**MEDWAY TOWNS ROWING CLUB**

**CHAMPIONSHIP HEAD**

**SUNDAY 17th October 2021 1pm**

**NOTES FOR COMPETITORS**

**BRING YOUR WELLIES**

**The Course**

3 miles DOWN stream on tidal water on the River Medway from WOULDHAM CHURCH to MEDWAY TOWNS ROWING CLUB. To be rowed on an EBB tide.

**Access to the course is**:

* Medway Towns Rowing Club, The Cyril Baker Boathouse, The Esplanade, Rochester, Kent, ME1 1QL.

*This is the only GUARANTEED access to the river is at MTRC.*

**First Aid / Medical Cover**

First aid cover will be provided by MTRC Club appointed First Aiders who will be based at Medway Towns Rowing Club. Transport will be available to take any person(s) to hospital where appropriate.

**Casualty Department**

The nearest is at Medway Maritime Hospital, Windmill Road, Gillingham, Kent, ME7 5NY. Telephone: 01634 830000

Telephone for all emergency services is 999 and a mobile telephone will be available at MTRC for this purpose.

**Covid 19 Instructions**

Medway Towns Rowing Club will adhere to British Rowing Managing COVID-19 advice (current version 14: 20 July 2021). Kent and Medway at time of publication are not subject of Surge Testing restrictions.

**Pre-competition symptomatic competitors**

Competitors are reminded that should they the present with symptoms of COVID 19 prior to the event they are to seek PCR testing, notify training crews and abstain from attending.

**On-site lateral flow test provision**

On site tests will be available for competitors, umpires and volunteers to use at their personal discretion. Kits will be made available at registration for competitors seeking to use.

**Surge test areas**

Should you live within an area subject of surge testing, you should take a test and only attend if you test negative.

Competitors should be mindful that other members of crews may not be fully vaccinated or are clinically vulnerable. It is important that consideration is given to other competitors and avoid crowding. Should there be any competitors who are vulnerable or anxious, please advise MTRC ahead of the event to allow for placing of crews and equipment.

**NHS Test and Trace Club QR Code**

Please assist with NHS track and trace, and utilise the QR code posted around the site.

**Clubhouse Limitations**

**Changing rooms**

Changing rooms will be used for emergency shower use only.

**Toilets**

Outdoor port-a-loos have been provided for use and requested preferred use.

3 indoor toilets are available. Access will be available from within the main boathouse. Competitors are requested to queue within the boathouse and refrain from standing within the corridor ramp to the toilets. Exiting will be via the club entrance and competitors will be required to walk around the outside of the building back to boats.

**Areas out of bounds**

The clubhouse, kitchen area and gym will be accessible only to the Race Committee, Umpires and event volunteers for briefing and tasking, and individuals registering crews.

**Registration**

Event registration will take place within the Gym area of the club house. Participants registering crews are requested to enter from the boathouse doorway and leave via the metal steps exit.

**Safety Brief**

The Cox and Steerer briefing will be delivered to each club crew location to minimise mixed groups. Should there be any crews who have not received a briefing before launching commences. Please notify registration who will direct the briefing officer to your location.

**Competition Zone**

Crews attending will be marshalled to trailer parking locations. Crews are requested to rig and prepare boats water side of trailers, creating social distancing barriers between crews. (MTRC and UKC crews will prepare boats by the roadside boathouse area in order to leave sufficient clear space for participants entering and leaving the clubhouse facilities.

**Race Results**

Race results will be published and displayed on the hard standing (subject to fair weather). Crews are requested to avoid crowding and exercise reasonable social distancing behavior.

The formal prize giving will take place on the hard standing in front of the boathouse (subject to fair weather) to permit crews to remain within their designated areas and will be called up to collect prizes.

**Spectators**

The event will not be publicized locally outside of the rowing community. Crews will be allocated trailer space within the private perimeter of Medway Towns Rowing Club. It is not anticipated that there will be general public on site. From previous Head Race events at the club, supporters, family and friends of competitors can be accommodated safely outside of the clubhouse facilities.

There is no parking provision available for spectators and non-towing vehicles on site. Paid parking is available on the esplanade towards Rochester, and limited unrestricted parking is available opposite the club on Shelley Rise (Please do not park on restricted roads or block driveways to private residential properties).

**Safety launch**

A launch will be manned at the half way point of the course and will have first aid bag including survival blankets. This can be summoned by mobile phone or radio through Race Control.  All marshals’ launches will also be expected to help with incidents as required.

**Boat Buoyancy**

For older boats without inbuilt buoyancy, the race requires fitting of buoyancy bags or equivalent.

**Juniors**

When collecting crew numbers each club should advise our Race Control of the person responsible from that club for any juniors that they have present.

**Dangerous behaviour:**

Marshals and umpires will warn competitors whose behaviour could impair the safety of others and themselves and details will be taken and reported to Race Committee. Persistent offences can be identified and appropriate remedial action taken even up to disqualifying the Competitor or whole Club concerned.

**Course safety:**

**A plan of the course is attached**and will also be displayed at Race Control in the boathouse. The course will be inspected by the event Umpire or other agreed person on the day of the event prior to the race commencing. Any new hazards identified will be added to the course plan at Race Control and notified to competing crews.

**Abandonment**:

The weather forecast leading up to the event will be closely monitored and a decision to abandon the race will be taken in the 24 hours preceding the event, if considered necessary.  **All competitors must ensure that the Events Secretary has a contact telephone number in case of cancellation**.  Notices will also be placed on the club Facebook Site Medway Towns Rowing Club – Posts | Facebook

The Chief Umpire will inspect the course on the day, if conditions look at all concerning, and competitors may be alerted to a course alteration before boating.  The race may be abandoned after boating, in which case marshals will wave red flags and/or sound continuous short blasts on air horns or megaphones and stop the race.

**Pre-race briefing – to be held at 11 am – by race Safety Adviser**

Coxes and Steerers from each crew MUST recieve a pre-race briefing, scheduled to be held two hours ahead of the race in the MTRC boathouse.  The Safety Adviser deliver this to clubs at their designated areas. They will remind crews of the racing rules and safety instructions and will also be able to answer questions from those unfamiliar with the river.  The timing is to enable crews to boat in good time to reach the start of the race, rowing up against the oncoming tidal stream.

**Going afloat**

Crews should ensure that they are afloat **at the latest** within 45 minutes of the start time.  Marshals will assist with the boating process and will withhold crews who are not able to launch in time to reach the start.

There will be spot checks of equipment to ensure that boats meet the required British Rowing standards and that they meet the race’s buoyancy requirements.

Competitors who in the opinion of the launching marshal are not appropriately dressed for the conditions will be prevented from competing.

**Warming up**

* Crews warming up ahead of the race must do so prior to the start Marshalling area.
* No crews should proceed down the centre of the course within 10 minutes of the start of the race.

**Start procedure**

* Crews must be in position five minutes ahead of the start time.  Those arriving late may be allowed to start at the back of the race, at the discretion of the start marshals.
* Crews need to marshal on the Rochester side of the river.
* The crews need to be marshalled at least 500 meters up river from the start and pointing up river i.e. into the ebb tide.  **Remember this is a tidal river and the boats will constantly be moving down river on the outgoing tide unless crews keep tapping the boat along.**
* Crews will be put in their correct order by the marshals, with the lowest number NEAREST the start line.
* Three minutes before the start, the marshals will sound pneumatic horns to signal tops off and ready to turn.  Crews must not turn until instructed to by the marshals.  On being told to do so, crews will turn and proceed towards the start in numerical order.  **To turn the most easily in a tidal flow, it is best to turn the bows out into the middle of the river and then get the other side to back it down, using alternate strokes.**
* Crews will be given the “go” command just ahead of the start line

**During the race**

Coxswains and steers should maintain that which they consider to be their best course.  It is the responsibility of the overtaking, faster, crew to give due clearance to the slower crew but the slower crew must hold its course and not obstruct or impede the overtaking crew.  **All crews have a responsibility to avoid a collision and may be penalised if judged to have contributed to the causes of a collision.**Umpires and observers will be posted along the course.

The river will **NOT** be closed for the event and it is a requirement that all crews operate the same navigation and proceed up to the start taking an inshore route, sticking close to the Rochester bank of the river, and back down the middle whilst racing.  Whilst racing, crews must be prepared to pass any oncoming vessel keeping them on the stroke side (i.e. port to port). **THERE IS NO EXCEPTION TO THIS**.

The race will be run two hours after high water, so there will be plenty of water over the mudflats.  Course buoys are therefore not being used on this occasion – Steerers should follow the course down the centre of the river, taking the fastest part of the stream.

Marshals’ boats or sited Marshals will be at the:

* **Start (Boat)**
* Wouldham Church (Bank)
* **Cement Works (Boat)**
* **Pylons (Boat)**
* **Kent Boat and Ski Club (Boat)**
* **Downstream of the Motorway Bridge, near Medway Bridge Marina. (Boat)**
* Moorings club side of the Motorway Bridge (Pontoon)
* **Upstream of finish (Boat)**
* **Turning Buoy (Boat)**

**At the finish**

All boats must move on from the finish line at Medway Towns Rowing Club as quickly as possible and continue to a Buoy marker. A marshal will be afloat and will direct competitors when to commence their return to the boathouse.

**Returning crews**

The returning crews must remain in single file and stay as close as possible to the eastern, Rochester, bank, keeping a good lookout for racing crews.  The returning crews must not impede racing crews and accordingly must give way to them.

**Important notice**

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