

Star Club Regatta 2022

Safety Plan

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1. Introduction

Welcome to **Star Club Regatta**. We hope that you have an enjoyable and successful day's racing. With your help and cooperation, we (and our equipment) should survive the day intact.

This Safety Plan incorporates the key points of the British Rowing publication 'Row Safe: A Guide to Good Practice in Rowing,' and should be read by every cox and crew member. This plan is a local extension, for the duration of the Star Regatta, of **British Rowing's Row Safe' A Guide to Safe Practice in Rowing**.

A copy of the Safety Plan is lodged with British Rowing, Regional Water Safety Officer and Bedford Borough Council.

Medical professionals, Ambulance Response Services, will be present during the whole event.

Safety boats crewed by trained personnel will be patrolling the course throughout the event.

Marshals are equipped with loudhailers and basic safety equipment; throw-bags and emergency blankets.

Safety boats, marshals and officials are provided with radios operating for communication.

2. Safety Procedures & Preventive Measures

2.1 Safety Instructions & Information for Competitors

Equipment:

It is the responsibility of each crew to ensure that the equipment that they are using is safe and compliant with the requirements of *British Rowing's Rules of Racing* and '*Row Safe' A Guide to Safe Practice in Rowing*. Coxes arriving at the start without lifejackets will be disqualified. Coxes of front-loading boats should ensure that their life jackets allow for a quick escape from their boat.

All boats must have secure bow balls, heel restraints and watertight buoyancy chambers. Coxswains must wear a life jacket or buoyancy aid in the correct manner and be familiar with the method of operation. In "front-loader" boats, coxswains must wear manually operated gas-inflation life jackets (Rule 2-3-7a). Spot checks on equipment will take place during the day.

Coxes

All coxes should be familiar with the method of operation of their life jacket.

Boat Identification

All boats must have clearly visible Boat ID, as specified in Rules of British Rowing Section L 'Boat Identification'. Boat ID must be visible on both sides of the boat. Failure to show boat ID may well mean exclusion from taking part in the event.

Swimming Ability:

Every competitor is expected to be in good health and able to swim for a minimum of 50 metres in kit. Although the river is fairly narrow and access from the bank relatively good, there are areas of dangerous undercurrent, especially in the area downstream of the Town Bridge by Bedford Rowing Club.

Competitors' Responsibility

While we endeavour to provide a safe system at this event, each competitor and competing club also has a duty of care to themselves and others. They should:

- remember that they have a duty of care to themselves and any third party both on the water and on land.
- ensure that any equipment (e.g. boats, blades, buoyancy aids, etc.) are safe and prepared to the standards as required under the 'Rules of Racing' and 'RowSafe'. Spot checks may be made by umpires to check on bow ball, heel restraints or other quick-release mechanisms and coxes' life jackets.
- ensure that their boats comply with the buoyancy requirements of section 2.3 of 'Row Safe'.
- observe any 'local rule' or traffic/circulation pattern along with 'RowSafe' provisions.
- Decide whether or not they are competent to use the water course in the prevailing weather conditions; this decision may be taken by the individual, or with their coach/crew.
- Wear adequate clothing / protection that is suited to the conditions on the day.

River Hazards

During racing the following should be noted:

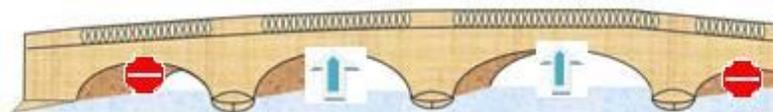
Crews will proceed upstream to the start keeping close to the Embankment wall at all times, avoiding crews racing downstream. There will be **no practice starts on the course** whilst proceeding to the start. At the Town Bridge, all crews proceeding to the start will use the narrow right-hand arch only. Care to be taken when exiting the Town Bridge going to the start, as racing crews may be coming downstream towards you. Keep to the Town Hall side of the river, and keep to the north side of Goose Island just past Star Club, where marshals will guide you to the marshalling area.

Crews will be marshalled upstream of the Start between Hitchin Bridge and the Twin Bridges. No crews to go beyond the Twin Bridges. When going upstream through Hitchin Bridge, keep to the right-hand arch only. Trial starts are discouraged in this area. For your own safety, please observe the warnings and instruction of Marshals at all times.

When proceeding downstream from the marshalling area to the start, use the centre arch only of the Hitchin Bridge. Marshals will then advise you which arch of County Bridge you should take to get onto the stake boats.

The course is marked with buoys separating the two racing lanes. Crews must stay in their lanes throughout the race.

At the Town Bridge, use the two main central arches, one for each lane. (See illustration below)



Other possible hazards are Monkey Island, just past Bedford Rowing Club, the weir, approximately 150 metres downstream of Monkey Island, and the lock where other river users may join the main river. Marshals will monitor comings and goings through the lock.

There is a possible hazard at the weir approaching the Schools boating area, and finally the boating area at the the Schools is always very busy with crews embarking and disembarking from the river.

In the event of capsiz:

The whole course is visible by umpires and marshals. Umpires and marshals are equipped with throwing lines etc. and safety boats patrol the course. In the event of a capsiz on the course, please stay with your boat as getting out of the river in many areas is difficult due to the high banks.

Know the rules:

British Rowing's Rules of Racing will be used. The marshalling rules are straightforward – see the event circulation plan – the safety advisor will stop racing if an unsafe situation develops. In particular, keep well into the bank on the way up to the start. Give yourself plenty of time to boat before your race time. Listen for marshals' instructions - they are all experienced in the job and know the event and the river well. Once you have arrived at the marshalling area you will be paired with your opponent and marshalled to the start line. Late arrivals at the start can result in disqualification. Requests for race delays due to boat damage or doubling up will be considered but can be refused.

If you see an accident:

Umpires and marshals will be the initial public contact points for reporting of emergencies. Umpires normal dress attire is blazer and white trousers, and marshals will wear a high visibility jacket for identification at all times.

This Safety Plan is distributed to all officials.

Safety Boats

Two safety boats will be available on the course at all times. These shall be equipped with competent people, radios, throw lines, safety blankets and first aid equipment.

First Aid

First Aid cover is provided at Star Rowing Club and at the Schools' Boathouse, and will be contactable via radio.

Emergency

The nearest A&E unit is Bedford Hospital (South Wing), accessed via Ampthill Road (A6).

Emergency: Fire, Police, Ambulance: 999 from any telephone.

Key Personnel

Person in charge on the day:	Ian Donald contact via control or mobile:	07922 833149
Safety Adviser:	David Gowing contact via control or mobile:	07775 030130
Event Secretary:	Nicky Durrant contact via control or mobile:	07971 079764
Event First Aiders:	Ambulance Response Services	07904 040092
Welfare Officer:	Amber Dorkin contact via control or mobile:	07954 334430

Key Telephone Numbers

Telephones are situated at Bedford Rowing Club, Star Club, Schools' Boat House and public telephones on the north side of the Town Bridge on the Star Club side.

All positions are in radio contact with control, the rescue services and the Chief Umpire.

Contact numbers: Event Mobile: 07971 079764 (Event Secretary)
 Schools' Boathouse: 01234 359076
 Bedford RC Clubhouse: 01234 353183
 Star Clubhouse: 01234 212070

Please ensure you do not obstruct the towpath with boats, trestles, blades and other equipment in case access is required by emergency services. The towpath is also a public thoroughfare.

2.2 Incidents – Collisions & Capsizes

Above the start/below the finish: Get any boat that is damaged and unable to proceed to the side.

On the course: Any damaged boat which is unable to proceed should be moved to the bankside without delay, preferably to Star Club, Bedford Rowing Club, or the Schools Boathouse. It should be noted that the only normal entry and exit points to the river are from the bankside, downstream of the start at Star Club, Bedford Rowing Club, and the Schools' boathouse.

Umpires and marshals: Shall pay particular attention to any incident on the river. Should a crew be involved in a collision or suffer any injury requiring assistance, or crew member fall out of a boat, the official shall summon a safety launch by radio. If the course is blocked, the official shall also advise the start to stop and hold the next race until advised that the course is clear.

Capsize: The whole course is visible to umpires and marshals. Every umpire and marshal position is equipped with throwing lines and a radio to inform Race Control. **STAY WITH THE BOAT!** Priority will be to get the rower/sculler removed from the water first, dealing with the boat comes next.

2.3 Incidents – Extreme weather conditions & other threats

Where extreme weather conditions or other situations that could require the cancellation or postponement of racing, either for the day or until the conditions change, the decision will be the responsibility of the Chairman of the Race Committee and the Safety Adviser. The Chairman of the Race Committee or the Safety Adviser also reserve the right to amend this plan if weather or competition conditions on the day make this necessary. Amendments, postponement or cancellation will be published at Race Control and announced over the public address system.

In the case of lightning, a risk warning will be broadcast advising participants already on land to avoid moving boats and oars during the period of the storm. The message shall make clear whether or not racing could be resumed if conditions improve and whether crews already on the water should return immediately or complete their race first. As soon as the decision is made, every effort will be made to get all competitors and Safety boat crews ashore and safe as quickly as possible.

As for determining when things are safe, use the 30-30 rule. After you see lightning flash, count the number of seconds it takes until you can hear thunder crack. If the time is less than 30 seconds, you are still in danger and should stay in a safe place. Similarly, a person should wait 30 minutes after seeing the last flash of lightning as it may linger after a storm. Nearly half of the deaths caused by lightning strikes occur after a storm has passed.

NOTE: If an umpire considers that it is unsafe for a crew to race in the prevailing conditions (wind or stream) then that crew may be stopped and withdrawn from the race in the interest of their own safety and the safety of other crews and officials.

2.4 Protecting children

The organisers of Star Regatta believe that the welfare and wellbeing of all children is paramount. All junior competitors have a right to safety and protection. All suspicions, concerns and allegations of harm will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

It is expected that the welfare of junior competitors is primarily the responsibility of the competing clubs' own coaches and officers, or individual parents accompanying their children.

In the event of a junior being involved in any incident, the responsible adult will be identified from the competitor's entry form. The named person will be called over the public address system and contacted by the mobile phone number given on the entry form.

It is the responsibility of the coach or parent accompanying juniors to monitor their whereabouts. In the event of any junior crew member going missing, the responsible adult must take appropriate action. In the first instance a call may be broadcast over the PA, by contacting Race Control. The named adult, or in their absence, the Regatta Chairman, is responsible for deciding whether the local police should be contacted in the case of any incident

No individual will have access to personal contact details of junior competitors.

2.5 Pre-inspection

Approximately 1 hour before the start of racing, the Safety Advisor along with the Chairman of the race committee will inspect the course and surroundings for any obstructions or likely problems and assess the weather conditions. A Checklist shall be completed by the Safety Advisor at this time. Any decisions on postponement or cancellation can be considered then.

2.6 Instructions

Umpires, marshals, and other officials will be issued with all relevant safety documentation prior to the event. Specific safety information may be issued on the day.

Competitors will receive details of the arrangements and instructions prior to the event.

3. Communications

Safety boats are provided with radios operating on the Umpires channel, to maintain contact with umpires and Race Control when needed. "Red" and "Blue" codes will be used to indicate urgency.

Radio etiquette shall be maintained at all times and only relevant event information shall be relayed by radio.

4. Circulation Pattern

The majority of visiting crews will boat from downstream of the finish. Crews boating from Star should keep to the North Bank of the river and proceed to the start marshalling area, keeping to the north of Goose Island. Crews boating from Bedford Rowing Club should first check for racing crews before crossing to the North Bank and proceeding upstream towards the start. Crews that have finished their race must clear the finish area promptly and continue to observe Marshals' instructions.

5. Emergency Action Plan

5.1 Purpose

This Emergency Action Plan sets out mitigation and procedures in relation to an emergency that represents a general threat to Regatta participants.

5.2 Responsibility

Responsibility for actions in the event of an emergency rests with the Race Committee. These individuals will carry mobile phones at all times.

5.3 Actions in the event of a medical emergency

The nearest radio-equipped Race official on the scene takes initial control and will assess the situation. (If necessary, he/she will call emergency services.) As soon as immediate life saving measures are in hand Race Control (if not aware) will be notified. If emergency assistance is required the Official will call "PAN, PAN" or "code RED" on his radio and all other radio users will observe radio silence and follow instructions given by that official.

The initial incident report should briefly include;

- Where.
- What has happened.
- The number of casualties.
- The severity of injuries or illness.
- Any support required.
- If racing needs to be suspended.

As soon as an incident is reported, all stations on radio are to minimise their communications. Absolute priority is to be given to Race Control and those responding directly to the incident.

In the event of any accident or emergency beyond that detailed in the safety plan and outside the capabilities of the first aid and safety facilities, the emergency services will be called using 112 or 999 by mobile phone, or if necessary from fixed lines available at Bedford Rowing Club, Schools Boathouse or Star Club.

5.4 Fire

If there is a fire in a Rowing Club, the person discovering it will assess the situation and tackle the fire only if they are competent to do so and initially order local evacuation. Any fire should be reported to an official of the Club. If the emergency may require the stopping of racing or general evacuation, he/she will inform the Race Chairman. They will agree appropriate action.

5.5 Equipment failure

Should there be a Radio failure during the event, Safety Boats and marshals etc shall use mobile phones & loudhailers to raise alarm, providing the radio is replaced hastily. If this is not possible Race Control shall be informed and racing shall be halted.

In the event of Safety Boat failure during the event then this must be reported to Race Control straight away to consider if racing should be halted.

5.6 Floating Hazard

Any significant floating debris or hazard seen on the water shall be reported to Race Control immediately. A Safety Boat shall be deployed to clear the water and racing shall be suspended.

5.7 Anti-social Behaviour

A serious public disorder or violent behaviour shall be reported to Race Control immediately. If necessary, racing shall be suspended and the police shall be called.

5.8 Terrorist Threat

Any news that could be deemed a serious threat to life should be reported to the Police immediately. Evacuation of any area believed to be in threat shall be organised in the first instance by Regatta officials.

6. Reporting of incidents

It is the duty of the Clubs involved in any on or off course incidents: collisions, near misses, injuries to Competitors, Officials or Members of the Public, damage to boats or other equipment or property, to report to British Rowing by a representative of the Competitor or Club involved. <https://incidentreporting.britishrowing.org>.

Star Club would appreciate that any such report be copied to Star Club Event Secretary.

7. Emergency Services Access

Emergency vehicle access to the Schools' boathouse area is via the small white foot bridge close to Longholme Way.

8. Feedback

If you have any comments that may help us improve the plan for future events, then please let us know via control. Further information that makes up the full Regatta safety plan is contained in separate documents sent to clubs and available on the Star Club website, namely circulation plan, access and parking arrangements.