



**Tyne United Rowing Club**  
**Junior Group**  
**Parents' Guide to Regattas and Heads**

**TURC-JD-03**

This guide has been developed to give the 'new to rowing parent' information to ensure that whenever we attend an event everything runs as smoothly as possible. The key message is that race days are a team effort for the benefit of our children, there is too much organising for a coach to do it single-handed. All parents need to help out.

The guide includes:

- How regattas and heads are organised
- Preparing for the event
- Boat loading at TURC
- Arrival at the venue and boat preparation
- Racing
- Packing away
- Boat unloading

#### Reference Documents

This document should be read in conjunction with the following TURC Juniors documents, available on the TURC website (<http://turc.co.uk/index.php/about/club-documents>).

TURC-JD-01: Entries & Payments for Heads and Regattas

TURC-JD-02 - Junior Welfare and Safety

#### **How Regattas and Heads are Organised**

There are two main water racing seasons, 'regattas' in summer and 'heads' in winter.

At a **regatta**, two or more boats race head-to-head and the winner progresses to the next round. For example if 8 boats enter a particular class at a regatta there will be four heats, the winning boats progress to the semi-finals and the semi-final winners race together in the final. It is possible that the winning boat will have to race 3 or even 4 times. Regattas are generally raced over short distances. Regatta days are separated into either 2 or 3 divisions, each division being completed before the next one starts. No rower, blade or boat can enter more than once in a division. For example, a female J14 rower might be able to race in a single in division 1, a double in division 2 and a quad in division 3. For a male J14 rower at the same regatta the quad race might be in division 1, the single in division 2 and double in division 3. This means that the same boats can be used by both the females and male J14 rowers. During each division rowers about to race make their way to the start whilst others are racing, and return to the start during subsequent races.

A **head** is a time trial race generally held over longer distances. Head races on the River Tyne are usually raced from Scotswood to Newburn. Initially, all boats make their way to the start, where they are started at approximately 15-second intervals and timed across the race distance. The fastest boat in each category wins.



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Dates for regattas are in the 'events' section of the TURC website.

## **Preparing for the Event**

### Availability

Coaches will ask for availability around 6 to 8 weeks before the event. From this they will decide who can enter which race – with large numbers it can be complicated. If you cannot make it please inform the coach as soon as possible.

### Entry Fees

Entry fees are "per seat" in the boat and are around £5 per race. There is also a trailerage fee per rower of £7.50 for local events and £12.50 for events further afield. Entry fees are paid from each child's "account" which requires to be kept in credit. Refer to TURC-JD-01: Entries & Payments for Heads and Regattas

### Reading the instructions

Each club in the region has a website. These will have racing and safety instructions, course maps etc. All rowers must read these before the event. It is also very useful for parents to know the information as well.

### Know the boating times

The event information will include a race schedule which will include the time each boat will be racing. The boating time is when the boat must be in the water to make the way to the start. It is useful to print the list off, especially for regattas where winning boats will progress to the next round, which have their own boating times e.g. semi-final or final races.

### Clothing and equipment

It is essential that your child has adequate clothing and equipment, as well as spare clothing. This will include warm clothes during the winter and appropriate sun protection in the summer. TURC racing all in ones should be worn for summer regattas. Refer to TURC-JD-02: Junior Welfare and Safety

## **Trailer loading at TURC**

Trailer loading normally takes place the night before the event. All rowers who are taking part in the event are expected to attend the club and assist with boat loading, if they cannot attend for any reason the coach must be informed. Parents are also expected to help.

The coaches will supply a trailer plan which identifies which boats are being taken to the event and where they should be located on the trailer. Boats will need their riggers and seats removed and stored on the trailer, together with enough blades and trestles.

Most boats require a 'Rigger Jigger' to remove the riggers. This is a double-ended spanner (10mm and 13mm) which can be used to remove / refit and adjust the riggers, and it is recommended that each rower has one. These are available from the club at a cost of £5.



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Note: A coach or the driver of the towing vehicle will attend trailer loading to ensure that all boats are correctly and adequately secured to the trailer. If you are unsure of how to secure the boat, please ask the coach / driver to secure it.

***It is each rower's responsibility to ensure their boat, riggers, seats and blades are loaded on the trailer. If they are not there when we arrive at the event, it is too late to go back and get them.***

### **Arrival at the venue and boat preparation**

You should aim to arrive at the venue at least an hour before boating time. You may have to walk from your car so please take this into account before leaving home. One hour only gives the minimum time for preparing the boat, walking the course, warming up and queuing to get the boat on the water.

***Parents retain responsibility for their children at all times at regattas. If you are unable to stay, please ensure that another parent has responsibility for your child.*** (Refer to TURC-JD-02 - Junior Welfare and Safety.)

When you arrive at the location find the TURC trailer, there will be lots going on. Your first priority will be to reassemble your boat (if it has not already been rowed in an earlier Division) and check over it with the rest of the crew. Nobody is going to tell you to do this - it is the responsibility of the crew to ensure the boat is fit for racing. Parents are expected to help co-ordinate this. Please do not stand around watching others lifting boats when you can help.

Before the boat is allowed in the water it will be required to pass a safety inspection, which will include checking buoyancy covers are all present, the heel restraints are adjusted correctly and the bow-ball is in position. It is best to check these before queuing to boat.

Parents can help with boating by carrying the blades and the boat if necessary.

### **During the Race**

You can relax and enjoy the race. If the crew wins and progresses to the next round, please ensure they know when they need to get back on the water. It is best to try and identify the opposition and boat together, to avoid long periods waiting on the water, or risking missing your race.

### **Packing Away**

Once the race has finished, establish if the boat is needed later in the day. If it is not it must be dismantled and placed back on the trailer before you leave. Please ensure that riggers and seats are all in the trailer as well as the boat. Winners trophies / medals are normally available soon after the results are published and should be collected before you leave.



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At the end of racing all remaining TURC rowers and parents are asked to help ensure the trailer is correctly loaded ready to go back to the club. Specifically ensure that all TURC blades and trestles (which will have been used by multiple crews during the day) have been loaded securely onto the trailer.

### **Trailer Unloading**

Arrangements will be made in advance as to when the boats will be unloaded back at the club. This can be the evening after the regatta or the following day. Again all rowers are expected to attend to help with this. If anybody is not able to attend they must tell the coach in advance.

Trailer unloading will generally include the rerigging of all the boats and returning them to their correct locations in the boat sheds (unless they are being used immediately for a training session.) Blades and trestles should also be put away and ties used to secure the boats should be rolled up neatly and put into the relevant storage containers ready for the next event.

### **Website updates**

A coach's report from the event will normally be published to the website soon after the event. Any photographs that you have taken which you want adding can be e-mailed to [dropbox@turc.co.uk](mailto:dropbox@turc.co.uk) or if you have a Dropbox account you can share them to the same e-mail address using Dropbox.