

Oxford University Rowing Clubs Torpids 2025



O U R C s

Stream Contingency Plans

Introduction

In the event of fast stream conditions, a number of contingency programmes have been prepared. These have been designed to reduce risks involved in the bungholes area by limiting racing to more experienced coxes, more experienced crews, or by running smaller divisions keeping boats safely further upstream of Iffley Weir.

We also provide for a change in format to a time-trial processional race over the same stretch of river, which would be similar to the Isis Winter League events run in Michaelmas and Hilary terms.

The exact choice depends on the stream/wind conditions and competitors will be informed of any expected change in programme at least 40 hours before the first race of the day (i.e. no later than 7.30/8pm on Monday for the Wednesday's racing starting at 12 noon).

The decision itself will be made by the team of Senior Umpires (SUs), who may liaise with many different people including the Environment Agency, Iffley Lock Keeper, Race Secretary, and Rowing Sabbatical Officer.

Bumps Style Contingencies

We have several contingencies to allow for the maximum amount of safe racing. Each contingency plan has a code name (curry type).

Full programme (Korma)

This is the full event as set out in the Event Plan.

Full programme, restricted coxes (Pasanda)

The full event with the same timings, but 'Novice' status coxes will not be permitted to cox any crew.

The Coordinating Senior Umpire will liaise with the OURCs Captain of Coxes and decide whether 'Experienced' status coxes with no bumps racing experience will be permitted to cox. This would be used when river conditions are considered unsuitable for Novice coxes by the Coordinating SU.

When we restrict coxes this way, the normal crew eligibility restrictions are lifted: a cox may cox for multiple crews and may cox boats for different colleges to their own. Coxes must still satisfy all the standard athlete safety requirements: they must have passed their swim test, must be registered with OURCs, and the substitutions must be completed before they boat.

No Rowing On (Tikka)

If we are unable to run the Rowing On event, the Rowing On divisions may not be run. The Coordinating SU and the Race Secretary would normally adjust the timing of divisions.

No Rowing On, restricted coxes (Madras)

This is a combination of the Pasanda and the Tikka.

If Rowing On divisions do not run, timings would be adjusted in the same manner. No Novice coxes, so coxing restrictions would be lifted in the same way as in a Pasanda.

Some half divisions (Vindaloo)

When conditions are good but the stream is high, then the Senior Divisions (Men's Divisions 1-3, Women's Division 1-3) can be run as full divisions. The remaining divisions would be split into half-divisions. The Rowing On divisions and the lower Fixed Divisions would be cancelled and timings adjusted.

Novice status coxes may not cox any crew, and the Coordinating SU and Captain of Coxes will decide whether any further coxing restrictions are required, such as Senior status coxes only, or no Experienced status coxes who have not steered bumps in the last 12 months.

All half divisions (Pfal)

Similar to a Vindaloo, except all divisions will be run as half divisions and Senior status coxes only. As before, Rowing On divisions would not run and neither would the lower Fixed Divisions (decisions as to which taken by the Coordinating SU together with the OURCs Secretary and Committee).

Head Race Style Contingency

In the event that we are unable to run bumps style racing, then the format of racing may be changed to a time trial as outlined below. Reasons for running the Head Race Style Contingency include: the bunglines being obstructed by moored boats that are unable to be safely moved; part of the bank in the bunglines area has collapsed; or a tree (or other large object) is obstructing the bungline area and crews cannot safely race past.

Racing would occur from approximately 11.45am until approximately 5.15pm. The race course is upstream within the stretch from Iffley Lock to Folly Bridge. Racing is split into divisions of 6-20 boats, racing at approximately 30-minute intervals. Division size and intervals, as well as the precise course, are to be decided by consultation with the Coordinating SU, although we would normally use the divisions that crews would have been entered in for bumps, as decided by the SUs ahead of time. Boats are set off one at a time with roughly 20 seconds between each boat, and each boat rows the full length of the course. The aim of racing is to row the length of the course in the fastest possible time as measured by two timers, at the start and finish respectively. Competitors may be subject to additional entry requirements in the interest of safety as specified by the Event Committee and Coordinating SU.

Race Management

The role of the Senior Umpire here is the same as for Rowing On (which itself is a head race) and so they will be situated near the start area, instead of down in the bunglines area. The SU will be situated a short distance below the designated start line.

Marshal Positions and Particular Duties

Race Desk oversees the marshals and assists the SU. Additional marshals may be stationed on the day by the Event Committee and/or SU as needs dictate.

Key: ▼ - marshal normally given a megaphone.
† - marshal performs river checks with the SU.

- 1) **Head ▼†:** (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; warns non-event pedestrians and cyclists coming down the towpath that an event is occurring.
- 2) **Finish ▼†:** (by Cox's stone or slightly downstream if conditions dictate more room is needed above the finish) operates the finish clacker on the bow of the boats to inform crews when they have finished racing; instructs crews to move upstream to clear the finish line; radios Race Desk when the last racing crew crosses the line.
- 3) **Boathouses A †:** (on Boathouse Island, covering boathouses on the upstream end of the Island, approximately from St Anne's to Brasenose inclusive) acts as a raft marshal for crews boating from Boathouse Island; communicates with river traffic entering the course from under the humpback bridge leading to Christ Church Meadow and liaises with the SU about this.
- 4) **Boathouses B †:** on Boathouse Island, covering boathouses on the downstream end of the Island, approximately from Oriel 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 Boat House and liaises with the SU about this.
- 5) **Univ †:** (outside Univ Boat House) acts as a raft marshal for crews boating from Univ; monitors the raft and instructs crews to move any equipment on the raft that may impede racing.
- 6) [*optional*] **Greenbank †:** (halfway between Univ and Longbridges boathouses) monitors traffic exiting the Cherwell Cut next to Christ Church Boat House.
- 7) **Longbridges †:** (outside Longbridges Boat House) acts as a raft marshal for crews boating from Longbridges.
- 8) **Top Gut †:** (at the upstream Gut exit) keeps a record of which boats have passed downstream so as to inform the SU of the progress of crews to the start.
- 9) **Bottom Gut †:** (bottom end of the Gut, directly opposite Sea Scouts)
- 10) [*optional*] **Donnington Bridge †:** (by Donnington Bridge on the city side) acts as a raft marshal for crews boating from Falcon or CORC; communicates with other river users in the area; deals with swans; can be asked by the SU to move to the towpath side or roam up and down the non-towpath bank if operational requirements dictate.
- 11) **Start #1 †:** (upstream section of the marshalling area) assists the SU marshalling crews before the start.
- 12) **Start #2 ▼†:** (downstream section of the marshalling area) assists the SU marshalling crews before the start; communicates with river traffic entering the course; warns non-event pedestrians and cyclists coming down the towpath that an event is occurring.
- 13) **Bike Marshal:** to cycle along the towpath just ahead of the first boat of each division 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 Race Desk between each division and may be used to ferry equipment, such as a replacement radios, to other race officials between races.

Circulation Pattern

To ensure the safety of river traffic and the smooth running of the event, a strict non-racing circulation pattern is enforced. In the following explanatory notes, left and right refer to the course as seen by a coxswain, i.e. port (strokeside) and starboard (bowside) respectively.

The circulation mirrors Rowing On. Please see [Appendix C] Circulation Pattern for a diagram of the following.

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.) When they get to the Top Gut Marshal they should cross, if not already there, 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 bows side bank), giving way to other river traffic before doing so. Crews from the Falcon and CORC 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 bows side bank).

Crews may spin in either direction when it is safe to do so, and under the direction of the SU or a start marshal. Marshalling crews will be asked to keep tucked into a particular bank, as instructed by the Senior Umpire and Start Marshals. Crews will be started by the SU, and marshalling should move up towards the SU as each crew is set off.

Racing Crews

During the race, crews may take whatever line across the course that they wish, avoiding obstructions. Slower crews should move to give way to a faster overtaking crew. As they cross the finish line, crews should wind down, move to the towpath side, and proceed upstream well clear of the finish line under the instruction of the Finish and Head Marshals to make room for other crews. Crews should not spin until told to do so by the Head or Finish Marshal and must remain upstream of the finish line until the last crew of the division has finished.

Return Circulation - crews landing on Boathouse 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 warm up circulation. (Crews boating from the Falcon or CORC rafts should therefore spin below their raft when it is safe to do so). Crews landing below the Gut may be asked to wait at Longbridges if this is necessary to ensure that the next division runs on time.

Communications and Safety

These are the same as Rowing On (itself a head race) and are covered in the main event plan.