostages etc.

Building Invacuation or Lockdown (i.e. Rowing Club Boat Houses): Remain calm; close all nearby windows and doors; external doors to be locked for invacuation; stay in room unless in danger or instructed to move to another area of the building (e.g. instructed by police); emergency services will keep parties informed of emerging issues as and when possible; **DO NOT LEAVE BUILDING UNTIL ADVISED TO DO SO BY POLICE AND INCIDENT COORDINATOR.**

OURCs would need to consider radio silence in the event of such an attacker possibly having got hold of a radio, but the tannoy, if available, could be used to broadcast reassurance and confirm that the police have already been called.

Incident De-Brief

Following any significant safety incident the SU and Race Secretary should briefly discuss the causes for the incident and whether any action is appropriate. The SU and Race Secretary are expected to communicate regularly about concerns or any relevant information.

Swans

During Summer Eights arrangements are made to have the swans on the Isis removed from the river for the duration of the races. The safety launches may also be used to help move swans clear of the racing line. Races will be delayed as long as possible to avoid endangering swans.

Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (Drones)

OURCs cannot be held responsible for the use of any UAVs/Drones as the towpath is a public right of way and Boathouse Island/Christ Church Meadow is not University land, but will not (cannot) issue permission for UAVs/Drones to be used anyhow.

Any drone use should have the permission of the land owner, with the 'controller' adhering to the CAA 'Drone and Model Aircraft Code' and appropriate flyer and/or operator ID and insurance cover in place. In the event of somebody using a drone in a dangerous way, Thames Valley Police should be called on 101 (as per CAA guidance). Also, in line with CAA guidance, serious incidents or near misses can be reported to the CAA via [here](#). The Sports Safety Officer should also be advised in the event of any serious incident or near miss.

Contingencies

Towpath Contingencies

In the event that the towpath is unsafe or inaccessible for bikes, at the discretion of the SUs and Race Secretary, any of the following may be used:

- 1) The Race Secretary and other members of Event Committee may organise attempts to clear the towpath if possible
- 2) Bankriders may not be allowed on the towpath, switching to X and S status coxes only if needed
- 3) The race committee will plan for the use of Static umpires rather than Bike Umpires if the towpath is unusable. Static Umpires are spread down the race course such that they can see the whole course between them, and report the results in by radio after each race. It is expected that Static umpires will be needed throughout the Saturday of Eights every year and may also be needed if the towpath is impassable or unusable for other reasons as agreed by the SUs and race committee.

High Stream ("Curry") Contingencies

In the case of fast stream conditions, a number of contingency programmes are available. These are designed to reduce the risks in the bungline area by:

- 1) limiting racing to more experienced crews, or
- 2) running smaller divisions so that boats can stay further away from the Iffley Lock weir

The exact choice of the two, or their combination, depends on the stream and wind conditions.

The timings and divisions for each contingency level are attached in Stream Contingencies (*Appendix F*).

Non-Bumping Contingencies

If the Senior Umpires and Race Secretary decide that safe bumping racing cannot take place, one or more of the regatta days may be used to run Head races using the Isis Winter League documentation.