



## Torpids Instructions for Competitors

The following is a general guide to participating in Torpids. Further details are available for coxes. More information will be in the Torpids information meeting held before the regatta and a question and answer session will be included with this. Other questions should be addressed to the OURCs Secretary on [secretary@ourcs.org.uk](mailto:secretary@ourcs.org.uk)

### Race officials

There are several types of race official at the river during torpids:

#### **Race (OURCs) Committee and Racedesk**

These are the people who are running the event and are based at racedesk at the longbridges boathouse. Payments, substitutions and appeal forms should be taken to racedesk. Racedesk can be contacted via the marshals' radios or on the OURCs mobile 07527071415.

#### **Marshals**

These wear yellow fluorescent jackets with "Marshal" written on the back; Marshals have radios and klaxons; Marshals ensure the safe running of the event and you must obey the instructions given by them; You will be able to ask marshals the racetime or any other queries and should inform them if you suffer any unforeseen problems before boating or when on the river.

#### **Umpires**

These wear red bibs with the number of the bungline of the crew to which they are attached; If you suffer problems on the bungline you may ask them to report your problem to marshals; Otherwise you should not speak to them as interference with their impartiality will invalidate the results. They will follow your boat during the race and have priority over your bank-rider.

#### **Senior Umpire**

In charge of the safe and timely running of the event, located down by the bunglines. As competitors you are unlikely to need to communicate directly with the SU and may address most queries to racedesk.

### Arriving at the river

Leave plenty of time to get to the river. At least an hour before your race time may be appropriate to allow time for a warm up erg/run and get the boat out.

You may put your boat on the water after the boats from two divisions before have landed. If you have any delays due to equipment or personnel problems the start cannot be delayed, but please inform a marshal as soon as possible so they can inform racedesk.

### Boating and warm up

Torpids takes place at a cold time of year. Therefore you must wear an appropriate amount of kit for your warm up (that little extra weight in the boat may save you from hypothermia). If you are unwell

you are advised not to race but if you choose to then do so with enough kit to stay extra warm. You can de-kit on the bungline just before the race.

Unless otherwise instructed by marshals, you may boat when the last racing crew of the division before yours passes your raft. For the first division of the day you may boat when the river opening is announced over the PA and by the marshals (this will be approximately half an hour before the first division). You should push off promptly as soon as you are able.

Crews on bunglines 1-6 must warm up above the gut, crew 7 may warm up either above or below the gut and 8-13 must warm up below the gut. Reverse circulation applies above the gut and normal circulation below. The centre of the river is reserved for cruisers. You may spin where appropriate but do not obstruct other river traffic.

While warming up it is important to arrive at your bungline with plenty of time, the cox or coach should keep track of race time (available from any marshal).

## **Bank riders**

Your club is responsible for *any* cyclists following your boat. You are permitted to have only 1 bank rider. All novice coxes *must* be accompanied by a coach. This person must pick up a numbered bib for the bungline you start. These are green for women's crews and blue for men's crews. If you need another bank rider in extreme circumstances you may *request* permission from racedesk.

Cyclists must be responsible for their own safe conduct. Safety must override all other concerns. Although marshals and signs will warn pedestrians of cyclists during the division, you must be aware that people will be in front of you. Megaphones are prohibited.

## **Starting procedure**

A gun near the middle of the bunglines will signal the start of the race. Guns will also sound 5 minutes before and 1 minute before. Your coach (or someone in the boat) should set their watch to the 1 minute gun as the start gun will go 60 seconds later (+/- 5 seconds). The guns will also be announced over the PA.

If there are any delays or changes you will be advised by the marshals.

## **Racing**

There will be no other boats on the course during the race. The usual racing line is to the left below the gut, right along the green bank and left along the boathouse islands.

The finish line is between the cox stone and the Christ Church meadows and is marked by the klackerboard.

## **Klaxons**

In the event of a klaxon sounding, all crews must cease racing immediately (remember it may have been sounded to prevent your crew from colliding with someone else your cox has not seen). Await the instructions of marshals and clear a path for the rescue launch if it needs to get through.

Bumps gained before the klaxon first sounds on the course will stand but bumps cannot be gained after the klaxon. This is not influenced by whether the crews claim to have heard the klaxon or not. Once started, divisions will not be re-run.

## **Bumps**

A bump has occurred in one of three circumstances:

There is contact between the hull/blades/etc. of the chasing boat and the hull/riggers/blades/etc. of the leading boat.

There is a concession by the cox of the leading boat in the form of an arm being raised.

The chasing boat rows clean past (stern passed bow) the leading boat.

Once a bump has occurred, the bumping crew is no longer racing. They must take appropriate action (“wind down”) to not interfere with the bumped crew and must clear the racing line without causing obstruction to racing crews behind.

In Torpids, the bumped crew continues racing (Note that in Eights the bumped crew also drops out of racing).

Crews are liable to be bumped until their stern crosses the finish line or they gain a bump.

## **Landing**

Crews crossing the finish line wind down and move upstream, clear of the finish, where they wait for instructions on spinning from the Head marshal. Crews who ‘bump out’ follow the last racing crew up the river, observing the circulation pattern. Crews that ‘bump out’ beyond their boathouse join the warm-up circulation pattern and land at their raft when they pass it on the correct side of the river. Crews ‘bumping out’ before their boathouse may go straight in provided it is clear to do so and under instructions from the marshals, with the exception of the top half of the Boathouse Island side, St. Anne’s to Keble, who must re-join the circulation pattern.

## **Results and appeals**

Results for each division will be announced over the PA system after the umpires have returned and been debriefed. Once the results are announced there is 10 minutes for anyone to appeal them. Results must be appealed at racedesk (you may inform a marshal to radio to racedesk that you are appealing if you will not make it in 10 minutes). The appeal must be made in writing on a form available from racedesk.

In the event of an appeal, representatives of the crews involved (usually to cox) will be called to racedesk. A committee will be formed of three members of the Race Committee to deal with the appeal, they will interview those involved as well as umpires and marshals to establish an order of events of what has happened. They will then announce the outcome of the appeal to those at racedesk and by the PA. There is then 10 minutes to appeal this to the Senior Umpire. This is appropriate if you believe the race committee has misinterpreted the rules and not simply because you believe they have reached the wrong order of events.

Appeals will normally be dealt with as soon as they are brought to race desk

Note: While any appeal will be considered, you should normally only appeal if you debate the sequence of events or within the Rules for Bumping Races from the bumps races. You will not successfully appeal that a crew “should have conceded” if no actual bump has occurred (i.e. physical contact or rowing clean past). No appeal will be considered if received later than 10 minutes after the results are announced.

## **Penalties**

A number of penalties may be given against crews for a variety of reasons, the severity of the penalty will reflect the seriousness of the violation of the rules. Unsafe conduct of any sort will be penalised. Delaying the start by being attached to your bungline late will result in a fine. Unsafe conduct will be punished particularly severely (this includes penalties for failing to follow the circulation pattern). Unsporting conduct will also be punished as appropriate (this includes the use of foul language).

Fines of £10, £25 or £50 may be given to crews.

Technical bumps will be given against crews who do not start in accordance with the rules. Penalty bumps may be given against crews guilty of unsafe or particularly unsporting conduct. In extreme circumstances, a crew may be disqualified from the whole event and or other penalties imposed by the race secretary on an entire club.

Technical bumps, penalty bumps and more extreme penalties will not be issued without giving the crew or college captain the chance to present their case.

## **Outstanding debts**

All outstanding debts to OURCs (fines, entry fees, etc.) must be paid before your top boat races each day. Fines may be paid to racedesk at any time. If you are appealing a fine then you still need to pay and if the fine is overturned later you will be refunded.

## **Substitutions**

Substitutions may be put in by your captain through the entries area of the website until 9am for each day (this is the preferred method). After that, substitution forms are available online and from racedesk on the day.

Substitutions must be eligible to row for the crew (Refer to the OURCs rules on substitutions). Exceptions will rarely be made in extreme circumstances and require permission from the Race Secretary and only if it is not an enhancement to the crew.

## **Poor weather contingency plans**

A number of plans exist to allow racing to take place in the event of poor stream and weather conditions. These will involve limiting coxes to X or S status and or reducing to senior divisions. If this is the case then information will be circulated via the OURCs and rowing captains' mailing lists.

*David Pallot, OURCs Secretary 2007-08*