

WEYBRIDGE WINTER HEAD – INSTRUCTIONS TO COMPETITORS

Boating

Visiting crews should boat from Walton Rowing Club, Sunbury Lane, Walton, or Weybridge Ladies ARC, Walton Lane, Weybridge. Crews must be in position **10 minutes** before the start of each division. Crews arriving late at the start may be allowed to compete at the end of the division but only at the discretion of marshals. Note that crews will not be permitted to boat from Walton RC once a race has started.

Numbers

Paper numbers must be firmly affixed to the back of the bowperson, one on the racing vest and one on the tracksuit, so that they are clearly visible to the marshals when lining up at the start and to the timekeepers. The sticky label number should be affixed to the stroke side saxboard next to the bow position.

Marshalling at the start

The first 20 crews in each division will marshal on the Middlesex side of the river, facing upstream, with the first crew downstream of Walton Rowing Club. Crews should not stop in front of the little weir. The remaining crews in each division will marshal on the Surrey side in consecutive order, lowest number upstream and all facing upstream.

Crews will be started at approximately 15-second intervals and told to start racing when opposite Walton Rowing Club. The timing point will be on Miskin's Wharf.

The Course

Normal navigation rules apply. Crews must keep to the Middlesex side of the river, leaving the Surrey (towpath) side as the navigation channel for other river users, apart from the Desborough Channel which will be closed to other traffic. Any crew which crosses onto the Surrey side of the river during the race (with the exception of the Desborough Channel) will create an unacceptable safety hazard and may be disqualified.

Swans & Other Wildfowl: There are a large number of swans on the Walton Reach, particularly close to the Anglers Hotel. Crews must take all reasonable steps to avoid collision or interference with swans or any wildfowl. Any crew colliding with wildfowl must inform an official as soon as practicable.

About half way along the course the narrow arches of **Walton Bridge** straddle the river. Crews must use the **Middlesex arch**, which will be marked by a yellow sign suspended from the bridge. **CREWS BEING OVERTAKEN ON THE APPROACH TO WALTON BRIDGE MUST GIVE WAY AND ALLOW THE FASTER CREW THROUGH. FOR SAFETY REASONS OVERTAKING THROUGH WALTON BRIDGE IS FORBIDDEN.** Some 400m above Walton Bridge, crews must leave the Middlesex bank and cross into the Desborough Channel.

Crews being overtaken must give way to the overtaking boat.

The Finish

The Finish is at Elmbridge Canoe Club, about 50 metres upstream of the bridge at the top of the Desborough Channel. Once past the Finish, crews should continue upstream on the Surrey side of D'Oyly Carte Island. Crews wishing to return to Walton may turn at the upstream end of D'Oyly Carte Island and either return on the Middlesex side of D'Oyly Carte Island and then along the old river course round Desborough Island, or wait for the end of the race and return via the Desborough Channel. Any crew attempting to row downstream along the Desborough Channel during the race will be disqualified.

Rules and Safety

The ARA Rules of Racing place a clear obligation on competitors to ensure their boats are safe and comply with the ARA Water Safety Code (rule 2-3-8 a). Race monitors will conduct random checks of boats going afloat and are empowered to refuse participation of those in non-compliant boats.

The race will be rowed in accordance with ARA Rules of Racing for processional races and Race Monitors will be stationed at intervals along the towpath to report any infringements of the rules.

Crew captains and coaches must make sure that coxswains and steersmen are fully conversant with these instructions and the Safety Plan, including the navigational details on the maps of the course.