



TURC/DUBC New Year's Head

21st January 2023

Safety Plan as issued 21-11-22

This document should be read in conjunction with the competition's Risk Assessment and its 'Actions to address risks' and numbered references in this document refer to those actions.

1. Introduction

TURC/DUBC New Year's Head is jointly organised by Tyne United Rowing Club and Durham University Boat Club.

The event will be run from Tyne United Rowing Club, Newburn Bridge Road, Blaydon, NE15 8NR

Boating will also be from Tyne ARC and Newcastle University Boat Club depending on numbers.

The course for both divisions of the event is 4.5km approx (with about 500m further at either end for marshalling) and is shown on the accompanying course map. The waters are within the jurisdiction of the Port of Tyne and authorisation is necessary and is being sought on the basis of this and other documents. The river will not be closed to other traffic, but this is very limited.

The event races are for eights, fours, quads, doubles, pairs and singles. The first division will be run at 10.30am and the second division at 1.30pm. Races will be for both adults and juniors.

The extent of safety cover outlined here recognises that junior and relatively novice crews may be entering. The organising committee will ensure that in the case of seriously adverse conditions, such rowers will not be allowed to row, even if already at the clubs. If already on the water, they will be given extra supervision on the water until back at the host club.

Morning and afternoon will be run as completely separate time trials. The races will be run under the Rules of Racing and the Rules of British Rowing with local rules relevant to specific hazards such as bridges.

2. Planning and preparation.

Authorisation is required from the Port of Tyne (PoT) and, at the time of this plan, is being sought. PoT requires copies of key safety documents and details of insurance. River closure is not being requested, as commercial traffic is minimal and other potential users will all be notified in advance. Emergency services are informed as appropriate to the modest scale of the event. Insurance cover is supplied through British Rowing on its standard event policy.

Other river users on this stretch of the Tyne will be informed in advance, with particular emphasis on other rowing clubs, but also others such as Newburn Water Ski Club who operate close by. Rights of way pass through the various club sites at Newburn and warning notices

will be put out on the day warning of activity. Bookings for externally provided launch safety cover and first aid will be booked early and confirmed in place a week before.

Careful management of entries is important in minimising the risk of having too many crews on the water. These competitions can attract a very large number of potential entries, but there is a safety limit of 70 entries per division. In drawing up the start orders, care is taken to order crews as far as possible by speed, fastest first, to minimise the need for overtaking (although the river is broad enough for this not to be a major problem). In addition short breaks will be introduced in the start order within divisions to further reduce need for overtaking.

The overall course map, instructions to crews, access and parking instructions and details of safety briefings will be issued/published when the event is first advertised; detailed circulation patterns at start and finish will be issued in the week before the event, when numbers and likely weather conditions are known.

The organising committee will ensure that resources related to safety are available in-house, on loan or bought in, notably marshalling launches, loudhailers, radios and timing equipment; all to be checked as working prior to race day. The organising committee will prepare task rotas for volunteer helpers and volunteer names and roles will be fully filled out by the Wednesday before the event. Priority will be given as necessary to tasks directly related to safety.

Assistance will be sought from neighbouring clubs in good time if there are insufficient resources at the home club. Volunteers named for key roles, notably launch drivers and water-based marshalls, will be assessed for experience and competence. Written instructions for all volunteer roles and bought in services will be prepared and circulated in advance.

The clubs physically hosting on the day (number depends on numbers of entries) will ensure buildings, sites and boating steps are in a clean and safe condition, that toilet and changing facilities are available and arrangements have been made to receive any crews that are wet and/or cold.

Action points from Risk Assessment: 1.1-1.8, 2.1-2.10

3. Weather and water conditions

Tide times are known in advance, but detailed weather forecasts will not be available until about a week before. During the week preceding the event, the event safety adviser will monitor weather forecasts each day and inform the rest of the organising committee a week before and then daily from the preceding Wednesday, noting not just the weather, but also the likely inter-action of wind and tidal flow.

The organising committee will ensure that participating clubs are kept informed of the prospects for the day via the event secretaries and/or the club web sites. The organising committee will review the need to cancel the event in advance throughout the week if prospects are poor.

Conditions along the whole course will be assessed early on race day and the organising committee or delegated officers shall decide if the divisions of the event can proceed as planned or whether it is necessary or likely that either restrictions on who rows or complete cancellation is necessary at that point.

The safety adviser in conjunction with the Chair of the Race Committee can at any time on the day suspend or cancel racing, either as a whole or for particular classes of entry. Where it is

thought possible to run reduced numbers in a competition, particular note will be taken of the possible young age or lack of experience of crews and exclude these first.

Should a risk of thunderstorms and lightning be identified in advance, the organising committee will consider this information and decide whether to cancel early. If lightning occurs on the day, then the 30/30 rule will apply: rowing shall stop when the flash-to-bang count is 30 seconds (or less), and shall not resume until at least 30 minutes after the last lightning. If crews are on the water, they will all be instructed to return to the home club and land there or at one of the adjacent clubs as quickly as possible.

Action points from Risk Assessment: 1.1, 1.3, 6.1, 6.2

4. Pre start on race day

Race Control will be set up early in the day and remain staffed until completion of the two divisions. Race control will take on overall coordination of the event, though tasks may be delegated to others with clear reporting lines.

A safety briefing for all participating club coaches and individual rowers may be held before each division gets underway. The organising committee will decide whether a safety briefing is needed, which will depend on weather and rowing conditions, and will send details of the time and location of the safety briefing to the contact persons at each Club that is entering the event. All clubs are required to send a representative to attend the safety briefing, who must pass on the information that is provided

The instructions issued to clubs in good time before the event will have contained the same information, except for late changes and up-to-date weather and water reports, so crews should all be well briefed in any case.

The safety adviser will confirm to Race Control that all safety provisions are in place before advising that boating can take place - notably launch-based marshalls and safety cover. Crews will have been advised that the normal rules of river navigation will be followed on the way to the start, i.e. follow the south bank, but do not apply during the race.

Competitors will have been issued with the final start order before the day. Land marshalls will ensure that these are kept to. Crews presenting after the last boating time indicated will be refused permission to boat to ensure prompt start time, unless race control in consultation with other officials agrees otherwise.

Control Commission checks will be carried out before boating. These will cover boats, life jackets, cox weights and making sure that crews are wearing suitable clothing for the race conditions. The clubs cannot guarantee to inspect every boat however (see later re competitor and club responsibilities).

Action points from Risk Assessment: 1.8, 2.1-2.10, 5.1-5.5

5. Communication, including with Port of Tyne and emergency services

The main means of communication will be by UHF radios so that there is good communication to/from all parts of the course. Mobile phones will be a back-up. Safety launches will be in contact with each other by VHF radio as well and race control will also have a VHF radio. Appendix 'I' with its telephone number list will be established by the Wednesday before the competitions and issued on the day and available on host club web sites.

Port of Tyne's Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) unit monitors and controls all commercial shipping, fishing and leisure movements on the River Tyne. Tyne VTS is operated on a 24 hour basis, using the call sign 'Tyne VTS', with Channel 12 as the primary maritime VHF radio frequency. Telephone number is 0191 257 2080 and email TyneVTS@portoftyne.co.uk.

Race Control will ensure that Tyne VTS on VHF channel 12 or via the phone number above is contacted (a) immediately before the events starts, (b) on completion of the event and (c) in the case of a serious on water incident. Depending on the nature of the incident and whether rescue or just medical aid is required fire, ambulance or police may be called.

Action points: 1.7, 6.1, 7.3, 7.4

6. Standard procedures on the water

For each division of the event the start marshalling launches will precede the first crews to boat down the river to the start marshalling areas. The safety cover launches and bank monitors will also be deployed along the river in accordance with the course map accompanying this document. All will report to race control when in place and the marshalling launches shall give regular reports on how the start marshalling is progressing. All launches will check for debris en route and clear or ask race control to allocate another crew to clear.

Race Control will check with all marshalling and safety launches, umpires, race monitors and finish officials that they are in place before asking the start marshalls and start umpire to initiate the race. The race course should be clear of all but marshalling and safety launches at the time of the start. However, if a racing boat is held back for any reason and is on the course when the start is ready, the start umpire will take advice from race control and others and may start the race if advised the boat is in a safe position off the main line.

Should a commercial craft, powered pleasure boat or other river user be likely to interfere with the racing appear (most likely from downstream), the nearest water-based marshall shall approach the craft and request it to turn around or wait. If the boat master refuses to do so and proceeds, then advice should be given that doing so may contravene Port byelaws by endangering others. Race control and the start umpire should be informed immediately and if necessary, racing should be suspended.

Action points from Risk Assessment: 1.8, 5.1-5.5, 6.1-6.10, 7.1-7.7, 8.1

7. Emergency procedures on the water

Race monitors, on land and in launches, will be stationed in positions along the race course to ensure that it is fully observable at all points. In the event of an incident occurring, it should be within sight of a safety launch and the launch will respond immediately. If a crew not involved believes an incident has not been spotted, they should report to the next safety launch. The launch crew should deal with the incident as necessary and advise race control of what is happening. Race Control will call the emergency services should this be advised by the safety launch.

If a safety launch is required to leave its position to attend to an incident and/or transport rowers to land as described below, the race monitors nearest to the safety launch will adjust their positions so that they are able to continue to observe the race course whilst the safety launch is not in its designated position and until it returns.

The safety launch can decide whether to evacuate the rowers affected immediately or hold until all crews are past. If the incident is serious and immediate evacuation is necessary, then Chair of the Race Committee or the safety adviser in conjunction with others may decide

racing should be stopped immediately or other appropriate action taken to safeguard all on the river.

The safety launch may take any appropriate action without consultation with race control if needed urgently to safeguard crews or others. Racing can be restarted if deemed safe by those directly involved in attending the incident. Evacuation should be to Gateshead CRC at Derwenthaugh if clearly the safest option for incidents in the lower part of the course or to the clubs at Newburn (a maximum of 4.5km away) otherwise. Adverse wind or tidal flow conditions should be taken into account.

All actions will be monitored and logged by Race Control. Race Control will also contact Tyne VTS to alert them in the event of a serious on water incident

Action points from Risk Assessment: 4.3, 6.1-6.10, 7.1-7.7, 8.1

8. Competitor and entering club responsibilities

The responsibilities of and precautions taken by the host clubs are outlined above and in the Risk Assessment. Competitors must take some responsibility for their actions, and they should be advised as such by their own clubs through coaches or otherwise. Coaches of juniors in particular must ensure that all competitors are fully briefed before the competitions on the instructions to crews and on the day of any further information from the briefings.

The instructions to crews will emphasise two things for competitors and coaches to consider. Firstly, that all crews should have sufficient strength and experience to row a 4.5km race on a large tidal river. And secondly, that as the event is taking place in January, the weather could be cold and/or wet and suitable clothing to wear at the start should be carried. Competitors and clubs should be aware that they may not be allowed to boat or race if these expectations are not met.

Club volunteers under the direction of an umpire, if possible, will undertake Control Commission checks of safety aspects of boats before getting on the river, but this will not necessarily be on a 100% basis (as per British Rowing policy). As far as possible competitors will be given time to rectify faults. Participating clubs are asked via the Instructions to Crews to check all standard safety items on every boat before loading and again on the day before proceeding to the steps.

Competitors through coaches or directly should make themselves familiar with the national Rules of Racing as they apply to head races and to any local rules published, most notably the need to use only the middle arch/es of bridges during racing.

Action points from Risk Assessment: 1.4, 1.8, 2.4, 4.3

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Appendix

Contact names and phone numbers for the day

To be completed in week before competition