NRC Head Of The River Safety Plan

Introduction

The competition will be hosted by Northwich Rowing Club (NRC) on the River Weaver between Vale Royal Locks and Hunts lock, downstream, a distance of approximately 2500m.
The competitions will be held under the BR Rules of Racing and the BR Row Safe Guide offered in categories – Seniors, Masters and Juniors with no restrictions on fine boat type.
The club is located at CW9 8AE. Parking is via Sir John Deanes College located at CW9 8AF.
This safety plan complies with 'Row Safe: A Guide to Safe Practice in Rowing'.
The safety plan explains safety measures that have been introduced as a result of the competition risk assessment and specific details linked to BR requirements.

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1. Event Organisation

1.1 Event Organising Committee

This event is organised by NRC. The Organising Committee are:

Chair of the Organising Committee: Anthony Taylor (NorthwichRC.competition@gmail.com)
Event Secretary: Catherine Lawton (NorthwichRC.competition@gmail.com)
Event Safety Adviser: Nathan Jump(07743146898)
Event Welfare Officer: Helen Wrigly (07783255002)
Chairman of Race Committee: Catherine Thursby

Race Control and Registration will be located in the Club House who can redirect any specific enquiries to the appropriate officers.

1.2 Communications

Competitors and organisers must be made aware of the safety arrangements before and during the event in order to prevent incidents and to enable incidents to be dealt with efficiently if they do occur. The following actions should be undertaken to ensure effective communication between all parties: ***Priority will be given to safety messages at all times.***

Prior to the event

The following documentation will be sent and made available on the web before the Head. It is the responsibility of all participating clubs to make sure their crews are made aware of the content:

- Course Map
- Safety Plan
- Emergency Action Plan
- Risk Assessment
- Notes for Officials and Crews
- Video safety briefing(supplemental email on the day)

All information is available on line on the Northwich Rowing Club website.

Other water users have been advised in writing.

1.3 At the start of the event

It is assumed that all clubs have watched the safety briefing video displaying the permanent hazards of the river. The morning of the event a supplemental “Hazards” email will be sent to the nominated contact for each club for them to communicate out to their squads. This email will contain a list of the hazards that are unique to the day of the event.

Crews will boat in divisions and marshall just upstream of the start. Please note that the area can get very crowded immediately before the start of the event; please listen carefully to the instruction of the Marshalls.

Officials will have copies of the Draw and Safety Plan. Each of the Rescue Launch crews will receive an aide memoire detailing what to do in an emergency. First Aid is provided by Qualified First Aiders; they can be located via Race Control using the Radio net. The first Aiders will be stationed in the club house.

1.4 During the event

Communication will be via a Radio Net on channel 1 or as otherwise agreed. Spares will be held in the club house.

Instructions and briefing on when and how to use will be given to each Radio user. A separate document on how to use radios and what to say if you have an incident has been issued to radio operators.

Race Control and Registration will hold key mobile phone numbers should other communication methods fail. Race control will take the lead in communicating with Umpires and the race committee.

1.5 Post event

Any feedback or comments on any aspects of the Event should be emailed to: NorthwichRC.competition@gmail.com or you can contact any one of the Event Officials whose details are listed in paragraph 1.1. who will listen and note any points to bring to the Wash-Up meeting.

Any matters raised on the day will be dealt with if possible at the time and discussed after the event and at the Wash-Up meeting.

2. Documentation

2.1 Risk Assessment

The Risk Assessment is a separate document which covers both on and off water hazards. It is a live document with its content being reviewed and modified as and when required. The document covers a wealth of potential hazards and those with the highest Risk Probability are addressed as a priority.

2.2 The Course and Circulation Pattern

The course and circulation pattern are available on the notice board at Race Control. The draw will also be published in advance and is available to all attending clubs.

2.3 Distances

The course will be over approximately 2500m from the Railway Bridge at Vale Royal to the finish line just upstream from the boat house. Start and finish lines are marked with marker posts.

2.4 Access Points

Access points are shown on the Northwich RC HORR Emergency Procedure and on the Course Map.

2.5 Hazards

It should be noted that for this event there is unlikely to be significant other river traffic.
The safety boats will sweep the river for obvious obstructions. Competitors proceeding to the start should assume boats may be returning to the landing stage and should keep an appropriate look out.

3 Safety Monitors

3.1 Race Marshalls, Monitors (RMM)

Race Marshals, Monitors will be located all the way down the course to provide visual surveillance for safety and racing infringements at Bends, Bridges and major deviations in the bank – See Course Map

Each Monitor will have specific responsibilities, but the overriding rule is safety and fairness. All instructions given by these people must be acted upon; otherwise the offending crew may receive a penalty/s.
A list of Monitor positions is available with brief descriptions of responsibilities to cover the key areas on and off water the water i.e. Car Park / Road Way, Towpath, Embarkation, Disembarkation, Control Commission, Hazards (Fixed and Variable). For ease of identification Monitors will wear Hi vis vests.

3.2 Safety boats

The Club will provide launches and safety boats sufficient for the circumstances identified during the pre-planning stage. They will be equipped with the safety equipment detailed in RowSafe. They will be positioned at the points indicated on the course map. Any launch can be called to assist a crew in trouble by the nearest race officials; all safety resources will be in radio contact and/or hailing distance.
The launch drivers will recieve a separate aide memoire detailing how they will affect a rescue, they are also issued with the documents set out in section 1.2 above and in addition RowSafe section 2.3 (radio procedure), section 5.2 (launch driving) and section 7.4 (launches). Any crew in trouble are to stay with their boat and follow the instructions given to them by the Safety Boat Crew. They will get the crew into the launch and back to the Landing stage as efficiently as possible.

3.3 Capsize or Other Incidents requiring Assistance

It should be noted that although the Starter will pause racing in the event of an incident on the course, it is sometimes difficult to stop boats already on the course from continuing at speed. Whilst every effort will be made to stop boats on the course (suspend racing).
Rescue Boats will be made aware of any possible hazard as a result of approaching boats.

4. Accident and Emergency Procedures

4.1 Accident and Emergency Procedure

A supplementary document, HORR Emergency Procedure, describes actions to be taken. Location points for extracting victims and a map showing the actual locations. All Officials and Marshalls should have a copy of this document with them whilst on station.

4.2 First Aid Cover

A qualified First Aider will be available at all times, they will be primarily based within the club house, the first point will be sign posted. First Aid Kits are located at Race Control and on each of the Launches.

4.3 Emergency Services

Please note that there are no A&E facilities at the local hospital.

The nearest A&E unit is at the following location:

Leighton Hospital
Middlewich Rd, Crewe CW1 4QJ
Tel: 01270 612159

It will take about 18 minutes to reach.

Any Emergency Services called will be asked to attend an appropriate location as advised at the time.

A designated person will meet and direct them to any Emergency.

4.4 Useful Numbers (note that there is no landline at the Club but there is good mobile reception along the entire course)

Ambulance, Police, and Fire service 999

4.5 Emergency Equipment

In addition to the equipment present on the safety launches all Marshals and Umpires will have throw lines and thermal blankets available from them to use as and when required.

5. Pre Boating Safety Checks

It is the responsibility of Clubs, Coaches and Crews to present all boats to the minimum standard laid down in the RowSafe Guide section 7.1 and BR Rules of Racing before being allowed to boat.

It is the responsibility of each crew to check, but not limited to, the following – heel restraints, bow balls, cox's lifejacket, condition and general maintenance of the boat, including the integrity of any buoyancy compartments. Note: If a compartment is fitted with a method of closing that compartment then the fitment must be in place and intact.

Bow-balls. The bows of racing boats shall be properly protected. A solid ball, of not less than 4cm diameter, made of rubber or material of similar resilience, must be firmly attached to the bows and the fixing must not itself present a hazard. Where the construction of the boat, or its composition, is such that the bow is properly protected, or its shape does not present a hazard in the event of a collision, this requirement need not apply.
It is recommended that the bow ball be white as, in most circumstances, this is the most satisfactory colour with regard to judging the finish of a race.

Coxes must wear the correct type of life jacket for their boat, know how to use the life jacket and it is operational. Coxes' ability to escape from front-loader boats should be assessed.

Quick release foot stretchers. In all boats the foot stretchers, shoes or other devices holding the feet of the rowers shall be a type which allows the rowers to get clear of the boat with no delay in an emergency.
Where shoes or other devices holding the feet will remain in the boat, each shoe or device shall be independently restrained such that when the heel reaches the horizontal position the foot will be released from the shoe. In addition, where laces, Velcro or similar materials must be opened before the rower can remove their feet from the shoes or other device, all such materials must be able to be released immediately by the rower with a single quick hand action of pulling on one easily accessible strap.

6. Incident Reporting:

Any incident or accident must be reported to Event Organiser and the Event Safety Adviser. The Safety Adviser will record any incidents and submit them online to British Rowing.

If in doubt any competitor, official, coach or spectator can and is encouraged to log any incidents on the BR website.

The Control Commission Report on Equipment Failures will be issued to The North West Rowing Council Regional Safety Advisor.

7. Emergency Response Plan / Incident Response Plan

The key to a successful Response is to have effective communication – be clear and concise with radio messages any communication in this regard should detail.

a) Location

b) Type of Boat (single, four, eight etc) and

c) Nature of incident (capsize, collision)

All casualties will be given immediate first aid by the safety boat crew and moved to Race Control as soon as possible– the full details can be recorded and passed on later.

Water based incidents will be controlled initially by the Umpires / Marshals on duty, before the Safety Launch and Safety Adviser take over responsibility.

Off Water Incidents can be controlled initially by those finding the incident until the Safety Adviser and or First Aider takes over responsibility.

7.1 Radio Procedure

Effective use of the radios relies on keeping transmissions short and to the point, speaking clearly and following basic internationally recognised procedure. The following guidelines are based on standard VHF radio procedure

Only one radio can transmit successfully at a time so if you talk at the same time as someone else one of you will not be heard.

The latest radio procedure will be issued on a laminated card by race control upon issue of each radio.

A copy of RowSafe section 2.3 (radio procedure) will be issue to each recipient of the safety plan, emergency procedure, and notes to safety boat drivers.

8. Abandonment Plan

The conditions that could cause racing not to take place would be severe winds, fog or high flow . All other conditions would see some form of racing taking place.

If the event is to be abandoned in its entirety this will be determined the Thursday before the event so that all clubs are made aware before they travel.

At the start of the race day an assessment will be made by the Race Committee in consultation with the Safety Advisor based on the fixed and variable aspects of the event eg: Age, Experience / Category, 1x, 2x, Coxless, Front Loader, No under seat buoyancy, Weather, the course, Water Conditions, Other External Factors etc as to what categories are deemed able to race. Any restrictions will be advised to all Club coaches.

An ongoing assessment will be made during the day by the Race.

9. Notes for Club / Coach / Individual

The Competition / Event will endeavour to provide a safe environment in accordance with British Rowing's "Row Safe" guide, although competitors, coaches and clubs are specifically reminded that

every person attending the event, including those competing, or officiating, do so entirely at their own risk and are solely responsible for:

their own safety;
ensuring that their boats are safe and are prepared to the standards required by British Rowing's "Row Safe" and the British Rowing Rules of Racing. Any boat found failing to meet the standard shall be excluded;
the strict observance of the circulation pattern and British Rowing's "Row Safe";
deciding, together with their coaches, whether or not they are competent to compete in the prevailing weather and stream conditions;
ensuring 'a responsible adult' accompanies each junior competing in the event to assist them 'in loco parentis' with their responsibilities and assume responsibility for their welfare.

10."Plan B"

Needed to cover for failure of any part of the planned safety arrangements – what, if, then, else

10.1 Failure of safety arrangements

In the event of:

Loss of a safety boat / multiple launches will see a re-deployment to maintain a reasonable cover of key points.

Loss of Umpire support will be covered by extended shifts or others suitably qualified officials and/or persons.

Loss of Safety Adviser will be replaced by a suitably experienced member of Northwich Rowing Club Coaching Staff.

Loss of medical cover within NRC will be covered by a qualified Event First Aider.

Loss of radio communications will be covered by use of mobile phones.

Changes to racing arrangements may see the length of the course being shortened, restrict racing to larger boats and/or competent crews.

These arrangements have been made based on experience of previous events and will be reviewed as situations develop.

11. Measures for Specific Hazards

11.1 Weather and water conditions

There will be some weather and water conditions that may require the event to be changed:

Conditions and Possible Prevention and Mitigation Measures.

Lightning - Suspend racing and stop boating until storm blows over.

Flooding (fast current and/or debris in water or on bridges) - Cancel event. Limit entries to older and more experienced crews and larger boats.

Heavy rain - Ensure appropriate clothing is worn at boat inspection and control commission.

Water Level - water level too low – delay event until water level recovers or cancel event

In the event of adverse weather conditions the safety adviser and Race Committee may decide to alter the scheduled racing, this might include: Shortening the course; removal of some events; withdrawing crews with a low CRI from some events.

11.2 Slips and trips

The boating and trailer areas should be kept free from blades, shoes, trestles, etc.

Wet surfaces – close to the water's edge can be slippery

11.3 Manual Handling Risks

Launches onto water

Movements of equipment

Setting up of equipment and removal from trailers

11.4 Car Park and Trailering Area

Car and Trailer parking will be as designated at the time.

Car park marshals will be present to help people decide where to park. If in doubt the following applies:

Cars are to be parked on the approved car park.
Towing vehicles must be moved to the designated areas.
Please do not obstruct the one way system in use.

11.5 Hygiene

Separate male and female toilets and washing facilities are available.

If utilities fail (water, sewerage or electricity) the Event Committee will contact the appropriate utility or contractor to rectify the problem.

Litter bins are to be provided. Competition / Event area is to be inspected during and after the event.

Normal hygiene procedures apply and ensure washing facilities are available to people serving food.

12. Welfare

The welfare and well-being of all is paramount - regardless of age, sex, ethnicity, religion or ability, all have equal rights to safety and protection. The Event Committee believes that Special care is needed for children and vulnerable adults. The British Rowing Welfare Plan has been adopted by the Club Welfare Officer.
Should any welfare issue arise during the Event, the Event Organiser and/or Welfare Officer will report the matter to the British Rowing Child Protection Officer and the relevant authorities.

Copies of the Safety & Welfare Documentation will be available to view at Registration. The Safety Adviser will be available to discuss any matters arising.