

Isis Winter League

Instructions to Competitors.



The Isis Winter League is a series of head races run on the Isis by OURCs in Michaelmas and Hilary terms. Divisions of 10-16 boats race upstream from Donnington Bridge to the Cox Stone (opposite Christ Church Meadows).

Risk Assessment

Risks to the event and competitors such as high stream, high wind, fog, ice or an obstructed towpath will be assessed by the Senior Umpire and Race Secretary and adjustments (e.g. change of required coxing status, race format and timings) may be announced as long before racing as possible. However, this does not absolve the steersmen/women of crews from needing to make their own risk assessments for their crews. Crews who are unable to compete safely in the conditions should not be taking part. Colleges are requested to tell the Race Secretary before the draw if they know that a crew will need to have members 'sitting the boat' during the race.

Equipment

All boats must comply with British Rowing and EA regulations, particularly in relation to heel restraints, bow protection and buoyancy, and coxes must wear a suitable personal flotation device. Boats in later divisions may be required to have lights – bright non-flashing white lights solidly fixed to the bow and stern so that the light is visible through 360 degrees. These divisions will be marked (L) on the draw.

Lightweights

Lightweights must weigh in at Longbridges Boathouse between two and one hours before their race start time. Competitors boating from Boathouse Island are strongly recommended to weigh in as early as possible to give themselves time to get on the water in time after weigh-in. Maximum weight will be 61.5 kg for women and 75 kg for open, while wearing an all-in-one or similar. Competitors must bring either a BR racing licence or other form of photo ID. No juniors are permitted to race lightweight.

Boating and warming up

Crews should warm up on land before boating – opportunities for warmups on the water are minimal due to tight timings of divisions. Crews should boat as soon as the last racing crew (usually, but not always, followed by the following safety launch), has passed their raft.

The race desk will use Greenwich Mean Time (or British Summer Time in the event of a summer IWL) as its standardised race time. Coxes are expected to carry watches or other timepieces and to get their crew in place when requested. If races are delayed, they will be caught up as fast as possible.

Warm-up circulation

All crews should boat with their bows downstream and proceed directly to the gut sticking to the side of the river they boated from, leaving the centre of the river clear on the top stretch. No circulation is permitted on the top stretch and crews are required to leave the centre of the river

clear for other river traffic. On entering the gut crews should “merge in turn” and be on the towpath bank as they take the right-hand bend of the gut. Circulation below the gut is normal with crews keeping to their bowside bank and turning in the Haystacks spinning areas appropriate for the flag level (or otherwise as directed by the Senior Umpire and marshals) and in the bay outside Sea Scouts. They may be permitted to turn earlier if need be, to get into order for racing, or if late.

Marshalling

Crews should line up on the City-side (non-towpath) bank, pointing upstream in the order shown on the latest version of the published draw. Crews should be lined up in order 5 minutes before the published start time. Marshals and the following launch will help with getting crews into order – you must listen to marshals’ instructions. Beware of moored cruisers and steamers around Salters’ wet dock. Once all crews are below Donnington Bridge, the SU may give permission for crews to align on both banks (but still in order), so as to spread out congestion.

Start

As space appears in front of you in the queue, tap up to close all gaps with at least half your crew, unless instructed otherwise by a marshal or the SU. The start will be a rolling start under the direction of the Senior Umpire, who will wave a green flag and instruct your crew “[Brasenose] - GO!” or similar. You should then wind up to race pace and aim to be at full speed when you cross the downstream side of Donnington Bridge – this is the start timing point. If at any point you see a red flag being waved, please stop immediately. Coxes are obliged to keep a good look-out and to obey instructions from outside the boat.

Bank-riders

In the interests of safety on the towpath, only one cyclist will be allowed to accompany each crew, except by advance permission of the Event Committee. Additional bankriders will incur fines.

During the race

During the race you may take any safe line you see fit up the river. It is important to note that in IWL **slower crews have priority**, so faster crews must go around, making their intentions clear. It is the responsibility of all crews to avoid collisions with moored boats, fishermen’s poles, other racing crews and all other obstructions.

In the event of a **KLAXON** sounding during a race, all crews must HOLD IT HARD immediately and wait for instructions from marshals.

Finish area

The finish is at the Cox Stone and is marked by the white clacker post - in general it is advised that crews row through the finish line on the towpath side. Finish time will be taken when the bows of the boat cross the line. All crews should wind down but continue rowing past the finish line and as high as possible. Crews should spin under the direction of the marshal at the Head and then remain stationary, above the finish line, on the meadow side until the last racing crew has crossed the finish line. In high stream conditions the marshal may require crews to remain pointing with their bows upstream until all the crews have finished, and then to spin in a specific order.

Returning and landing

Once the last racing crew has finished the Finish marshal will release crews to return to their boathouses. Crews returning to Boathouse Island should row down the meadow side and land downstream. Crews returning to Univ or Longbridges should cross to the towpath bank upstream of Boathouse Island (N.B. you do not need permission to cross) and proceed downstream on the towpath side, landing downstream where possible. The centre of the river should be left clear.

Re-opening the river

The river will be re-opened by the SU when all the racing crews for the last division have returned to their boathouses. No training crews may boat until that point, and crews training after an IWL are reminded that the river closes to all crews one hour after official sunset.