



O U R C s

Summer Eights 2024

Instructions to Competitors

Format

Summer Eights is a bumps race, with crews attempting to catch the boat in front before they are themselves caught. Racing starts with crews lined up on bunglines between Iffley Lock and Donnington Bridge, with crews finishing once they bump, are bumped, or completely cross the finish line at Cox's Stone.

The full Event Plan and appendices are available on the Summer Eights page of the OURCs website (<http://www.ourcs.co.uk>).

Safety

All participants must be listed as swim-tested on the OURCs Entries System. Coxes must also be registered with OUCS. All coxes must be wearing a well-fitting, done-up lifejacket as their outermost layer and should have attended the pre-event coxing briefing.

Boats must meet all relevant EA and BR regulations, and must have bow balls, hatch covers, backstays on the foremost port and starboard riggers, heel restraints, and EA boat codes as appropriate. These should be checked before boating.

In low visibility conditions, such as low light or poor weather, boats must have bright white non-flashing lights on their bow and stern which are, together, visible through 360°. In adverse conditions, the Senior Umpire may limit entries to crews and coxes of a certain status.

When handling boats and blades on land, participants must take care to avoid hitting bystanders. This is particularly important for Saturday of Summer Eights when the towpath and areas around boathouses tend to be especially busy.

Health

Crew members are responsible for carrying their own medication if required (e.g. inhalers). Athletes with pre-existing conditions are (along with their club) expected to be managing these in line with medical and BR guidance and taking appropriate precautions.

Crews must be aware of the risk of gastrointestinal illness due to contact with poor quality river water. They should consider measures that can be taken to help prevent illness, such as covering any cuts or abrasions before boating, and washing hands, clothing and equipment, particularly the handles of oars, after racing. Coxes and coaches in particular should remind their crews about these measures before and after racing.

Circulation

Oxford-college crews not racing must observe the college river closure from 11:00am until End of Racing/Closing Time, whichever is sooner, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday; the river is closed all day Saturday. The Harbourmaster's river restriction is in effect from 10:15am-7:15pm on all four days. All competitors must wait until informed by a marshal that the river is open before boating.

Crews racing in the first division of the day may boat as soon as the Senior Umpire has opened the river to racing crews. Crews in subsequent divisions should place their boats on the water once crews in the division two before them have landed. Crews must boat when the following launch of the previous division has passed their raft.

Above the Gut, reverse circulation applies, meaning crews should boat with their bows pointing left, the opposite to normal. Crews boating from Longbridges may boat point downstream with permission from the raft marshal if they are heading directly through the Gut. When crews reach Top Gut, they must cross to the bowside bank (towpath side) if not already there and keep to normal circulation in the Gut and below. The centre of the river must be kept clear for other river traffic.

The top half of the division (generally bunglines 1-6) must warm up above the Gut, the bottom half (generally 8-13) below the Gut, with the middle crew (generally bungline 7) able to choose one or the other. Crews warming up above the Gut must spin directly onto their bungline after proceeding through the Gut. Crews may otherwise spin wherever it is safe to do so.

After finishing their race, crews who have rowed over should remain upstream of the finish line until the final boat in the division has finished; they may then return to their rafts under warm-up circulation as directed by the marshals. Crews that have bumped/been bumped should return to their boathouse once the finishing launch of the division has passed, following warm-up circulation. Crews returning to boathouses on the lower half of BHI (Oriol to Christ Church) that have bumped out below their boathouse may land upstream provided it is clear to do so.

A diagram of the circulation pattern is available in the Summer Eights section of the OURCs website (<http://www.ourcs.co.uk>).

Racing

Races are started using a system of three guns: on the 5-minute gun crews should aim to be attached to their bungline or almost so; a one-minute gun will then be followed, approximately one minute later, by the start gun.

Crews are expected to follow the Ideal Racing Line, which is along the towpath bank below the top of the Gut, by the Greenbank (non-towpath side) immediately above the Gut, before crossing over back to the towpath side below the Cherwell Cut.

In the event of a bump by concession, contact, or a clean row past of the crew in front, both crews cease to be racing crews, but must clear out of the Ideal Racing Line before stopping. A bump may also be achieved by the stern of a boat crossing the finish line before that of the boat in front.

If a klaxon is fired during racing, all crews must hold it hard immediately and should not start rowing again until instructed to do so by a marshal, Senior Umpire, or medical launch. If possible, crews from a klaxoned division may be invited to re-row in a later division.

Cyclists

Only one cyclist may accompany each crew Wednesday to Friday, unless specific permission has been granted by the event organisers to have additional bank riders. Bank riders must have a valid briefing and collect a bib from Race Desk prior to the race. They must keep a good look-out and avoid collisions. Filming, or any activity that prevents due care and attention being paid to cycling, is not permitted by cyclists during racing.

During racing, any bank rider involved in an incident on the towpath must stop and provide initial assistance and/or information as required, alerting the nearest marshal and informing Race Desk via the marshal if the crew's cox is Novice. If the cox is Novice, the crew will be held at the finish until either the bank rider can join them to accompany them back to their raft (if no longer needed at the accident), or Race Desk can send a substitute bank rider. If the cox is not Novice, the crew can proceed unaccompanied while the bank rider 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 bank rider involved in an incident on the towpath must stop, as must their crew. The bank rider must alert the nearest marshal and proceed as above, with Race Desk expediting a substitute bank rider if the crew is yet to race.

Marshals shall be responsible for reporting unsafe behaviour of accompanying cyclists. Captains should be aware that they are responsible for the conduct of their coaches, and sanctions will be employed in the case of dangerous or inappropriate behaviour.

On Saturday, no cyclists are permitted due to expected spectator numbers. Anyone associated with an OURCs member club may not ride a bike on the towpath during racing hours.

Marshalling and Umpiring

Competing clubs will be required to provide marshals and umpires. Rotas will be sent out prior to the event and hosted on the OURCs website (<https://ourcs.co.uk>) in the Summer Eights section.

Emergencies

The First Aid unit will have a base at Christ Church Boat House on BHI, but the launch set aside for the medical staff will be headquartered at Longbridges Boat House. If First Aid is required, ask the nearest marshal to radio Race Desk. The Rowing Sabbatical Officer will be available by telephone (07917 643030) to give emergency access advice.

If required, defibrillators are available at

- Pembroke Boat House (///glitz.actual.horn), downstream side;
- Balliol Boat House (///speech.gums.stocks), upstream side;
- University College Boat House (///nation.bunks.levels), front;
- Longbridges Boat House (///normal.when.sings), downstream side;
- Falcon Boat House (///margin.rating.votes), downstream side; and
- The Riverside Centre (///rider.burst.vouch), downstream side.

These locations are also shown on the Circulation Pattern and Placement of Marshals map, held by all river marshals (wearing yellow high-visibility jackets and carrying clipboards) and also available on the OURCs website (<https://ourcs.co.uk/>) under 'Racing', 'Summer Eights'.

Lightning

If any lightning is seen, it should be reported to the nearest marshal, who will contact Race Desk. 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, by 'racing home' if appropriate, and should seek proper shelter in their boathouses.

Organisation

Entries must be done via the OURCs Entries system. Any questions should be directed to racedesk@ourcs.co.uk and secretary@ourcs.co.uk.

On the day, Race Desk will be based at Longbridges Boat House. Any substitutions required after the online substitution deadline must be done in person at Race Desk before the crew in question boats for their race. It may also be possible to make substitutions by phone or WhatsApp, but only once Race Desk has been set up on the day.

A tannoy system will be set up during racing and used to provide commentary and announce results.