



O U R C

Torpids Marshalling Guide

Please be sure also to read the Torpids event plan as well as this guide. This is a guide to the absolute essentials of marshalling and more information is available from the event plan.

Please arrive promptly at the LongBridges boathouse for the start of your marshalling shift where you will be briefed by a member of the OURCs committee and sent out to your position. Remember to wear appropriate clothing to stay warm and dry as you will be standing by the river for some time. It may also be useful to bring a pen. Due to the potential of harsh weather, if you are unwell, you should not marshal for long periods of time and your college should organise an alternative. If you become unwell during your shift, radio to racedesk for advice.

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 towpath or area you are stationed, but do not let this distract you from the river. If you need help, radio racedesk.

Race Time

You will be given the exact race time when you are briefed at racedesk - ensure you set your watch to this so you can advise crews of the time.

Circulation Pattern

The circulation pattern is available from the website.

The basic circulation pattern between divisions is a figure of eight. Above the Gut all crews observe reverse circulation thus keeping to the left of the river. Below the Gut, the normal pattern is followed and crews keep to the right. Crews may only overtake below the gut if it does not obstruct cruisers. All crews boating from the Boathouse Island must therefore boat downstream and keep close to the left bank. Crews on the County Side must boat upstream towards the Head. Any crew stationed at Falcon or City of Oxford Rowing Club should boat as normal, unless the river is completely clear - crews may then boat downstream. Similarly, if crews are late boating at Long Bridges, the river is clear and permission has been gained from a marshal, crews may boat downstream.

Of the 13 crews in each division, the top 6 will warm-up in the upstream part of the river and the bottom 6 in the part below the gut. Boat number 7 may choose its warm-up stretch. The change from left to right hand circulation happens at the top entrance to the Gut as crews move down toward the start, under direction of the Long Bridges and Top Gut marshals. The bungline marshals assist crews with spinning onto their bunglines; either reverse or normal spin is allowed with the aim of leaving the far bank clear if cruisers are passing.

Upstream of the Gut, encounters between crews are avoided by all crews keeping tight to the banks and leaving a clear, central passage for cruisers and other river traffic. Downstream of Long Bridges, crews obey the Regulations for the Avoidance of Collisions (Thames Navigation Licensing and General Byelaws 1993). Crews may spin above the gut where appropriate provided it does not cause obstruction to oncoming river traffic.

Marshals should ensure crews are following the circulation pattern and correct them if they are not. Particular attention should be paid to avoiding collisions between crews and other crews and other river traffic.

Other river users

During the event it is likely that other boats will come to the Isis. As they reach either Iffley lock (going upstream) or Osney lock (going downstream) they are given verbal notice from the EA. (Races are never started until the river is completely clear of river traffic and other obstructions). These could be everything from tourist punts and narrow boats to huge steamers. They have a right to be there so when speaking to them **be polite** and always **ask** them to follow your instructions. **When approaching a cruiser, find out what their intentions are and ask them to stick to the centre of the river, passing other cruisers on their portside. Competing crews should not be allowed in the centre of the river and should not spin in front of cruisers. The SU may tell you to ask cruisers to moor (at one of the three points: A, B or C) marked on the circulation pattern, to wait for divisions to go past, please do this politely and explain why.**

The Environment Agency river inspector may be on the river during event. They are aware of how things run so will probably not need direction. Their boat has a flag on the stern saying "River Inspector", and has a pale blue hull.

Two launches will also be in operation (yellow catamarans) – this is part of the event so you do not need to worry about this.

Racing

During the race, no vessels other than the 13 racing boats and the following safety launch are on the course. Crews may take whichever route up the river they choose. In the event of a 'bump', the crew gaining the bump moves out of the racing line as quickly as possible and stops. The launch follows racing as far as the Gut. Crews who have been 'bumped' or have not gained a 'bump' race as far as the finish post, opposite Christ Church meadow. Crews then 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.

Crews for the next division may boat when the last racing crew passes their raft, as announced by the PA system. Marshals should encourage crews to boat promptly when the time comes.

Radio use

Ensure you know what channel your radio is supposed to be on (usually channel 1). When talking into the radio press the large button on the side for a second or two before starting to speak and keep it held down until you have finished. Speak slowly and clearly.

Remember your call-sign (your marshalling position) so you can identify yourself when making a call and say who you are who you are speaking to (e.g. "Univ to racedesk..." or "Top gut to senior umpire...").

Have your radio at a suitable volume that you can hear it but it is not distorted. Listen out for if the racedesk or SU are calling you.

If the battery starts to run out radio racedesk or find a nearby marshal to radio racedesk to request a replacement.

In the rain, the radios will start to fail to work if allowed to get too wet. Try to keep your radio as dry as possible.

If you are in doubt about anything you may radio through to racedesk to ask – but please use common sense and do not interrupt important communication. Radio silence will be called by the SU before the race starts and you should not break this unless you have a safety reason to stop the race (i.e. obstruction on the course or need of first aiders to your position).

If your radio fails you may phone racedesk on 07527071415 or contact a marshal near your position.

River Checks

The SU will call frequent river checks over the radio by saying something along the lines of “Can I have a river check please, from the Head, go”. The person named (in this case the Head marshal) should then report and everyone should in turn report on whether the river is clear. This order runs from the head of the river downwards in order: **Head, Finish, Boathouses A, Boathouses B, Univ, Green Bank, LongBridges, Top Gut, Bottom Gut, Top Bunglines, Bottom Bunglines**

If it is, say “Head, clear” “Finish, clear”, etc. If it is not, please report on any cruisers, kayaks, logs, debris, swans or anything else in the racing line (e.g. “Boathouses A, there is a large log in the middle of the river drifting downstream slowly” or “Top gut, there is the narrow boat ‘X-ample’ heading upstream through the gut”).

Klaxons

You will have a klaxon which can be sounded as a last resort to stop racing - the division will not be restarted. **If you need to sound your klaxon, hold the button on the top down for 10 seconds. If you hear another klaxon, sound your own for 10 seconds also. If you have sounded your klaxon, immediately radio through to race desk with details of your position, where the problem is, why you have klaxoned and if any help is required (the launch and or first aiders).**

You have three reasons to klaxon a race:

- In the event of anyone falling in the water either ejected from a boat or a spectator from the bank.
- If the racing line is irreversibly and completely blocked with a crew approaching (and not able to get around).
- In any circumstance in which a person is in danger from the race (for example you need to get the first aid team to someone quickly if someone has been injured in a boat or on the bank)

Boat checks

If you are one of the raft marshals (boathouses A and B, Univ, longbridges or the bike marshal sent to CORC, Falcon or Academicals) you will need to check all boats being put on the water before pushing off for the following:

- **The cox must be wearing a lifejacket and it must be over their outer layer.**
- **Bow balls must be firmly attached to the bows of the boat (give it a tug to ensure it is firmly attached)**
- **Heel restraints must be present and correct (lift up the heels of each of the seats to ensure they do not come further than horizontal)**
- **EA licence (this is a square coloured sticker in the boat with the year on it).**
- **ARA Boat ID (the three-letter ARA code together with a three-digit fleet number).**

Details of roles of individual positions’

- **Head (of the River) Marshal:** Warns and communicates with other river traffic to prevent obstructions on the course; instructs crews who have finished racing on when to spin and where to wait to prevent a build up of crews by the finish line; warns pedestrians that an event is occurring. You will need to be a particularly competent and confident marshal to ensure good communication with any river traffic.
- **Finish:** Operates the finish clacker to inform crews when their stern has crossed the finish line (i.e. that they have finished racing); instructs crews to clear the finish line.
- **Raft Marshals (Boathouses A and B, Univ and Longbridges):** Fields questions from competitors; Performs checks on each boat to ensure that they conform to ARA and EA regulations; Encourages crews to boat on time to prevent late starting of divisions.
- **Green Bank:** Observes racing; warns pedestrians that an event is occurring.

- **Gut Marshals (Top Gut and Bottom Gut):** Keep a record of which boats have passed downstream to be able to inform the SU of the progress of crews to the start. Particularly important to be alert during races due to the large number of bumps happening in the Gut.
- **Bunglines marshals (Top Bunglines and Bottom Bunglines):** Keeps a record of which crews are attached to their bunglines; assists the SU. Bottom bunglines warns and communicates with other river traffic.
- **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.

You may also be deployed as an **extra marshal** by the Race Secretary if this is necessary.

The end of your shift

You may not leave until you have been relieved by another marshal or at the end of racing when instructed by racedesk. You may also not leave during or less than 10mins before a division.

When someone else arrives, hand over your equipment and BRIEF THEM FULLY before departing - make sure they know exactly what they should be doing when, who they follow in the River Check order and that their watch is synchronised to Race Time. They should arrive before you are expecting to leave so get them to shadow you before they take over.

If you are expecting to be relieved by a marshal from another college, radio the Racedesk if they are late. If you are expecting to be relieved by someone else from your college, this is your captain's responsibility to arrange so please phone them.

David Pallot, OURCs Secretary 2007-08