

Bankrider briefing *and bumps rules for coaches*

Bumps 2024 – Rachel Quarrell



What's in this briefing

- a) Introduction and why the briefing is needed
- b) Legal situation and liability
- c) What to do while riding (training and racing)
- d) For coaches, the Rules of Racing
- e) New: what to do if involved in a towpath accident.

Introduction

Why the bank rider briefing is needed

The University of Oxford's duty of care

*Expectations of student-organised
training and events*

OU Sports Safety hierarchy

- What happens if it goes wrong
- Things to do
- Important bumps safety rules



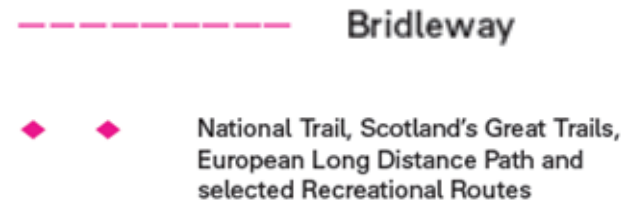
The towpath in Oxford is a **bridleway** >>



The towpath is a bridleway

Access is controlled by the
Countryside Act

It is also part of the Thames
Path, which has no special legal
status as a highway



The Countryside Act

66 Interpretation of Part III.

(1) In this Part—

"bridleway" means a highway over which the public have the following, but no other, rights of way, that is to say, a right of way on foot and a right of way on horseback or leading a horse, with or without a right to drive animals of any description along the highway;

30 Riding of pedal bicycles on bridleways.

- (1) Any member of the public shall have, as a right of way, the right to ride a bicycle, [^{F1} not being a mechanically propelled vehicle], on any bridleway, but in exercising that right cyclists shall give way to pedestrians and persons on horseback.
- (2) Subsection (1) above has effect subject to any orders made by a local authority, and to any byelaws.
- (3) The rights conferred by this section shall not affect the obligations of the highway authority, or of any other person, as respects the maintenance of the bridleway, and this section shall not create any obligation to do anything to facilitate the use of the bridleway by cyclists.
- (4) Subsection (1) above shall not affect any definition of "bridleway" in this or any other Act.

[^{F2}(5) In this section "mechanically propelled vehicle" does not include a vehicle falling within paragraph (c) of section 189(1) of the Road Traffic Act 1988.]

What does this mean?

Cyclists are guests on the towpath.....

- Give way to pedestrians
- This includes people temporarily pedestrian (ie standing beside cycles)
- And people who dash out into the path of cyclists unexpectedly
- No right of passage through (includes commuter cyclists)

- There are no formal rules about which side of the bridleway a cyclist should ride since it is a path not a road

- Highway rules on lights DO apply (and bad brakes or a poorly-maintained bike would be indefensible if in an accident)

- No 'two tings' rule (but bells are strongly advised)

What if you were in an accident?

You would want to be able to demonstrate in court that you understood the legal rights of pedestrians and cyclists on the towpath and cycled aware of them;

And that you had paid great care and attention while cycling (ie had taken all steps possible to avoid an accident).

You need to avoid being accused of any contributory negligence....

You could be personally liable for having injuries or death caused in any way by your bike or your actions while riding it.

Insurance options?

British Rowing
CycleGuard
Wiggle
British Cycling

What do you need to do – when you're riding (**training**)

- Keep a very sharp lookout (even if accompanying a crew)
- Give way to pedestrians
- Be considerate
- We advise you have a bell on your bike and use it – but do not be aggressive
- You are expected to use lights when necessary
- Cycle competently! **No hand-held videoing while cycling....**
- Be particularly careful when cycling fast with crews doing pieces
- **ALWAYS remember that other towpath users have as much right to be there as you, however unpredictable, drunk or vulnerable.**

Equipment

- ▶ * You are very strongly advised to have a bell on your bike if possible
- ▶ * Your bike should have lights on if the visibility is poor (dim light or mist)
- ▶ * During racing you are required to wear a bankrider bib which can be signed out from racedesk and must be returned straight after the division. All bankriders must have been briefed since 1st January 2023 either here or in a riverside briefing on race day. Unless rules change this briefing will last for 18 months.
- ▶ * All cyclists are strongly advised to have both hands on the handlebars at all times. Carrying and filming from a camera or phone is not allowed during racing, and very risky during training.

OURCs rules for cyclists bankriding during bumps

From the Rules of Racing (A3.19)

19. Cyclists

- a. During every day of Torpids, and the first three days of Summer Eights, each crew may only have one bank rider cycling alongside them, unless with the permission of the Race Secretary and the Senior Umpire.
 - i. All bank riders shall wear a bib, to be issued at race desk and returned by 30 minutes after the start of the division. They must also have attended a bank riders' briefing within 18 months of the event, unless given specific exemption by the Event Secretary.
- b. On the Saturday of Summer Eights, cycling is banned on the towpath from bungline 14 to the Folly Bridge for all member clubs, their members, and spectators associated with them.
- c. Cyclists shall look where they are going and at the path ahead at all times. (It is strongly suggested to ride slightly behind your crew, so you can see them and what's on the towpath at the same time. Umpires shall use their best endeavors to accurately observe the race while riding safely).
- d. All cyclists shall remember that they are required to abide by rule 2.11 at all times, including during races.

From the Code of Conduct (A2.11)

2.10. Personal conduct

- a. Member Clubs, their members, their employees and their contractors are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that shows respect for other Member Clubs and the wider public. Member Clubs that cause damage, injury or offence to other parties shall face severe penalty.
- b. The use of foul or abusive language and gestures is prohibited.
- c. Towpath users on rowing business (e.g. coaches, bank riders, those running with crews) are reminded that they must not put other towpath users at risk, whether during training or racing. Cyclists must to give way to pedestrians.

What do you need to do – when you're riding (**during races**)

- Keep a very careful lookout
- Give way to pedestrians
- Be considerate, and be ready to stop suddenly if necessary
- We advise you have a bell on your bike and use it – but do not be aggressive (and please don't use klaxon-like horns during OURCs races....!)
- **Don't film while cycling unless you can do so with both hands on the handlebars and while keeping a good lookout**
- Cycle competently! You will be responsible for any accident you cause
- **We won't stop races for towpath blockages so you need to be aware it may go ahead without you.**

What do you need to do – admin

- Turn up in time to get and sign for a bib – you cannot just grab it
– BRING PHOTO ID
- Make sure anyone who is not here is planning to go to one of the (small number) of on the day briefings – these are at pre-set times (11:45 each day)
- Be certain a briefed coach can ride if you have a novice cox – missing a briefing does not exempt you from this rule – novice coxes may be withdrawn
- Return your bib immediately post racing
- Personal conduct fines can still be applied

The current safety rules for crews (1)

RULE ZERO

Appendix: Rules of Racing

A0. Guiding Principle

1. **Safety shall be the overriding principle of all OURCs racing. Crews and coaches not conducting themselves safely while taking part in events are liable to be penalised.**

The current safety rules for crews (2)

CREWS SHOULD BE COMPETENT ENOUGH TO RACE SAFELY

Make sure your stern pair know how to help your cox

11. Racing conduct

- a. All competitors in both Rowing On and bumps must make safety their first priority. Coxes, with the help of rowers, are required to keep a good look-out at all times ahead of and around them.
 - i. Crews are expected to steer around non-racing obstructions when possible and not use the presence of an obstruction as an attempt to artificially improve their racing result.
 - ii. When interpreting whether it was possible to steer safely around an obstruction, a Race Committee shall apply the test of the behaviour expected of a competent crew relative to their position in the start order.

The current safety rules for crews (3)

DON'T CRASH INTO OTHERS DANGEROUSLY

- b. No crew shall collide with another river user (including crews who are still racing, those who have bumped out, and those on rafts) at a speed and angle which either causes, or could reasonably be expected to cause, injury to crew members or significant damage to equipment.
 - i. Incidents involving such collisions will be assessed by a Race Committee which will consider the award of penalty bumps against the offending crew or crews on grounds of dangerous conduct, unless there are proven mitigating circumstances. This Race Committee may be the same as that ruling on the bumps outcome for the crews concerned, and procedure will follow rules A3.14 and A1.10.
 - ii. If any crews involved in such collisions are adjudged by the Race Committee to have deliberately caused the incident, this will be adjudged extremely dangerous conduct and will also be treated as a major transgression in accordance with the Code of Conduct section 2.12.4.b.

The current safety rules for crews (4)

THERE IS A RACING LINE.

CREWS SHOULD TRY TO AVOID RACING OUTSIDE IT UNLESS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY.

CREWS MUST AVOID CLEARING INTO IT, AND NOT STAY THERE.

- c. Crews may take any line, however they are expected to race wherever possible within the ideal racing line area. If they race outside it, other than to steer around an obstruction in accordance with A3.15.1.a, they will be required to abide by their own accidents.
 - i. The ideal racing line is defined as being on the County towpath side from the bottom bungline until the upstream left-hand/stroke side corner of the Gut; crossing to the City side of the river at the top end of the Gut; beside the City bank for approximately two-thirds of the Green Bank from Longbridges upwards; crossing to the County towpath side between the upper end of the Green Bank to the downstream corner of the Univ raft; and beside the County bank for the remainder of the course to the finish line.
 - ii. Racing crews who race outside the ideal racing line may be subject to penalty bumps if their actions are adjudged to contribute to a dangerous incident, whether or not they were personally involved.
 - iii. Any crew which clears into the ideal racing line should have a good reason to do so, and must clear out of it as soon as safety possible. If their actions are adjudged to contribute to a dangerous incident, they may be subject to penalty bumps.
 - iv. Crews that cause an entanglement in the ideal racing line, such as through not winding down or a late concession, may be subject to penalty bumps if their actions are adjudged to contribute to a dangerous incident, whether or not they were personally involved.

The current safety rules for crews (5)

EXTRAORDINARY SUBS RULES HAVE BEEN TWEAKED

- e. Extra-ordinary substitutes may be permitted at the discretion of a Race Committee in circumstances including, but not limited to, sudden injury:
 - i. The Race Committee shall first determine whether the circumstances presented by the college are defined as extraordinary and, once this test is passed, shall apply either 3.4.5.b (in the case of coxes) or 3.4.5.c to 3.4.5.f (in the case of rowers). Following that process, A3.4.5.g to A3.4.5.i shall be applied in all cases.
 - ii. The Race Committee should be provided with a summary of the proposed cox's experience, and have the right to reject the substitution if the cox does not have the necessary experience for the division they will race in. Where an extraordinary coxing substitution is required, full member coxes will be permitted to cox more than one boat from their club on any one given day. Associates may be allowed to cox boats in fixed divisions at the Race Committee's discretion, provided they otherwise meet the requirements of the event and the club has demonstrated they have no suitable full-member coxes.

(and then the sub-sections about rowers are still there)

The current safety rules for crews (6)

THERE IS NO 'UNAVOIDABLE EXTERNAL INFLUENCES' RULE NOW

15. Technical Row-Overs

- a. Crews conducting themselves in accordance with A3.11 who, on grounds of safety, have no alternative other than to stop racing to avoid collision with another crew, shall be awarded a technical row-over.
 - i. Having to steer around obstructions where there is a safe and viable route around (including routes outside the racing line) is deemed a racing incident, and technical row-overs shall not ordinarily be awarded.
 - ii. Having to steer around obstructions where there is a safe and viable route around (including routes outside the racing line) is deemed a racing incident, and technical row-overs shall not ordinarily be awarded.
 - iii. In exceptional circumstances where a crew acts in the best interests of safety the Race Committee may award technical row-overs (for example, a crew that stops to avoid a non-racing obstruction such as a person in the water when a klaxon has not yet been fired).
 - iv. Bumps gained or suffered by crews not directly awarded a technical row-over under this rule shall stand.
 - v. A Race Committee shall determine how many crews impacted by any one incident may be awarded a technical row-over.

(the rest of the technical row-overs rule is still the same)

New 2023 — after towpath incidents

The OU Sports Safety Officer, in order to reduce the risk of towpath accidents, has required OURCs to make changes to what should happen after a towpath incident.

The new plan is different depending on whether a crew is racing at the time or circulating before or after a race, and whether the cox is novice or X/S.

After towpath incidents part b)

Towpath incidents during racing

Any bank rider involved in an incident (accident) on the towpath must stop and ensure all parties involved in said incident are uninjured or must remain with any injured parties until further assistance arrives.

Before returning to their racing crew, the bank rider must also exchange information with any parties involved in the incident if appropriate.

If either of these actions leads to the bank rider being absent from a racing crew with an N-status cox for any period of time, the bank rider must notify the nearest marshal, who shall notify Race desk to ensure the crew is adequately supported until the bank rider can return to their crew. This may include holding the crew at the finish until the bank rider can return and 'collect' their crew. (During racing N coxes are supported by the following launch).

After towpath incidents part c)

Towpath incidents before or after racing on a race day

Any bank rider involved in an incident before or after racing must stop, as must their crew.

The bank rider must alert the nearest marshal and proceed as on the previous slide, with Race desk expediting substitute bank riders if the crew is yet to race.

Conclusions

Questions