

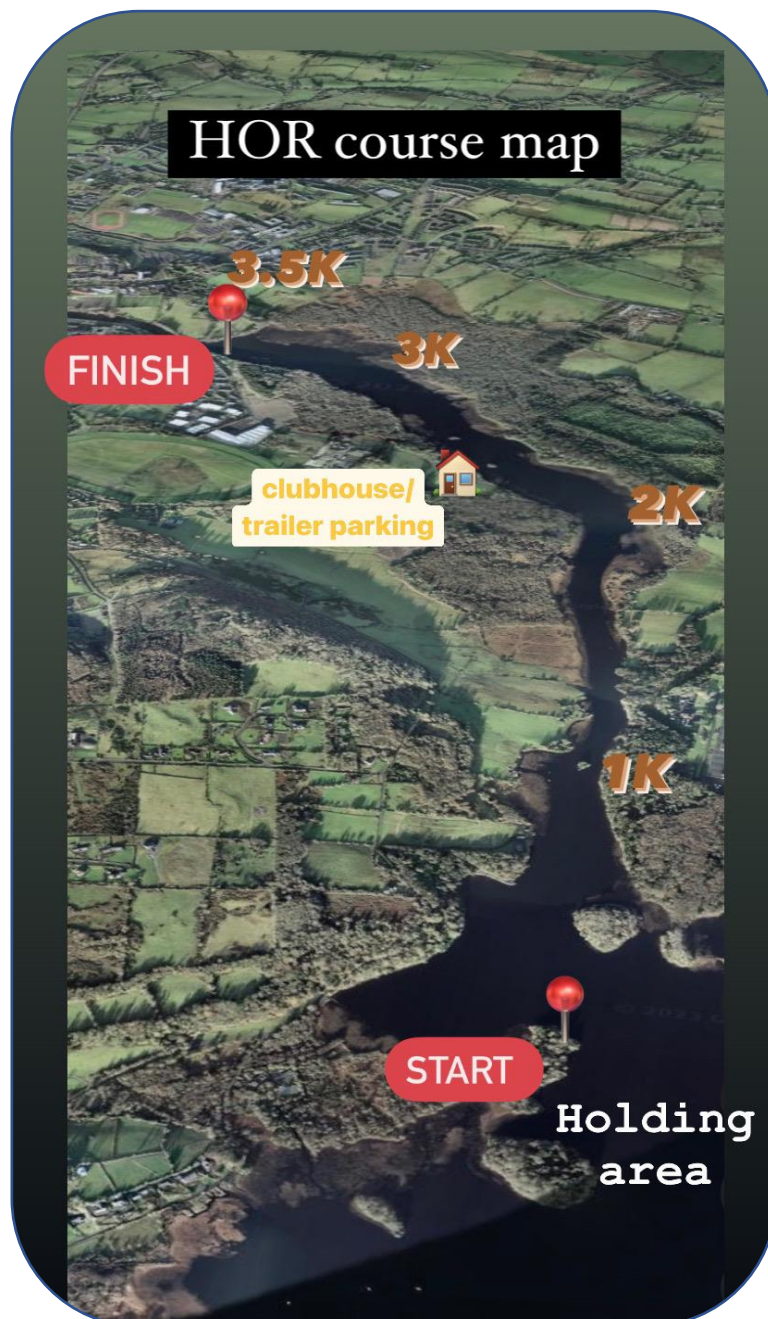


Sligo Rowing Club

Doorly Park, Sligo

HEAD OF THE RIVER SAFETY PLAN 2023

18th February 2023





Sligo Rowing Club, Head of the River 2023

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1. Introduction

Welcome to **Sligo Rowing Club, Head of the River 2023**. With your help and co-operation we hope that you have an enjoyable, safe and successful days racing.

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

First Aiders will be on site during the day of the HEAD OF THE RIVER enclosure and will be present during the whole competition.

Safety boats will be patrolling the course throughout the event.

Pending conditions on the day of the event, course length may be shortened. This is at the discretion of the organising committee and will be advised to competitors and coaches at the safety briefing

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 FISA (Fédération Internationale des Sociétés d’Aviron) and rowing Irelands 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. 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 and must familiarise themselves with the course layout.

In advance of the Head of The River Event, all coxes competing in the races must attend the scheduled coxes information and safety meeting on the day where course hazards, race rules and method for returning to slip will be discussed.

Swimming Ability:

Every competitor is expected to be in good health and able to swim. It is the responsibility of each club to ensure that their members competing in this event 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.

Each club member:

- Must behave in a safe manner, remembering that they have a duty of care to themselves and any third party both on the water and on land.
- Ensure 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.
- Must observe the competition rules or traffic/circulation pattern along with any competition specific 'safe' provisions detailed in the safety plan and at the safety briefing.
- Decide whether or not the competitors are competent to race in the Head of the River event taking into consideration the weather conditions and the competency of the competitors. This decision may be taken by the individual or with their coach/crew.
- Must ensure adequate clothing / protection is worn suitable to the conditions on the day bearing in mind there will be a wait time before race start.

2.1.1 River Hazards

- Shallows containing reed beds – keep safe distance from reed beds
- Three islands – competitors must familiarise themselves with the course layout in advance of racing and keep all islands to the cox's left or the scullers stroke side while racing.
- Weirs – no access into the lower river beyond the finish line. It will be marked and access beyond this point is forbidden.
- When racing down to the finish, competing boats must keep towards the centre of the river once past the launch slip to avoid encroaching on the buoyed return lane to the slip.
- Once across the finish line, competition boats must promptly clear the finish line by turning left and moving into the return lane.
- When returning to the slip, all boats must remain in the return lane and not cross onto the course.

2.1.2 Launch Plan

Slipway

There is one slipway for inbound and outbound boats therefore boats must be launched on time and slip stewards/marshals' instructions must be obeyed.

Boats will be launched in order as per the launch schedule as advised by slip stewards and marshals.

Boats must not leave the holding area to enter the lake.

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.
Oars should be removed from the slipway as quickly as possible.
A plan of the course is available in the club house.

2.1.3 Boat Traffic Plan - Training

There will be no training allowed on the day of the Head of the River Race.

All crews must launch and proceed to the holding area as per the course map and remain in the holding area until called by the starting marshall.

All boats will launch and proceed upriver (travel to your right when launching from the slip) to the holding area before racing commences.

Before launching, all cox's and scullers must familiarise themselves with the location and procedure for travelling to the launch area as detailed in the safety briefing.

Boats must not leave the holding area to enter the lake.

Competitors must obey stewards and marshalls at all times.

Umpires will stop racing if an unsafe situation develops and stewards/marshals instructions must be obeyed at all times.

Boats must only leave the holding area and approach the start line when called by the starter.

If you see an accident:

Please report to the nearest official immediately, who will act or alert the rescue services by dialling 112.

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 HEAD OF THE RIVER organising Committee.

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, communication means, buoyancy aid and safety blankets..

First Aid

First Aid cover is provided at the HOR enclosure adjacent to the launch slip.

Emergency

The nearest Accident & Emergency unit is Sligo University Hospital. Phone **071 9171111**

Emergency: Fire, Police, Ambulance: 112 or 999 from any telephone.



Key Personnel

Race Start:	HOR Secretary contact via mobile: Molua Donohoe	087 6148559
Safety Marshall Control	Rory Clarke	087 6189156
Safety Adviser:	Lisa Cronin contact via mobile:	087 2449843
Head of River Enclosure Contact	Tommy Colsh	087 2369292
Head of River First Aiders:	Rosie Harrison Rosaleen Walsh	086 8033423 087 2323140

Key Telephone Numbers

There is no public telephone facility within the Sligo Rowing Club area, but all officials will carry mobile phones with them on the day of the event, mobile network coverage within the area is adequate.

Contact numbers:

Event Mobile: 087 6189156

Safety Adviser Mobile: 087 2449843

Please ensure you give sufficient access for an ambulance to get through along the roadway down to boat house area of the club and throughout the trailer park.

Access to the club area is at Cleveragh and we request that all those attending to respect our neighbours and always allow for emergency vehicle access before, during and after the event. Car Parking marshals will be in place, and you are expected to obey their instructions. There is no parking along the access route to the club house and absolutely no parking on foot paths and cycle route in the area.

The local Garda have been informed of the event and that traffic will be managed by the host club.



2.2 Incidents – Collisions & Capsizes

Above the start/below the finish: Move any boat that is damaged and unable to proceed to the side of the river.

On the course: Move 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 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. If the course is blocked, the official shall also advise the start that no further races shall be started.

Capsize: The whole course will be marshalled by safety boats and marshalls strategically placed along the river banks. **In the event of capsize 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 including adjusting of course length 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.

The race organisers will consult with weather forecasts in advance of the race. Race organisers will continue to assess the weather conditions using all data available to them to check that suitable conditions for racing are predicted. In the event of lightning occurring 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.

2.4 Pre-inspection

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

2.5 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 at the safety briefing.

3. Communications

Safety boats are provided with all communication with marshals via mobile phone.



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

4. Emergency Action Plan

4.1 Purpose

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

4.2 Responsibility

Responsibility for actions in the event of an emergency rests with the Race Committee.

4.3 Actions in the event of a medical emergency

First aid persons will be contacted to assess the emergency and to make recommendation for follow up actions including calling ambulance, transfer to Sligo University Hospital etc.

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

4.4 Fire

If anybody discovers a fire in the area of, or in the club house or the enclosure they should raise the alarm by calling 999. If the emergency may require the stopping of racing or general evacuation, the emergency services will inform the HOR secretary. They will agree appropriate action.

4.5 Equipment failure

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. There are multiple safety boats arranged to marshal the river on the day of racing.



4.6 Capsize

In the event of a capsized boat during a race the marshal who observes the capsized boat will assess and address the situation and request assistance of Safety Marshal Control Rory Clarke if required.

4.7 Floating Hazard

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

5. Reporting of incidents

Any witnessed incidents should be reported to Safety Advisor for recording purposes. All incidents or near misses will be recorded.

6. Emergency Services Access

Emergency vehicle access to the boat house and club house area is via the main entrance, the emergency services will be met by a HEAD OF THE RIVER official at the main entrance 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 event, during the event and for a reasonable time after the event.

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 event organisers. The event 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.

Sligo Rowing 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.

7. Feedback

If you have any comments that may help us improve the plan for future events, then please let us know via Sligo Rowing Club website. Further information that makes up the full Sligo Head of the River safety plan is contained in separate documents on the Rowing Ireland website.