



O R C

Rowing On Marshalling Guide

Last up-dated 20/05/09

The event

Rowing On is essentially a timed head race. This means that boats are lined up one behind the other at the start, and are set off one at a time with a time gap between each one. The time taken to row the course is recorded for each crew, and the fastest crews win places in the Rowing On divisions in Torpids or Eights. Each crew has to race only once - it does not involve side-by-side racing, rounds, heats or semi-finals of any sort.

In general

Please **arrive promptly** at Longbridges Boathouse for the start of your marshalling shift and report to Race Desk. Do not wait for someone to approach you. You will be briefed by a member of the Race Committee and sent out to your position.

Wear **appropriate clothing** to stay warm and dry as you will be standing by the river for some time.

Please bring a **pen** and a **watch** with you. Some of the marshalling positions require you to note which crews have boated/passed you; a pen is useful to mark them off on the start list you will be given. You will be given race time (the time the race is being run to) during your briefing and asked to set your watch to it, so you can advise crews of the time.

Perhaps obvious, but you must **not have been drinking alcohol** before marshalling, nor drink it while marshalling.

If at any time, you find yourself in a situation you are unsure how to handle or asked a question you don't know the answer to, radio Race Desk and ask for advice or assistance.

Your role

Marshals are primarily responsible for the safety of all crews on the river. You must be standing up, alert and watching the river at all times.

You also should look out for hazards to spectators and the public on the river banks, but do not let this distract you from the river. If you need help, radio Race Desk.

In order to **maximise your view**, make sure you are standing up, are on the edge of the river bank, and at a point that gives you the greatest view of the river. If necessary ask spectators to stand back a little. **Have your radio in one hand, your megaphone in the other** and the klaxon at your feet so you can reach down and sound it quickly if necessary.

Marshals are responsible for:

Between divisions:

- a) checking that boats are safe to take on the water before they push off.
- b) making sure that crews boat in the right direction, and follow the circulation pattern.
- c) making sure that the crews paddling to the marshalling area stay clear of any river traffic.
- d) performing river checks.

During racing:

- a) ensuring that racing is conducted safely.
- b) as a part of this, being ready to stop the racing with your klaxon if it becomes dangerous.

Positions:

- a) marshals are located at different positions along the river, most of which have additional duties on top of these general ones.

Your equipment

Before you leave Longbridges after your briefing make sure you have been given the following:

- a) a yellow high-visibility bib
- b) a radio
- c) a klaxon
- d) possibly a megaphone

Check that the radio, klaxon and megaphone work, and that you know how to use them.

Please look after the equipment, keeping it as dry as possible if raining, and keep it with you at all times. Not only is it quite expensive, but it is also useless unless you have it to hand.

Details of roles of individual positions

(The numbers correspond to the positions on the marshals on the map on the Torpids or Eights webpage, and are in the order in which marshals radio in during a river check.)

(Please note that, with the exception of the Bike marshal, these duties are **in addition** to the general duties of overseeing the warm-up, performing river checks, and monitoring the racing, all of which will be detailed below.)

- 1) **Head (of the River) Marshal:** communicates with other 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:** operates the finish clacker over the BOW of the boats to inform crews when they have finished racing; instructs crews to clear the finish line, radios Race Desk when the last racing crew crosses the line; ensures crews returning to their boathouses keep tucked into the City side bank.
- 3) **Boathouse A:** fields questions from competitors, radioing Race Desk if unsure; performs checks on each boat to ensure that they conform to ARA and EA regulations; makes sure that, after a division pushes off from the rafts, crews waiting to race do not put their boats on the rafts until the division on the water has landed; encourages crews to boat on time to prevent late starting of divisions; keeps a record of which crews have boated for the division; monitors that crews are sticking to the circulation pattern as they paddle to the marshalling area.
- 4) **Boathouse B:** fields questions from competitors, radioing Race Desk if unsure; performs checks on each boat to ensure that they conform to ARA and EA regulations; makes sure that, after a division pushes off from the rafts, crews waiting to race do not put their boats on the rafts until the division on the water has landed; encourages crews to boat on time to prevent late starting of divisions; keeps a record of which crews have boated for the division; monitors that crews are sticking to the circulation pattern as they paddle to the marshalling area.
- 5) **Univ:** fields questions from competitors, radioing Race Desk if unsure; performs checks on each boat to ensure that they conform to ARA and EA regulations; makes sure that, after a division pushes off from the rafts, crews waiting to race do not put their boats on the rafts until the division on the water has landed; encourages crews to boat on time to prevent late starting of divisions; keeps a record of which crews have boated for the division; monitors that crews are sticking to the circulation pattern as they paddle to the marshalling area.
- 6) **Green Bank:** monitors that crews are sticking to the circulation pattern as they paddle to the marshalling area; encourages crews paddling to the marshalling area to be through the Gut with 5 minutes to go; ensures that crews that are returning to their boathouse stick to the circulation pattern.
- 7) **Longbridges:** fields questions from competitors or directs them to Race Desk; performs checks on each boat to ensure that they conform to ARA and EA regulations; makes sure that, after a division pushes off from the rafts, crews waiting to race do not put their boats on the rafts until the division on the water has landed; encourages crews to boat on time to prevent late starting of divisions; keeps a record of which crews have boated for the division; monitors that crews are sticking to the circulation pattern as they paddle to the marshalling area.
- 8) **Top Gut:** 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; keeps a record of which boats have passed downstream to be able to inform the SU of the progress of crews to the start; marshals crews as they paddle up to the start line, maintaining sensible gaps between them.

- 9) **Bottom Gut:** monitors that crews are sticking to the circulation pattern as they paddle to the marshalling area; marshals crews as they paddle up to the start line, maintaining sensible gaps between them; ensures that crews that are returning to their boathouse stick to the circulation pattern.
- 10) **Donnington Bridge:** might be required to cross Donnington Bridge to pass information to or perform boat checks on crews boating from Falcon or City; monitors that crews are sticking to the circulation pattern as they paddle to the marshalling area; marshals crews in the marshalling area, noting which crews are in their correct marshalling position, and moves them up to the start when told to by the SU, leaving sensible gaps between the crews.
- 11) **Spinning:** 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 as they paddle to the marshalling area; ensuring that crews spin at the point specified by the SU; marshals crews in the marshalling area, noting which crews are in their correct marshalling position, and moves them up to the start when told to by the SU, leaving sensible gaps between the crews.
- 12) **Bike Marshal:** cycles ahead 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.

Some marshals will be held back at Race Desk as spares. You may be needed to take over from a marshal who needs replacing, or to provide additional marshalling cover.

Boat checks

Raft marshals (Boathouse A and B, Univ, Longbridges, and possibly Donnington Bridge to cover Falcon and City and Spinning to cover the Isis Boathouse) need to check all boats being put on the water before pushing off:

- The cox must be wearing a **lifejacket** and it must be done up and over their outer layer.
- **Bow balls** must be firmly attached to the bows of the boat (screwed on rather than just taped on). Give it a tug to ensure it is firmly attached and push it to the side and up and down to see that it will not deflect and expose the sharp end of the boat on contact.
- **Heel restraints** must be present and correct (lift up the heels of each of the seats to ensure the soles of the shoes do not come further than horizontal). Do this one shoe at a time to ensure that they are independently secure.
- An **EA licence** (a square coloured sticker in the boat with the year on it) must be fitted to the boat.
- The boat must also carry an **ARA code** (6 digits, 3 letters followed by 3 numbers).
- **Lights** - white and bright - for later divisions.
- Race Desk might also ask you to check the **Bod cards** of a certain crew, a photocopy of which should be carried by all coxes. Check that everyone in the crew is who they say they are, and that the Bod cards are all valid. Report anything you think is amiss to Race Desk.

If anything is not as it should be do not let the crew boat. If it boats anyway, report the crew to Race Desk.

Boating

Boats on the water: To prevent a situation where all rafts are blocked with boats waiting to push off and crews are on the water trying to land, no crew may put their boat on the water until all boats from the division that is currently on the water have landed and are off the water.

Pushing off: Crews may only push off when the last racing crew from the previous division has passed their raft. You should be told over the tannoy who the last racing crew is. If you are unsure wait until the following launch has passed.

Direction of boating:

All crews boating from **Boathouse Island** must boat downstream and keep close to the left bank.

Crews from **Univ** must boat upstream towards the Head.

Crews boating from **Longbridges, Falcon** or **City** would usually boat upstream, but they may boat downstream as long as the river is clear.

If a crew is having problems on the raft, such as equipment problems or having failed the boat check, report this to Race Desk and the SU as this could delay the start of the division.

Circulation pattern

The basic circulation pattern (which can be found on the OURCs website) is a **figure of eight**. Above the Gut all crews observe reverse circulation thus keeping to their strokeside/the lefthand side of the

river. Below the Gut, the normal pattern is followed and crews keep to their bowside/the righthand side of the river. The change from left to righthand circulation happens at the top entrance to the Gut. Crews must stay **tight into the banks** and leave the centre of the river clear for other traffic. Overtaking is permitted, as long as it is done where there is room and done safely. As crews paddle to the marshalling area **do not be afraid of using your megaphone** to direct any crews which are not following the correct pattern, or are in danger of hitting another vessel.

Other river users

Other river users have a right to navigate the Isis during our events so when speaking to them **be polite and request**, rather than demand, that they follow your instructions.

The Head and Spinning marshals will be the ones who have to communicate with river traffic as it comes onto the course. Marshals in the area between Donnington Bridge and the Gut may have to deal with canoeists from the Riverside Centre or Falcon. As races cannot be started with traffic on the course it is vital that the situation is resolved.

Greet the cruiser's crew and ask what they are wanting to do, either moor up or carry on down/up the course. If they want to moor up, just inform the SU what is happening, and then again when the cruiser is tied up. If they want to proceed along the course you will need to inform the SU where the boat is, in what direction it is moving and at what speed. Depending on the speed of the vessel, and the time to the next division, the SU will either tell you to allow the boat to proceed, asking it to stay to the centre of the river, or to ask it to moor at one of the three mooring points, at point A [Head], B [Longbridges] or C [Isis Boathouse] which are marked by fluorescent yellow signs, to wait for the division to go past. Once the division has passed, having checked with the SU, thank them, and tell them that they are free to proceed. If the owner of the boat refuses to co-operate (which is rare), pass the problem onto the SU; do not get dragged into an argument.

Please note that whatever the boat is doing, you need to **inform the SU as soon as possible**, not wait for the next river check. Also look out for any boat you hear about over the radios, as the SU may ask for reports on its progress along the course.

Boats you do NOT have to worry about are the EA launch (with a pale blue hull and a flag on the stern saying "River Inspector") and the OURCs safety launches (yellow catamarans).

River checks

In the period between divisions, the SU will frequently call for river checks over the radio. Each marshal should then **report in order** (the sequence runs downstream from the Head: Head, Finish, Boathouse A, Boathouse B, Univ, Green Bank, Longbridges, Top Gut, Bottom Gut, Donnington Bridge, Spinning [NOT Bike]) **as to whether the river is clear or not**.

You are looking for non-regatta river traffic (ie anything other than racing boats, the EA and OURCs launches), significant floating debris or swans (not ducks or geese). Once you have heard the marshal upstream of you give their report, if the river is clear, give your location and say 'Clear', eg "Head, clear". If not, give your location followed by brief details of the problem, eg "Longbridges, canoeists coming under the bridges and heading towards the Gut".

If there is a break in the chain, and the marshal you are following does not say anything (which could be due to radio failure as much as incompetence) wait for a short period, and then make your report.

Radio use

Radios are usually on **channel 1** (knob on top next to the aerial). Have the volume (righthand knob on top) up full, unless this causes excessive distortion, and listen for Race Desk or the SU calling you by your marshalling position.

When wanting to use the radio, **press the large button on the lefthand side** and hold it for a moment before starting to speak with the radio close to your mouth. Identify yourself by your marshalling position and say who you want to speak to (e.g. "Univ to Race Desk..." or "Top gut to Senior Umpire..."). Wait for the person to respond, then give your message. **Speak slowly and clearly, and keep your messages short and to the point.**

Only one person can talk at any one time, so do not talk over the top of anyone, especially not the SU and Race Desk.

Do not use your radio after the 1 minute gun has been fired unless you are addressing the SU about a situation that the race should be delayed for.

If the battery starts to run out or your radio develops a fault, contact Race Desk (07527 071415) or find a nearby marshal to radio Race Desk to request a replacement.

During racing

During each division marshals above the Gut should watch for crews being impeded. The rules of Rowing On state that the slower crew must give way to the faster crew, as is usual in Head racing. If a slower crew is not giving way, use your megaphone to tell them to do so. If they fail to do so, report them to Race Desk. If you feel the faster crew has lost time, inform Race Desk of that as well.

Klaxons

You will have a klaxon which can be sounded as a last resort to stop racing. You should sound it immediately if:

- a) **anyone** - competitor or spectator - **enters the water**.
- b) **the river is blocked** such that following crews have no way to get past. (NB this is not just that the RACING line is blocked; if following crews can get round and past, allow racing to continue).
- c) there is an **imminent collision** between two or more crews, where one is stationary and one is at race pace.
- d) **you need to clear the river to get First Aiders to an incident**.

To sound your klaxon hold the button on the top down for at least 10 seconds, or until all crews you can see have stopped racing. If you hear another klaxon, or hear over your radio that the division has been klaxoned, sound your own for 10 seconds also. If you have sounded your klaxon, immediately radio through to Race Desk with details of your position, why you have klaxoned and if any help is required (the launch and or First Aiders).

After racing

Once crews have crossed the line, marshals in the finish area should make sure they wind down, and yet continue to move upstream until they are clear of the finish line. Use the full length of the river to park finished crews. Crews should stay pointing upstream while waiting. All racing crews must cross the line before the Head marshal then directs them to spin and head back to their boathouses along the far bank. Direct the crews to spin in the order which clears the area in the most safe and efficient manner. This will probably involve spinning the downstream crews first. Note that they do not have to be spun one at a time as long as it is safe, taking into account the stream and wind, and the size of the gaps between the crews.

Behaviour

You are representing Oxford University and college rowing to the wider public, so **please behave appropriately**. If you witness any unsavoury behaviour by crews or coaches, particularly if directed at members of the public, note the college or the bib number of the coach and **report it to Race Desk**.

The end of your shift

You may not leave until you have been relieved by another marshal or released by Race Desk at the end of racing.

When your replacement arrives, hand over all your equipment and check that they have been briefed at Race Desk before you depart. If they have not been briefed, you must radio Race Desk and inform them. It is not sufficient for you to run your replacement through the procedure.

Please do NOT hand over to someone else during the 10 minutes leading up to a division. In this instance, marshal the race, then hand over.

If you have come to the end of your marshalling slot and no-one has arrived to replace you, radio Race Desk. They will arrange for a replacement to be sent. Please stay in position until that replacement arrives.

It has been the practice for colleges to split their allocated marshalling slot into two, and get two people to cover the time. This, however, should not happen because it means that the second person will not have been briefed by someone at Race Desk. If your captain asks you to do this, please point out to them that one person needs to cover the entire slot.