

**Birmingham Regatta**  
**Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2016**  
**Event Water Safety Plan**

**1. Introduction**

**1.1 Author**

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This safety plan complies with British Rowing 'RowSafe: A Guide to Safe Practice in Rowing'. The safety plan explains safety measures that have been introduced as a result of the event risk assessment and specific details linked to BR requirements.

**1.2 Event Definition**

The event is organised by Birmingham Rowing Club, Reservoir Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham.

The event takes place on Edgbaston Reservoir over a course of approximately 700m depending on the prevailing conditions. The reservoir and the surrounding land are owned partly by Birmingham City Council and partly by the Canal & River Trust.

**1.3 Competition**

There will be over 400 competitors who are mainly juniors with some seniors (adults). Many will be fairly new rowers, with limited competition experience.

Competition is in fine boats over a two-lane course.

The regatta has Pathfinder events approved by the National Competition Committee, run under British Rowing Rules of Racing.

The individual events are either round robin events, sometimes split into leagues, or side-by-side knockout.

**2. Event Organisation**

**2.1 Committees**

Organising Committee

This event is organised by Birmingham Rowing Club. The Regatta Organising Committee includes the following persons:

Christopher Anton	Regatta Secretary,
Chris Llewellyn	Regatta Water Safety Advisor,
Rhian Prichard	Regatta Welfare Officer,
Sarah Gregory	Club Captain,
Hannah Read, Caroline Kelley, Hannah James.	

Race Committee

The Race Committee will be: Christopher Anton (Chairman), Chris Llewellyn, Richard James, Co-ordinating Umpire on duty.

**2.2 Communications**

Competitors and organisers will 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 will be undertaken to ensure effective communication between all parties:

### **Prior to the event –**

- With the Local Authority – Birmingham City Council have been informed of the event and their comments taken into account.
- With Emergency Services – A letter has been sent to Police, Fire and Ambulance Services and Hospital informing them of the event and advising type of event, location, possible numbers and directions to the Reservoir.
- With participants – Instructions for competitors are sent out to participants including Course Map with the circulation pattern and Safety Instructions. This information is available also on the Club website, [www.birminghamrowingclub.co.uk](http://www.birminghamrowingclub.co.uk).
- Other users of the site have been informed that the Rowing Club has exclusive use of the water on the date of the regatta.
- Weather conditions are monitored in advance of the event in order to determine whether any change needs to be made to the course or the organisation of the regatta. A decision on cancellation will be made in sufficient time to avoid unnecessary travelling by clubs.

### **At the start of the event –**

- Participants will be briefed on the regatta circulation pattern at registration.
- Club members will be briefed on various days before the event.
- Umpires will be briefed on checking in.

### **During the event –**

- Organisers – Radio communication is provided. Radios will be provided to umpires, marshals, registration and rescue boats. Race Control will have a list of mobile phone numbers of key club members and also coaches responsible for crews on the day. There will be a PA system to call crews. Umpires and marshals will have loud hailers.
- Organisers – All key positions have briefing notes explaining the purpose of the position and the emergency procedures. The race programme in race order and event order is included.
- The prevailing conditions will continue to be monitored by the Race Committee to allow decisions to be made on the organisation of the regatta as appropriate.

### **After the event –**

- Participants – Competing clubs are asked for feedback after the event.
- Organisers – There will be a post regatta meeting of the regatta committee and club members will be invited to make comments. The event will be reviewed for next year in light of these comments.

## **2.3 Documentation**

### **Risk Assessment**

A risk assessment has been undertaken and is attached as Appendix A.

### **Emergency Response Plan**

An emergency response plan is included in the documentation for key officials. See section 3 for details.

### **The Course**

The course is straight and buoyed throughout every 50–60m. The marshalling area is also buoyed as is the circulation/warm up area. The warm up area is patrolled by water marshals. The course may be configured in one of four ways. See section 4.

## **Circulation Pattern**

The circulation pattern is shown on the maps referenced in section 4. This shows the routes from the landing stages to the marshalling area via the warm-up circuit, to the start and from the finish back to the landing stages.

## **Key Official Positions including Umpires**

Each position has a book containing the operating methods at that position, emergency procedures, race information and an incident reporting sheet.

## **2.4 Safety Monitoring**

### **Umpires**

Umpires will be situated along the course (see maps A, B, C & D) and at other locations appropriate to their duties. Those on the course will be provided with throw lines.

### **Control Commission**

Boats will be checked before being put on the water for their conformance to the rules of racing, at the discretion of the Head of Control Commission. If the weather is inclement, crews will be checked for sufficient clothing.

### **Marshals**

There will be experienced club rowers on the bank marshalling the crews waiting for the start in the marshalling area. In addition marshals will ensure that crews beyond the finish return to the landing area or the start on the correct side of the circulation pattern.

### **Monitors**

Club members will monitor and assist at other areas such as the car park and boating areas,

### **Safety Monitors**

There will be launches on the water at all times in the area of the circulation pattern, crewed by an RYA-trained driver and an experienced club member.

### **Rescue Boats**

Mercia will be providing rescue boat cover. They will have two boats on the water crewed by their own drivers and crew. They are equipped with the equipment required for rescue. They will be based outside the boathouse near the Registration tent. Any transfer to emergency vehicles will be made there.

## **3. Accident and Emergency Procedures**

### **First Aid Cover**

Mercia will provide first aid cover; they have paramedic, first aid and defibrillator qualifications. There will be first aid kits at the Registration tent, in the launches and at the refreshments tent. They will be assisted by club members.

### **Emergency Services**

The nearest hospital with A&E facilities is City Hospital, Dudley Road. It is within 800m. Access time for an ambulance will be less than 5 minutes.

### **Emergency Procedures**

If an incident occurs on the course, the nearest umpire will call for racing to be suspended and inform Race Control. The call will be "Pan-Pan, Pan-Pan" then a description of the incident and location. After this call, radio silence must be maintained by all except those dealing with the incident. Racing will resume only when permitted by Race Control once safety cover is in place. Umpires and the launches will have throw lines

All crews must follow the instructions of the umpires.

## **Abandonment Plan**

In the event of abandonment, the Race Committee will determine how to clear the water of crews, depending on the reason for abandonment and the prevailing conditions. The resulting instructions will be relayed to the umpires and regatta officials, whose instructions must be followed by all crews.

Rescue and marshalling launches will be deployed to ensure that all crews reach the landing stages safely.

In the event of an emergency outside the scope of the regatta (for example, evacuation of the Reservoir), the umpires will be given instructions as to what to tell the crews. All crews must then follow the instructions of the umpires and other Regatta officials both on the water and on land.

## **Incident Reporting**

Any incident or accident must be reported to Event Organiser and the Event Safety Adviser. The Safety Advisor will record any incidents and log them on the BR website. Clubs who are involved in an incident are responsible to report them on the BR website. Incident reporting on the BR website is open to any competitor, official, coach or spectator.

## **4. Course**

Owing to the effect of conditions prevailing on the day, there are four different courses that may be used:

A: MSC Start, Long Course (see Map A).

This course will be used if the wind is SW (from the creek) provided that the conditions are reasonable at the start.

B: Creek Start, Long Course (see Map B).

This course will be used if the wind is NE (from the dam) provided that the conditions are reasonable at the start.

C: MSC Start, Short Course (see Map C).

This course will be used if the wind is NE (from the dam) and too strong to maintain reasonable conditions in the creek.

D: Creek Start, Short Course (see Map D).

This course will be used if the wind is SW (from the creek) and too strong to maintain reasonable conditions towards the dam and MSC.

Before the regatta, a decision will be taken on the course expected to be used on the day and will be communicated to competing clubs. However, if the conditions at the beginning of the day dictate, the course chosen may be different and will be advised to crews on the day.

Over many years of experience, we have found that conditions can worsen during the day. In this event, we may have to change the course during the day. In this case, racing will be suspended and all coaches consulted and advised of the change of course.

The courses are covered in the instructions for each station and umpire. The position (location around the reservoir), and duties are explained for each version of the course. If the course is changed during the day, wherever possible, people will remain where they are and assume alternative duties. This will make the changeover quicker and more efficient.

## 5. Measures for Specific Risks

### Weather and water conditions

There will be some weather and water conditions that may require the event to be changed, suspended or even cancelled to avoid unnecessary risk to competitors and officials. The decision on these actions will be taken as early as possible by the Event Committee with advice from the Safety Advisor and the Chairman of the Race committee. Although it is not possible to set exact rules for these decisions due to the number of variables that exist, a set of guidelines has been set out below:

#### Conditions and Possible Prevention and Mitigation Measures.

- **Lightning** - Suspend racing and stop boating until storm blows over. Racing to be suspended on order of any official if thunder follows lightning within 30 seconds. All participants to seek safe shelter (in cars, or in the boathouse) until 30 minutes after the storm has passed.
- **Heavy rain** - Ensure appropriate clothing is worn at boat inspection and control commission.
- **Strong Wind** – Consider if the course can be reversed/alterd/shortened to mitigate the worst of the wind, and if necessary cancel event. Ensure appropriate clothing is worn at boat inspection and control commission. Withdraw events for smaller boats and/or less experienced crews.

### Failure of safety arrangements

In the event of failure of safety arrangements, measures will be taken to restore the arrangements as soon as possible. If this is not possible the consideration will be given to reduction of the scope of the event, with the assistance of the coaches of the participating crews. Reduction could be a shorter course, suspension of certain events or abandonment, to reduce risks. Measures for specific failures are given below.

### Failure or loss of rescue boats

In the event of the loss of one rescue boat, a club launch will be redeployed to assist either temporarily or for the duration of the regatta. If insufficient cover can be provided, reduction of the scope or abandonment will be considered.

### Loss of first-aid cover

In this event, club members with first aid training will provide cover.

### Failure or loss of communications

In the event of loss of radios, mobile phones will be used to maintain communication between key official positions, until the radio network is restored. If this is not possible, the scope of the event will be reduced, since mobile phone communication will inevitably be slower than radios..

### Slips and trips

The boating and trailer areas should be kept free from blades, shoes, trestles, etc. that will cause a trip hazard. The marshals working in these areas will monitor these and arrange for equipment to be removed. Crews will be encouraged to keep their blades with their boats or trailers. Blades can be stored on grassed area or on large steps. Spectators will not be permitted to sit on steps when boats are moving around.

## **Car and Trailer Parking**

The Reservoir Car Park is reserved for trailers, so no cars will be permitted, other than the First Aid vehicle. A marshal will be located at the entrance of the car park and will allow in only trailers. Trestles will also be provided at the boat checking area for crews to rest and allow small repairs to be made.

A clear route for emergency vehicles will be maintained through the trailer park up to the boathouse.

## **Hygiene**

Portaloos will be provided for all at the Rowing Club. Separate male and female toilets and washing facilities are available at Rowing Club. If utilities fail (water, sewerage or electricity) the Event Committee will liaise with the Rowing Club and arrange for an appropriate utility or contractor to rectify problem.

Litter bags will be available around the site and the trailer area is to be inspected during the event for unnecessary refuse. There are also City Council refuse bins around the site.

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

## **6. Welfare**

The Event Regatta Committee believes that the welfare and well-being of all children is paramount. All children, regardless of age, sex, ethnicity, religion or ability, have equal rights to safety and protection. All suspicions, concerns and allegations of harm will be taken seriously and responded swiftly and in an appropriate manner.

The Event Welfare Officer will be available at Race Control (see map) and can be contacted via mobile (07886 605 643) or radio.

The first point of contact during the event will be the Welfare Officer. If, after due consideration, she decides that the police should be informed, the Welfare Officer will report the matter to West Midlands Police.

The Welfare Officer will then decide whether she will report the matter to the British Rowing Child Protection Officer.

The event organisers brief all helpers on the Welfare Plan, and ask them to report any inappropriate behaviour to Race Control.

As the event takes place in open public areas, control of photography is not feasible. Competitors and coaches have been informed that this is the case.