



Torpids Umpiring Guide

Umpires are the impartial observers that decide the outcome of races by following one crew each along the towpath.

Please arrive promptly on time for your shift to the longbridges boathouse. You must bring a bike and you are advised to wear a helmet. Please wear some obvious college stash so we can identify your college.

You should also be familiar with the rules of Torpids racing (a short summary is provided below).

The role of the umpire

For each division you will be assigned a crew. Neither your assigned boat nor the boats ahead or behind should be from your own college or any college you have an affiliation to. Declare any affiliation before you are sent out as this will undermine your impartiality. You will be given a red umpiring bib for the bungline of your assigned crew.

You should be at your crew's bungline before the five minute gun. If your crew has problems (e.g. equipment failure) report to the nearest marshal (yellow bibs) or the senior umpire.

When racing starts, follow and observe your crew. Do not interfere with racing except in the interests of safety.

After the race, immediately report back to racedesk for debrief whatever the outcome. Do not discuss events with coaches, spectators or particularly other umpires (it is important that umpires are independent) even after debrief (in case the results are contested and you need to be interviewed by a race committee).

You must report:

- Whether coxes were holding the bunglines on the start gun.
- If crews are obstructed by bunglines left in the water
- Whether bumps have occurred:
 - Direct contact between boats/blades of the bumping crew with the boats/blades/crew of the bumped crew.
 - Concession by the bumped cox (raising their arm).
 - The bumping boat rows clean past (stern past bow) the bumped boat.
- The sequence of bumps where three boats are close together (who bumped whom first).
- Whether concessions were early and clear enough.
- Whether the bumping crew wind down quickly enough after concession and clear the racing line quickly to the best of their ability.
- Whether coxes make reasonable attempts to steer around obstructions.

- Where all these events occur.

Torpids Rules

The following is a short summary of the rules of racing in Torpids:

- Boats start on bunghines at a given separation.
- The objective is to catch (“bump”) the crew in front of yours.
 - Any part of the boat touches the boat in front.
 - The cox of the leading crew acknowledges that a bump is inevitable by raising his/her arm.
 - The leading boat is overtaken completely (stern past bow).
- On gaining a bump, a boat is no longer racing and not liable to be bumped and must clear the racing line so as to not impede crews behind still racing.
- A crew that has been bumped is still racing and liable to be bumped until every part of it (i.e. the stern) has crossed the finish. Note the difference to Eights rules where the bumped crew also drops out.
- In the event of a klaxon sounding on the course, all boats cease racing.
 - Bumps prior to the klaxon stand; Bumps after the klaxon do not count.
 - This is independent of whether the crews themselves hear the klaxon.

David Pallot, OURCs Secretary 2007-08

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