



## Notes & Instructions for Competitors and Their Coaches

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**This Year The Regatta Will Take Place on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> May, 2024**

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### LOCATION OF IMPORTANT SERVICES

**Due to the geography of the course and boating area, facilities are spread out.**

( See [Regatta Site Map](#) )

Please allow sufficient time to get between the Boating Area, the Scout Hut & the Finish, and back before you expect to go afloat; 15 minutes each way is recommended - plus waiting / admin time.

**REGISTRATION & COX WEIGH-IN** are located in the **Scout Hut**.

**REGATTA ENCLOSURE** is at the finish (towards Eel Pie Island) on the **Surrey** bank.

**RACE CONTROL** is in the **Regatta Enclosure** close to the **Finish** and will deal with **timetable queries** and all other **competition issues** that may arise during the day. [*it is NOT in the Finish Judges' tent*].

**FIRST AID** can be found adjacent to the **Boating Area**. There are also First Aiders on each of the two water safety launches.

**REFRESHMENTS** can be found in the **Regatta Enclosure** and the **Scout Hut**

**TOILETS** can be found in the **Regatta Enclosure**, and the **Scout Hut**

### CAR & TRAILER PARKING

- We strongly recommend trailers approach River Lane on the A307 (Petersham Road) from the Kingston-Upon-Thames direction, NOT the Richmond direction, as the latter requires a very sharp right turn across traffic.
- No parking of vehicles or trailers will be allowed **in** River Lane.
- Vehicles with boat trailers and roof-racked boats will be allowed to park along the towpath at the end of River Lane, but you are warned that this area is liable to flooding at high tide. **Parking is entirely at owners' risk.**
- Competitors should park their cars at the end of **Ham Street** in the free car park. This is adjacent to the **Regatta Enclosure** and **Finish**.
- Motor coaches should NOT use River Lane, as there is no suitable place to turn.

**The Committee particularly points out that all boats, equipment, vehicles and personal possessions are brought to the Regatta entirely at the owners' risk.**



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### **CREW REGISTRATION, BOAT NUMBERS, COX WEIGH-IN**

These are all located in the **Scout Hut**.

Note: Coxes are required to provide their own ballast weight where necessary, in the form of a single mass (that must not be separated into smaller masses in the boat)

### **CHANGES TO THE PUBLISHED RACE PROGRAMME**

- Crews wishing to move races on the day should contact **Race Control** in the **Regatta Enclosure**. We will need to speak with authorised representatives of **both** crews.
- The Race Committee reserves the right to alter the programme and/or the course according to circumstances; in all cases of dispute the decision of the Race Committee is final.

### **COURSE PLAN & CIRCULATION PATTERN**

Please note the regatta course has been significantly changed from recent years, reverting to a shortened version of the course last used in the late seventies. This has allowed us to eliminate much of the bend and to use that area to provide a safe warm-up and marshalling area.

The new course plan and compulsory circulation pattern are shown in the diagram below. Each zone is then described in more detail in the following pages.

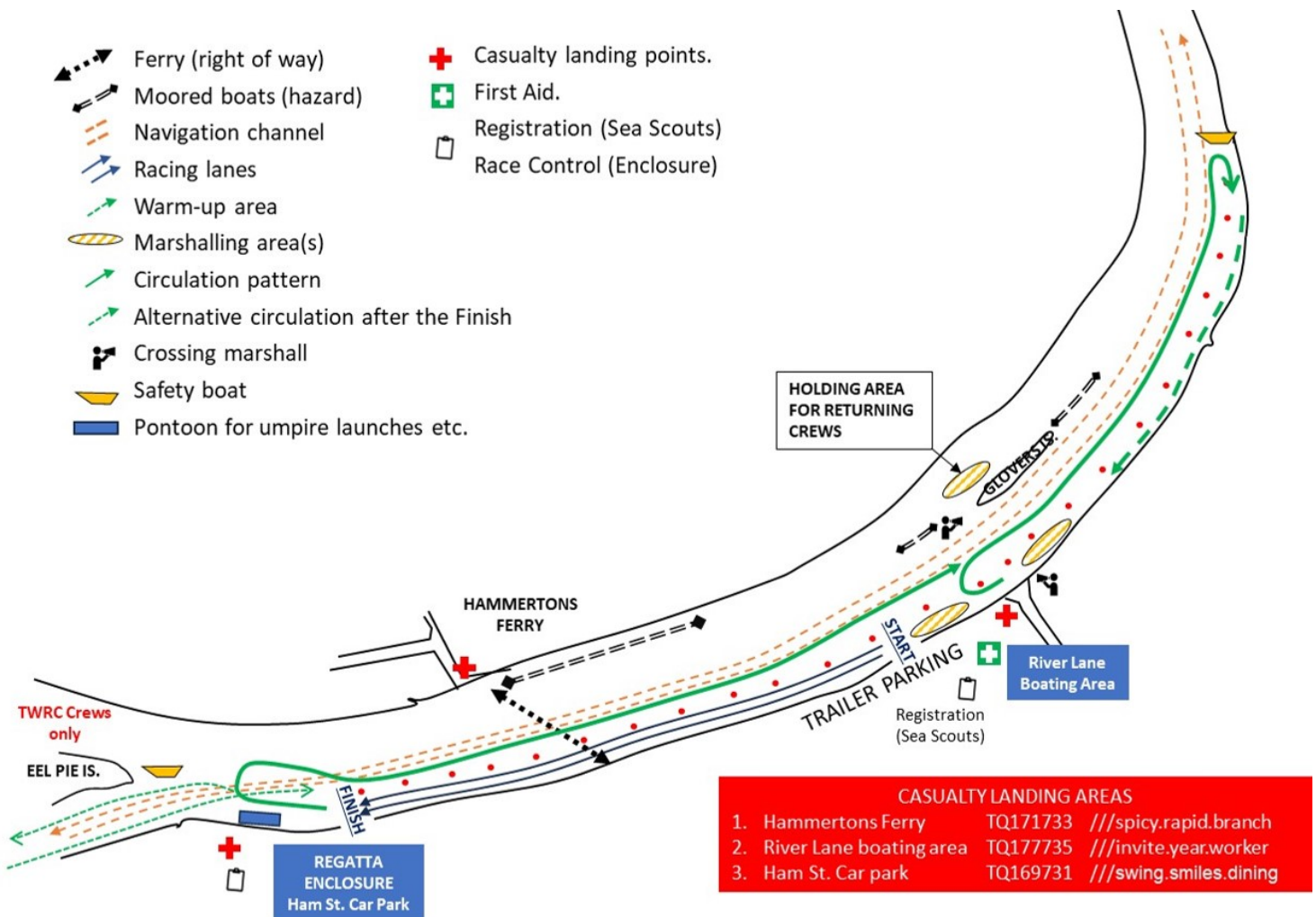
**PLEASE ENSURE ALL CREW MEMBERS ARE FULLY BRIEFED  
ON THIS INFORMATION.**

**NON-COMPLIANCE MAY RESULT IN THE AWARD OF A FALSE  
START OR DISQUALIFICATION.**

**ALWAYS HEED MARSHAL AND UMPIRE INSTRUCTIONS**



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### BOATING TO RACE

- Wherever possible, crews must try to boat together as race pairs. Please allow for congestion in the Boating Area and any time required for warming up in the warm up zone; ideally, a minimum of 30 minutes should be allowed from “Hands On” to get to the Start Marshalling Zone, to reduce congestion at the Start, and to ensure other crews do not have excessive waiting time.
- Crews must aim to be in the **Start Marshalling Zone** 10 minutes before the published start time of their race, ideally with their competition alongside. Latecomers may be given an official warning. Races may be started without reference to absentees.
- Be aware that once boated, crews must cross the **Warm Up / Marshalling Zones** to get into the navigation channel to proceed **downstream** (towards Richmond-Upon-Thames). Crews must await clearance from the Crossing Marshal to proceed. Ensure ALL crew members are alert and aware of possible hazards and pay attention to instructions from the Crossing Marshals.
- The channel between the course buoys and the Middlesex (North) bank is open to all river craft; the starboard-hand rule applies [KEEP RIGHT!]. Proceed downstream on the Surrey station of the navigation channel (i.e. with the course marker buoys close on your bow (starboard) side; and remain alert to all other river traffic.
- Crews must not turn into the **Warm Up Zone** until they have passed the Navigation Pontoon at the downstream end of the marker buoys (This pontoon carries a sign showing which traffic can go which side of it when proceeding upstream. It is therefore quite large and is a necessary collision hazard. Ensure you are aware of its presence).
- Crews can continue downstream beyond the start of the Warm Up Zone at their discretion. This is non-regatta water so normal navigation rules apply. Be aware also that there is a “Regatta in Progress” pontoon moored in the middle of the river below the start of the Warm Up Zone. Again this is quite large and is a navigation hazard.

### WARM UP ZONE

- The Warm Up Zone provides a one-way (upstream) traffic circulation pattern for competitors only.
- **PRACTICE STARTS AND RACE-PACE PIECES ARE TO BE EXECUTED ONLY WITHIN THE WARM UP ZONE AND A GOOD LOOKOUT KEPT FOR OTHER CREWS IN THE ZONE.**
- Unless otherwise agreed by Race Officials, crews must complete at least one full circuit of the Warm Up Zone prior to racing. Crews wishing to extend their warm up must leave the zone at the top (by the Boating Area), proceed downstream in the navigation channel and rejoin the Warm Up Zone at the bottom (Richmond) end.
- Crews who are observed to be flouting these rules are liable to be disqualified



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### START MARSHALLING ZONE

- Having completed their warm up, crews must enter the **Start Marshalling Zone** and make their presence known to the Start Control Marshal (who will be either on the Surrey bank upstream of the boating area, or in a marshal's launch, depending on river/bank conditions).
- Crews must know their event and ensure their race number is clearly visible to the Start Control Marshal (eg not underneath a splash top and not two different race numbers together).
- The Start Control Marshal will endeavour to marshal crews in race pairs ready to call to the start. However, it is possible races may be despatched out of the published race order to facilitate the process and keep the regatta running.
- Once the stake boats are clear of crews and Umpire's Launch the next two crews will be called forward by the Start Control Marshal.
- **DO NOT proceed to the stake boats until instructed to do so by the Start Control Marshal**
- Once the crews have been called to the stakeboats by the Start Control Marshal their race will be handed over to the Race Umpire.

### START PROTOCOLS

- The course now runs against the prevailing stream so this will push against the boat hull on the stakeboat with the potential to push it off line (as opposed to previous years where the stream has "pulled" the hull into line once attached).
- Please ensure coxswains and rowers are competent in how to attach their boat to a stake boat on flowing water and how to maintain a correct course direction once attached.
- We attach *Appendix C Stakeboat Hints* with advice and information you may find useful.

### COURSE MARKINGS & RACING ETIQUETTE

- The Race Umpire will oversee your race from start to finish in accordance with British Rowing Rules of Racing.
- The Course runs upstream from approximately 100m above the Boating Area to the upstream end of the concrete slipway and carpark, where the Regatta Enclosure is situated.
- For reference, the Boating Area and Finish Enclosure are on the SURREY side of the river.
- The course follows an almost straight section of the river, with the slight bend favouring the Middlesex station. Stream conditions slightly favour the Surrey station. The stake-boats and finish line are therefore set level as each station's advantage cancels out its disadvantage.
- The Middlesex side of the course is marked for the full length with buoys every 20-30m. Keep these to bowside (starboard) when racing.



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- The Surrey bank forms the stroke side (port) of the course.
- There are larger buoys at some points marking the Start, Finish, and the Crossing Zone to/from the Boating Area.
- All boats must keep to their station and may be disqualified at the discretion of the Umpire if they leave their station or go outside the buoys on the Middlesex station.
- **You are required to maintain your station throughout the race and are not permitted to cross into your opponent's station (*leave your racing lane*) even if you are ahead with clear water.**
- No crews may stop on the course unless instructed to do so by the Umpire. Crews with damaged equipment must remove themselves to the Navigation Channel as soon as it is safe to do so, due to the frequency of racing.

### RACE FINISH / ZONE

- The course planners have ensured there is sufficient space after the finish line for all boat types to safely execute a “wind down, easy and turn” before Eel Pie Island.
- On completion of their race, crews should ease oars and turn to bowside (starboard) back into the Navigation channel to face downstream to warm down.

*[At their discretion crews can continue upstream past Eel Pie Island. This is non-regatta water so normal navigation rule apply. (As for the Warm Up Zone, there is a “Regatta In Progress” pontoon moored in the navigation channel along Eel Pie Island. This is quite large and is a navigation hazard to be aware of). Crews wishing to return to the regatta must turn well above Eel Pie Island]*

### RETURNING TO THE BOATING AREA

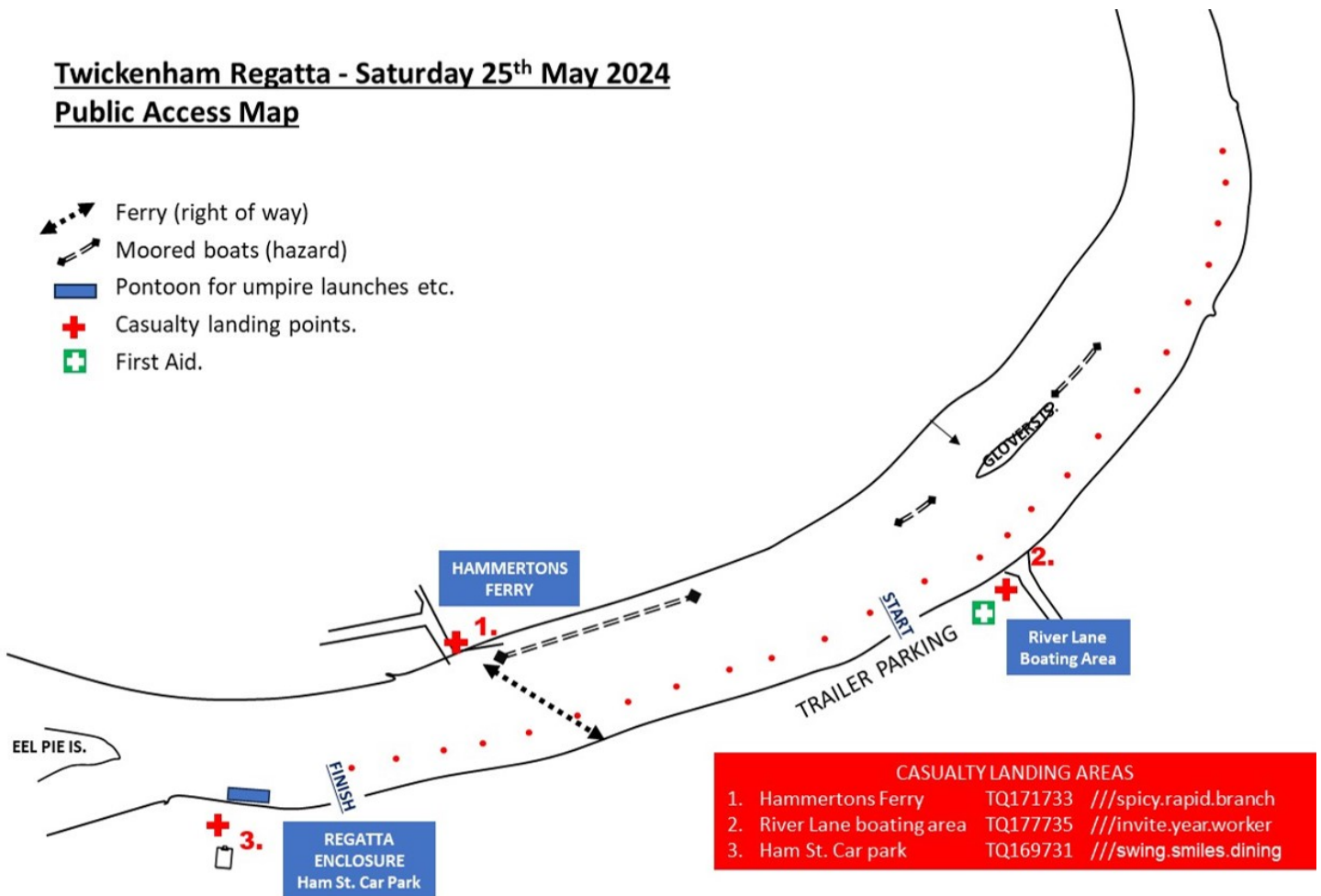
- Crews must follow normal ‘starboard hand’ river traffic regulations when proceeding downstream back to the Boating Area.
- Crews are encouraged to continue to the bottom of the Warm Up Zone and rejoin the circulation pattern there, and keep to the Surrey bank (strokeside) to queue to deboat at the Boating Area under instruction from the Boating Area Marshal.
- Crews wishing to cross straight into the Boating Area from the navigation channel must make their intentions known to the Crossing Marshal and follow their instructions.
- Crews must pay attention to instructions from the Crossing Marshals at all times and must not cross the course unless instructed to do so.
- We have made every effort to alleviate congestion in the Boating Area, but we still rely heavily on crew co-operation in de-boating as quickly as possible to free up space for others. Please follow the Marshals’ instructions.



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# APPENDIX A Regatta Site Map

### Twickenham Regatta - Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> May 2024 Public Access Map







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# Appendix B

## Regatta Day Planning

## **Regatta Day**

Regatta day can be quite stressful. The best mantra for how you conduct yourself through the day is “**CONTROL THE CONTROLLABLES**”: That is, make sure everything you can predict and plan for has been predicted and planned for. That way, when the inevitable unexpected challenges come along you will have sufficient time and resource to properly work through them.

Twickenham Regatta has certain unique features which may or may not be relevant on your specific race day.

### **The River State**

This regatta is unique in that it is raced on semi-tidal water. That is because there is a piece of Victorian engineering at Richmond that acts as a weir – to make the river between Richmond and Teddington (the Twickenham Reach) non-tidal – except two hours either side of high tide. In that four hour window the weir plates are raised to make the river fully tidal all the way up to Teddington.

Generally we try and run a full race programme between these weir-open conditions, but that is not always possible and depending on when high tide might be on the day, there may be periods of the race day when crews are racing on an incoming tide (ie with the stream). We also have to suspend racing around these changes of weir setting to ensure the river is safe to race on.

### **Course Management**

The other feature is that we run the start off stakeboats and have umpires in launches following each race. This is because we firmly believe stakeboats and chase launches best define a proper regatta race setting, and also to provide an additional level of safety for crews.

### **The Race Format**

Every regatta has its own set of local rules but all follow the same principle:-

1. There are a range of events for all different types of boat from 1x to 80+.
2. There are Open events – anyone can enter – for each category, then womens’, juniors and veterans’ events – the last two categorised by age.
3. Not all regattas cater for all classes of rowers or boats.
4. Crews start next to each other and race the length of the course, the winner going through to the next round, the loser is out
5. Eventually two or more crews will find themselves in the final, winner takes all
6. The more points you have, the higher status your crew has and depending on how entries pan out, you will find yourself drawn against crews of similar race status.

## The Day

All sorts of things can happen on race day which can take you by surprise. All you can hope to do is have full control of the controllables so that you only have to worry about the unexpected. If you are stressing looking for a 10mm spanner or somewhere to charge your cox box (most definitely controllables!) you will not be focussed on the racing.

How many events you are doing (it is common practice to “double up” and enter two events) and how many crews are in each determines whether you will spend a long day at the regatta, or just turn up for a straight final. In any case, the day more or less consists of the following schedule:-

1. **Arrival.** You may row up to an event if it is local or the club may arrange to take a trailer full of boats. These will have had to be split and loaded and your first job when you arrive at the regatta is to find your trailer and meet up with your crew. Expecting to pick out your hull in a sea of exactly the same hulls on identical trailers is a little optimistic so remembering the names of the boats on the top of the trailer can help; as will having the mobile number of the trailer driver so you can make contact and find each other. Note that the boating area at Twickenham Regatta (at the end of River Lane in Ham) is NOT the regatta enclosure.

Assuming your crew have also managed to find the boat they can be sorting out getting the hull together and rigging it – but there is also some administration to be done. It pays to make sure everyone knows what they are expected to do, and how to do it.

2. **Registration.** Every crew that enters a regatta will have had to put in an entry form with crew list – commonly online using the British Rowing system. Most regattas also insist that payment is done through this system so it is unlikely you will need to pay your entry fees on the day. With events generally oversubscribed these days it is common for unpaid entries to be rejected.

Find the registration desk (in the Scout Hut for Twickenham Regatta) and tell them your club and crew – or crews. If you have had to make any changes to the crew since the entry was put in **now** is the time to declare it (you can change up to half the crew provided you stay within certain constraints) – and you must have the BR racing licence cards of all the crew with you so that the changes can be validated and recorded. Most regattas will disqualify you if your entry cannot be validated (e.g. when you go to collect your prizes!)

So now your crew is logged as present at the event. You will be issued with a number to identify your crew. If you are doubling up make sure you know which number is for which crew!

3. **Weigh In.** Coxes must not weight less than the stipulated minimum weight for their event. That is their weight in racing clothes including life-jacket but excluding Coxbox (which is considered to be part of the boat).

If the cox weighs less they will need to provide sufficient ballast to make up the weight to carry with them. This should be in the form of something that cannot easily be altered e.g. a weights disc, not something like a bottle of water or bag of tools. This must be put in the boat where the cox sits, and not on their person. (In the case of a front-loader it is acceptable for it to be kept with the bow rower, under their seat or stretcher) – it must not be passed down the boat to spread the load.

Your cox will also be issued with a weight slip stating their name, crew and the weight and nature of any ballast issued. They may well be asked for this slip when boating so should keep it safe but accessible through the day.

It is a good idea to walk along the course to familiarise yourself with it, especially this year at Twickenham where we have changed the direction of racing and shortened the course. This is also a good opportunity to reread the Instructions to Competitors and familiarise yourself with boating patterns.

**Boating.** Give your crew plenty of time to check that the boat is assembled properly and that the nuts are all done up, that the cox box works and all the speakers work (so often crews forget to remake the speaker cable join across the hull section). Check that the boat complies with safety requirements – heel restraints, bow ball, hatch covers, and BR ID code. Check that if the boat needs a lane number in the bow slot (for multi lane events) that you have collected it and put it in the slot.

Most events insist you boat at least 20-30 mins before your race time. That doesn't allow for queuing time and boating facilities are usually quite hectic places. Make sure you know where you will be boating from and that your blades are taken down to a location close to the boating point but safe from being trampled on.

Make sure you know where to go once boated; if in doubt ask a race official.

Then it's time for "hands on". Walk the boat down to the boating area, keeping an eye out for the inevitable bystander who will not get out of your way! ("Mind your backs, please" is the most common call) – always keep it polite; the person in front blocking your route may well end up being the umpire in your final. It happens.

As you queue to boat it is likely an umpire will want to inspect the boat for safety features being intact. Put the boat on the half turn. If the boat fails any of these checks you won't be allowed to boat until they have been fixed – so make sure the boat is fit before you load it on the trailer.

Assuming the boat passes inspection you will eventually get it on the water and the crew in. This is where your boating routines come into their own - no faffing, no delaying other crews; just get in and get away. You may be facing the opposite direction to your normal boating direction. Make sure your crew know who is moving when you throw the boat, and who is getting in first.

4. **Paddling to the Start.** There are clear instructions as to how to get to the start and where you can, and more importantly cannot, practice racing starts and full pressure rowing. Follow them. They are there for everyone's safety.

For this reason your "warm up" is likely to be interrupted by circumstances, truncated by paddling restrictions and probably wasted if you have to queue for a long time before your race. Get fully stretched and warm on land and do what you can on the water.

With about ten minutes before your allotted race time you need to make sure you are at the marshalling area and that the start marshal knows you are there. Do not assume it. Make sure your crew number is visible (not under a warm-up top) and that it is the correct number (not one for a doubled up crew!)

5. **The Start.** The Start Marshal will call you and your opposition to move onto the start and advise which station you are on (either Surrey or Middlesex). At Twickenham Regatta the start is from stakeboats – fixed to the river bed with whatever stagger is required already set. All you have to do is get your stern "attached" to the stakeboat with your bows pointing up the course. (See Appendix 3 for Stakeboat Hints)

The Start Marshal will ask an umpire to take your race and from that moment you are under the authority of the umpire.

There are three parts to the start procedure and the umpires will always go through the same start routine.

Firstly they will check that everyone knows which race they are umpiring and call it out e.g. “This is race No.10; a heat of Open Novice Coxed Fours”.

This is also the umpire’s way of letting you know that the formal start process is underway. Until they have said this you do not have to raise your hand to indicate that you are not ready (or your bowman if you are in a front loader or a multilane event). Get your boat straight.

The second phase of the procedure is the roll call., where the umpire will name the crews in lane order. Once this roll call is complete the umpire is not obliged to take any notice of a hand being raised. In some adverse conditions (e.g. strong winds or stream) the umpire may elect to dispense with the roll call and start the race “on the fly” when they see the crews are straight. They will tell you if this is the case.

It is also a fallacy that keeping a hand raised even when straight (as some sort of psyche out trick against the other crew) will stop the umpire setting you off. They determine whether you are straight and ready, not you (within reason).

When happy that the crews are ready, the umpire will complete the final phase of the start procedure and get the race underway. They will call “Attention” and slowly raise a red flag above their head. ... (pause, then) ... “Go” and lower the flag as they says “Go”. That should be the last time you see the red flag until your next race.

6. **The Race.** Your umpire is there to make sure you race fairly within the rules. They are not obliged to give you steering instructions but are obliged to warn you if you stray into a position that they deem will interfere with your opponent; put yourself at risk of disqualification by gaining an unfair advantage (e.g. wrong-siding a buoy or cutting a corner); or put yourself in potential danger (e.g. wandering off the course and into the navigation channel) If they have to do this they will call “[Your Club Name] ....” and indicate with a white flag the direction they want you to move. Make sure you are seen to react – umpires will see that you have applied some rudder and will hear if you call for more pressure from one side, for example. If they have to warn you again they may well choose to disqualify you. You will hear the clanging of a bell and see the red flag again.

Assuming this has not happened you will finish the race and the umpire will be holding up the white flag and chatting to the finish umpire to confirm a clean race and the time (if they took it).

7. **De-boating.** You now have to warm down and return to the boating area under whatever restrictions have been stated in the Instructions. You need to get the boat off the water and back to the trailer as safely as possible and with minimum disruption to other competitors.

If all went well you will repeat this routine a few times until you are beaten or win the event.

When all is finished you have to split the boat and put it back on the trailer. Take responsibility for blades, riggers and seats – so that they are not left behind

# Regatta Checklist

## BEFORE THE DAY

Download from the event website :-

The Draw  
Timetable of Racing  
Instructions to Competitors  
River Circulation Plans  
Directions to the event (!)

### **READ THEM**

Check your equipment :-

Riggers in good order. No missing nuts or washers  
Seats not damaged and likely to come apart  
Heel restraints in good order and short enough  
Bowball not torn or cracked and properly attached  
Hatch covers correct for the hatch and tightly done up  
BR ID Code clearly displayed  
No holes in the boat (!)  
All section bolts present  
Cox Box working and fully charged. Speakers working

## ON THE DAY

Before you leave

Check that you have:-

Lifejackets  
Race Kit  
Racing licences (BR card)  
Cox Boxes (charged)  
Spanners  
Timetable, instructions, plans, directions

When you arrive ADMIN

Find your trailer  
Assemble your boat(s)  
Register  
Get your numbers  
Get Coxes weighed in – make sure you get weight slips

FAMILIARISATION

Walk the course – make sense of the instructions  
Find the boating area  
Find a place where the blades can be set down safely

CHECK THE BOAT

Heels, hatches, bowball, BR ID Code  
Riggers and seats on right, gates working  
Speaker join made. Speakers working  
Cox Box working – rate meter working

CHECK BLADES

Correct gearing. Clams in correct place (if used)  
Buttons tight. Spoons not damaged

RELAX

Watch some racing. Eat and drink something.

PREPARE

Know when your races are.  
Know what time to boat  
Know what station you are on  
Know who the opposition is

BEFORE BOATING	Take the blades to the boating area Get stretched Check numbers are on correctly Go through race plan with crew and coach
BOAT	Follow circulation patterns Warm up as best you can Identify yourselves to the start marshal Wait where you can be seen/called
LISTEN	For and to instructions. Respond when called



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### **Appendix C**

### **Stakeboat Hints**



## Stakeboat Hints For Coxes and Steerers

You have a big boat, capable of high forward velocity which doesn't really have any brakes - Approach the start with stealth. Let your momentum carry you into position. If necessary, stop short and then paddle on a bit more.

Try to stop no more than half a length beyond the stakeboat. This is difficult, because the crew will be all fired up and excited at the prospect of getting on the start and going to race, so they can easily get carried away and give it loads of welly – don't let them. You're in charge. They do what you say. At this point, less is more.

Use half the crew on final approach, pointing straight down the course, outside the line of the stakeboat i.e. aim to row straight past it. 'Easy' the crew as your bows come level with the up-course end of the stakeboat [relative to stern cox seat] Drift gently past, and then aim into the middle of your lane. As you pass the course end of the stakeboat, get the stern pair to gently check the boat's run, using the last of your momentum to swing your stern in line with the stakeboat.

Use no more than half the crew, the STERN half, to back it down – you will have more control, and the boat should be more stable. Make sure the rest of the crew have feathered blades slightly upturned so the spoon does not dig in as the boat moves backwards.

Keep the rudder STRAIGHT whilst backing down. If you do not and the rudder twists, at best, you will miss the stakeboat as the rudder stalls. Worst case, you'll reverse it on itself, tangle the steering cables and lose any rudder capability for the race. Game over.

If all goes as intended by now your stern will be in the hands of your stakeboat person. However, you are probably not yet straight and ready to race.... There will be a great temptation to get the bow pair involved at this time, and cry for bow or two to touch it up as required – RESIST THIS TEMPTATION at all cost.

The reason is quite straightforward – your boat is made of smooth plastic, which comes to a point at the back end with no discernible handholds. It is likely your stakeboat person will not be able to keep hold.

So, rather than using bow pair paddling, get the appropriate side at the stern to BACK the stern round until you are straight. If you are miles off-line, then the bows can join in, but ONLY if they share oars – i.e. Pass the blade forward and the person in front 'scratches' the boat round. This will maximise the chances of your stakeboat person being able to hang onto you until the race is ready for the off.

Also resist the temptation to complete your manoeuvring in one go – lots of little movements, and especially the combination of bow end scratching, stern end backing, will rotate you about the mid point of the boat, without too much forward pressure which will pull you off the stakeboat.

The key factor here is recalling that rowing shells are in effect rear-wheel steer. When you are travelling down the river, and you put the rudder on it might LOOK as if the bows are coming round to your chosen course. In fact, you are pushing the stern sideways to align the hull with the bow and where you think you want to go. When the boat is stationary, as on the stakeboat, you need to recall how it steers in reality, by pushing the stern sideways, and use the crew BACKING it to recreate that same effect.

### **SPECIAL NOTE ON CROSS-HEADWINDS:**

These are the hardest conditions to keep the boat straight on the start. Also, Twickenham Regatta will now run racing upstream, so the stream will be pushing your hull into the stakeboat and magnifying any misalignment.

Pointing head-to-wind, your boat has a relatively small cross section, so the wind doesn't affect it too much but broadside on, it will get blown across the course.

If it is windy, approach the stakeboat such that, as far as possible, when you turn towards the middle of your lane you are pointing INTO the wind:

Do not try to get straight before you get attached; it is more important to stay pointing into the wind until you are on the stakeboat as this is the only way to control your rate of [wind assisted] drift.

This is an edited version of a longer set of notes written by Iain McElroy



## Notes & Instructions for Competitors and their Coaches

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### **Appendix D**

### **Recommended Trailer Route**