

***CASTLECONNELL BOAT CLUB, HEAD OF THE RIVER  
6<sup>th</sup> of November 2021, WORLDS END CASTLECONNELL***

# Head of the River Safety Plan 2021



# Castleconnell Boat Club

Worlds End

Castleconnell

Co. Limerick

Ireland

Date 6<sup>th</sup> of November 2021

## HEAD OF THE RIVER SAFETY PLAN 2021

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## 1. Introduction

Welcome to **Castleconnell Boat Club, Head of the River 2021**. We hope that you have an enjoyable, safe and successful days racing. With your help and co-operation, we (and our equipment) should survive the day intact.

This Safety Plan incorporates the key points of all the rowing clubs involved, our aim is that all competitors, officials and visitors will uphold all Good Practice that exist in Rowing throughout all the clubs participating this weekend.

A copy of the Safety Plan is lodged with Rowing Ireland and our Medical Professionals.

Medical professionals, Ambulance personal will be on site during the day of the H.O.R. and will be present during the whole competition. There will also be a Doctor on call during the regatta.

Safety boats crewed by trained personnel will be patrolling the course throughout the regatta.

Umpires are equipped with loudhailers and basic safety equipment; throw-bags and emergency blankets.

Safety boats, umpires and other regatta officials are provided with radios operating on the Umpires' channel for communication.

## 2. Safety Procedures & Preventive Measures

### 2.1 Safety Instructions & Information for Competitors

#### Equipment:

It is the responsibility of each crew to ensure that the equipment that they are using is safe and compliant with the requirements of General Rule In principle, the Rules of Racing of World Rowing and Rowing Irelands Rules and safety manuals. Coxes presenting at the pre-launch inspection without life jackets on will not be allowed on the water. Coxes of front-loading boats should ensure that their life jackets allow for a quick escape from their boat.

All boats must have secure bow balls, heel restraints and watertight buoyancy chambers. Coxswains must wear a life jacket or buoyancy aid in the correct manner and be familiar with the method of operation. In "front-loader" boats coxswains must wear manually operated gas inflation life jackets. Inspections will be conducted, and omissions may lead to disqualification.

#### Coxes

All coxes should be familiar with the method of operation of their life jacket.

#### Swimming Ability:

Every competitor is expected to be in good health and able to swim. Although the river is not too wide access from the bank is relatively good. It is the responsibility of each club to ensure that their members competing in this event (CCBC HOR) are able to swim.

#### Competitors' Responsibility

While we endeavour to provide a safe system at this event, each competitor and competing club also has a duty of care to themselves and others.

- Their own safety, remembering that they have a duty of care to themselves and any third party both on the water and on land.
- Ensuring that any equipment (e.g. boats, blades, buoyancy aids, etc.) are safe and prepared to the standards as required. Spot checks may be made by marshals to check on bow ball, heel restraints or other quick release mechanisms and coxes' life jackets.
- Ensuring that their boats comply with the buoyancy requirements.
- The strict observance of any 'local rule' or traffic/circulation pattern along with any competition specific safe' provisions.
- Deciding whether or not they are competent to use the water course in the prevailing weather conditions; this decision may be taken by the individual or with their coach/crew.
- Adequate clothing / protection is worn suitable to the conditions on the day.

## **2.2 River Hazards**

Beware of the water falls and trees past the finish line near the inbound slip, the area has been marked with a line across the river with red and yellow marker buoys hanging from this line. Access beyond this point is forbidden, this hazard will be monitored from the bank by the slip marshal and a safety launch will be available near the finish line at all times.

## **2.3 Launch Plan**

### **Slipway**

There will be one inbound and two outbound slips for the duration of the HOR, the crews and coaches are asked to help with the flow of incoming and outgoing crews by ensuring boats are ready to launch and all adjustments are made before approaching the slipway.

Crews are advised to wear appropriate footwear when using the slipway.

There will be two slip marshals in place during the HOR.

Outbound crews will use the concrete permanent slipway and the temporary erected slipway.

Inbound crews will be using the outer slipway.

Oars should be removed from the slipway as quickly as possible.

A plan of the course is available in the club house.

## **2.4 Traffic Plan**

### **Training**

There will be no training allowed prior to the HOR

### **Racing**

Crews should make their way from the outbound slip to the area known as O' Brien's bridge keeping close to the bank on their left. Marshal's launches shall be in place on the way to the start and will help direct crews to the start. The course will be lined with marker buoys approximately every 500 meters, they are placed in the middle of the river. On the way to the start the crews should keep the bank of the river to their left (coxes right) and the marker buoys to the crews (right coxes left)

Once into the hold area crews should move in an anti-clockwise direction going around the marker buoys. Crews must pay attention to other crews that may be moving slower than them when warming up in the holding area.

When the marshals call the crews forward to the starting line they should proceed through to the start.

It is the responsibility of the crew to have their bow number in place.

The whole course is visible to strategically placed umpires and marshals. Umpires'/safety launches are equipped with throwing lines and safety boats patrol the course. In the event of a capsize on the course please stay with your boat and listen to Umpires/safety launches instructions.

### **Starting Procedures**

From this year to assist the starter at O' Briens Bridge we will introduce an entry Chute (approach and exit buoyed area) to direct crews through the start. All crew must enter the chute through the entry point and pass through the start line when called forward by the starter. Any crew found to jump the starting que or be found to have not entered the start gate through the proper channel **will not** have their time taken for the Head.

There will be an umpires launch on the water that will direct crews through the correct process.

#### **Know the rules:**

**The Rules of Racing of World Rowing** will be used. The marshalling rules are straightforward – see the HOR circulation plan - umpires will stop racing if an unsafe situation develops. In particular, keep well in near the bank on the way up to the start and keep a constant lookout for crews racing. Give yourself plenty of time to boat before your race time, as the marshalling area can become very congested and slow moving and it may take you some time to get to the start (allow at least 20 minutes to get to the start from the main boating area at the club house. All boats must launch from the 'Launch Slips'. All boats must return using the 'docking slips. Listen for start marshals' instructions - they are all experienced in the job and know the event and the river well.

**The course will be clearly marked by buoys any crew that deviates from the head of the river course and is found to have gained an advantage from this deviation will be disqualified.**

#### **If you see an accident:**

Please report to the nearest official immediately, who will act or alert the rescue services by radio as necessary.

Umpires, marshals and officials will be the initial public contact points for reporting of emergencies. Marshals will wear a high visibility jacket for identification at all times.

This Safety Plan is distributed to umpires and other HOR officials by the HOR organising Committee.

All unsafe incidents and accident will be reported on the Rowing Ireland IROWsafe system.

#### **Safety Boats**

At least one dedicated Safety Boat will be available at all times, positioned along the course in a strategic position dependant on conditions. These shall be equipped with competent people, radios, throw lines, safety blankets and first aid equipment.





On the course: Get any boat that is damaged and unable to proceed to the side, either side is ok. It should be noted that there are a number of access points to the river is from the banks and marshals are aware of their local access point.

Umpires and marshals: Shall pay particular attention to any incident on the river. Should a crew be involved in a collision or suffer any injury that requires assistance, or a crew member falls out of a boat, the official shall summon a safety launch by radio. If the course is blocked, the official shall also advise the start that no further races shall be started.

Capsize: The whole course is visible to marshals. Every marshalling position is equipped with throwing lines and a radio to inform Race Control. **STAY WITH THE BOAT!**

### **2.3 Incidents – Extreme weather conditions & other threats**

Where extreme weather conditions or other situations that could require the cancellation or postponement of racing, either for the day or until the conditions change, the decision will be the responsibility of the HOR secretary. The HOR secretary or the Safety Advisor also reserve the right to amend this plan if weather or competition conditions on the day make this necessary. Amendments, postponement or cancellation will be published at Race Control and announced over the public-address system.

In the case of lightning a risk warning will be broadcast advising participants already on land to avoid moving boats and oars during the period of the storm. The message shall make clear whether racing could be resumed if conditions improve and whether crews already on the water should return immediately or complete their race first. As soon as the decision is made, every effort will be made to get all competitors and Safety boat crews ashore and safe as quickly as possible.

As for determining when things are safe, the HOR will use the 30-30 rule. After you see lightning flash, count the number of seconds it takes until you can hear thunder crack. If the time is less than 30 seconds, you are still in danger and should stay in a safe place. Similarly, a person should wait 30 minutes after seeing the last flash of lightning as it may linger after a storm.

### **2.5 Pre-inspection**

Approximately 1 hour before the start of the race the Safety Advisor along with the HOR Secretary will inspect the course and surroundings for any obstructions or likely problems and assess the weather conditions. A Checklist shall be completed by the Safety Advisor at this time. Decisions on postponement or cancellation will be considered.

### **2.6 Instructions**

Marshals, Safety Boats and other officials will be issued with all relevant safety documentation prior to the event. Specific safety information may be issued on the day.

Competitors will receive details of the arrangements and instructions prior to the event.



### 3. Communications

Safety boats are provided with radios operating on the umpires' channel (Channel 1), to maintain contact with umpires when needed.

Radio etiquette shall be maintained at all times and only relevant event information shall be relayed by radio.

For clarity Marshals use channel 1 while Rescue, Control & Umpires are on channel 11.

The PA system shall also be used to make emergency and public announcements if necessary. Back up is provided via megaphones.

### 5. Emergency Action Plan

#### 5.1 Purpose

This Emergency Action Plan sets out mitigation and procedures in relation to an emergency which represents a general threat to HOR participants.

#### 5.2 Responsibility

Responsibility for actions in the event of an emergency rests with the Race Committee. These individuals will carry radios at all times.

#### 5.3 Actions in the event of a medical emergency

The nearest radio equipped Race official on the scene will take initial control and will assess the situation. (If necessary, he/she will call emergency services.) As soon as immediate life saving measures are in hand Race Control (if not aware) will be notified. If emergency assistance is required, the Official will call **Code-Red** (urgent medical issue) and **Code-Blue** (non-urgent) on his radio and all other radio users will observe radio silence and follow instructions given by that official. For any other situation (obstacles, debris etc) normal radio protocol should be used.

The initial incident report for a **Code-Red** should briefly include;

- What is needed (first aid or higher or safety boat).
- Location stretch of river or bankside that the service is needed.
- What has happened.
- The number of casualties.
- The severity of injuries or illness.
- If racing needs to be suspended.

As soon as an incident is reported, all stations on radio are to minimise their communications. Absolute priority is to be given to Race Control and those responding directly to the incident.

In the event of any accident or emergency beyond that detailed in the safety plan and outside the capabilities of the HOR first aid and safety facilities, the emergency services will be called using 999 by mobile phone.

Emergency services not familiar with the embankment and requiring detailed information about an incident location can contact Race Control for grid references & post codes.

#### **5.4 Fire**

If anybody discovers a fire in the area of, or in the club house or the Enclosure or surrounding forest park they should raise the alarm and he/she will assess the situation and tackle the fire ONLY if they are confident to do so and initially order local evacuation. If the emergency may require the stopping of racing or general evacuation, he/she will inform the HOR secretary. They will agree appropriate action.

#### **5.5 Equipment failure**

Should there be a Radio failure during the event, Safety Boats and marshals etc shall use mobile phones & loudhailers to raise alarm, providing the radio is to be replaced hastily. If this is not possible Race Control shall be informed and racing shall be halted.

In the event of Safety Boat failure during the event then this must be reported to Race Control straight away to consider if racing should be halted.

#### **5.6 Capsize**

Capsize

In the event of a capsize during a race the umpire will call "Rescue, Rescue, Rescue and state where the incident has occurred and whether additional assistance is required. All unnecessary radio traffic should be discontinued until the event is declared over.

#### **5.6 Floating Hazard**

Any significant floating debris or "hazard" seen on the water shall be reported to Race Control immediately. A Safety Boat shall be deployed to clear the water and racing shall be suspended.

#### **5.8 Anti-social Behaviour**

A serious public disorder or violent behaviour shall be reported to Race Control immediately. If necessary, racing shall be suspended, and the Gardai shall be called.

#### **5.9 Terrorist Threat**

Any news that could be deemed a serious threat to life should be reported to the Gardai immediately. Evacuation of any area believed to be in threat shall be organised in the first instance by HOR officials.

## **6. Reporting of incidents**

Any witnessed incidents should be reported to Race Control for recording purposes. All incidents during the day will be entered into the Rowing Ireland **IROWsafe** accident and incident online report system.

## **7. Emergency Services Access**

Emergency vehicle access to the boat house and club house area is via the main gates, the emergency services will be met by a HOR official at the gate and directed to the location of the incident.

It is very important that the access road from this main gate down to the club house is kept clear and free of obstructions at all times including two hours before the regatta, during the regatta and for a reasonable time after the regatta.

If parked vehicles are causing an obstruction it will be announced once over the public PA system and if the vehicle causing the obstruction is not moved in a reasonable amount of time, the vehicle will be removed by the regatta organisers. The regatta organisers will use a local car removal service to remove the vehicle and all cost incurred will have to be paid by the vehicle owner.

Castleconnell Boat Club and its Directors and committee accept no responsibility for damage caused to vehicles parked in such a way as to cause an obstruction to emergency vehicle access.

## **8. Feedback**

If you have any comments that may help us improve the plan for future events, then please let us know via Castleconnell Boat Club website. Further information that makes up the full Regatta safety plan is contained in separate documents on the Rowing Ireland website under Castleconnell Sprints Regatta, namely circulation plan, access and parking arrangements.