



Autumn Fours 2024

Instructions to Competitors

Format

Racing is side-by-side in buoyed lanes from a standing start just upstream of Longbridges Boathouse to the Cox Stone. Crews will be allocated either City or County station (City station is the Boathouse Island and Greenbank side of the Isis, County station is the towpath side) in the draw. On the day, the Senior Umpire may deem a staggered start necessary to make the stations even. This will be decided on the day and communicated to the crews as they line up for the start. The finish is judged on the bows. Crews may be disqualified if they leave their lane during the race. Should a race be stopped before either crew has reached the finish line, the Race Committee can award the race to the crew they believe to have had an insurmountable lead at the time. Crews may be disqualified if they are not in the starting area in time for their race. Their opposition will be required to “race” down the course alone at whatever speed they choose. Crews with a “BYE” in the first round do not need to race at all.

Depending on the number of entries and time available, racing may be run as a knock-out, either with or without a repechage, or as a round robin.

Safety

All crew members must be listed as swimtested on the OURCs Entries System. Any athletes competing in small boats must also have passed a Capsize Drill. Coxes must be registered with OUCS and be wearing a well-fitting, done-up lifejacket as their outermost layer. Coxes in bow-loading boats must wear manually-inflating lifejackets.

All boats must meet all relevant EA and BR regulations, and must have bow balls, hatch covers, backstays, heel restraints, EA licenses and boat codes as appropriate. 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°.

Novice crews are not permitted to enter.

In adverse conditions, the Senior Umpire may limit entries to crews and coxes of a certain status.

Circulation

Crews making their way to the start or returning to their boathouses from the start, crews must stay in the transit lane. The transit lane runs along the City side of the river past Christ Church Meadow and Boathouse Island, crosses over by the lower Cherwell Cut to the County side below Univ boathouse

and runs down the county side to Longbridges. Crews may only cross the racing lanes at the crossover point when given permission by a marshal.

Crews can warm up below the Gut. From Longbridges to Haystacks, there is normal circulation, with all boats keeping to their bowside bank. Crews should pair up with their opposition and head up to the Start together, rowing single file through the Gut.

There is no early crossing point for crews landing at Univ. Crews must cross as normal when given permission by the crossing marshal and back down to Univ raft to land.

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

Racing

Crews should pair up with their opposition on land if possible or during warm up if not and be waiting on their correct stations outside Longbridges boathouse at their scheduled race time. Crews will be brought up to the start, told to come forward to start and aligned. Coxes should hold one arm in the air (preferably the left arm so that it can be easily seen by the starter) if they are not ready to start, and lower it once they are straight and ready.

Once both crews are aligned and ready, or if the Senior Umpire determines that conditions dictate the race must be started, the race shall be started with the calls "Crew A, Crew B, Attention, GO!"

No re-rows will be held for crews experiencing equipment failure. The course will be buoyed. Crews must remain wholly in their racing lane (including blades) throughout the race. Any crew that is judged by the Race Committee to have gained an advantage by leaving their lane will be disqualified.

Should a klaxon sound during the race, crews must stop immediately. At this point, the Senior Umpire will decide to do one of three things:

- Restart the race from any point on the course
- Award the race to the crew who had an insurmountable lead
- Disqualify a crew and award the race to the other crew

The finish line is straight across the river from the Cox stone to Christ Church Meadow. The winner of the race will be the first crew to get their bow across the line.

The Race Committee will do everything possible to accommodate equipment/athlete sharing between men's and women's crews in the first round of racing, provided that clashes are clearly specified in the entry notes, but crews must make their turn-arounds as quick as possible. After the first round, no guarantee of accommodations can be made, and crews which double up athletes or equipment do so at their own risk.

Appeals

If a crew wishes to appeal a race, the cox must raise their hand as or just after they cross the finish line. Make sure the Finish and/or Head marshal has acknowledged the appeal and radioed it to race desk. If the crew has a bank-rider, they may go as a representative to race desk, otherwise the crew should proceed to their raft, land, and contact the nearest marshal to be put in touch with race desk.

Appeals must be made at the finish as described, and cannot be made afterwards. Because of the short time-frame before the next race, video evidence will not be accepted.

Cyclists

Only one cyclist may accompany each crew during the race, unless specific permission has been granted by the event organisers to have additional bankriders. It is not expected that there will be many pedestrians on the towpath, but bankriders should keep a good look-out and avoid collisions.

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 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 bankrider can join them to accompany them back to their raft (if no longer needed at the accident), or the Race Desk can send a substitute bankrider. If the cox is not novice, 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 the 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 the Race desk, which will take appropriate action.

Emergencies

There will be first aid available at Longbridges which can be brought to any point on the Isis using a launch. If First Aid is required, ask the nearest marshal to radio Race Desk. Emergency Services vehicles can gain access to the river via the Riverside Centre.

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, Racedesk will be based at Longbridges boathouse. Any substitutions required after the online substitution deadline must be done in person at Racedesk or over the phone to Race Desk (07341-500865) before the crew in question boats for their race.