



THE NATIONAL SCHOOLS' REGATTA

22- 24 May 2026

EVENT SAFETY PLAN

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OVERVIEW

1.1. Scope

- These instructions apply to *all competitors, volunteers and third parties* at The National Schools' Regatta both on land and on water.
- These instructions should be read in conjunction with the British Rowing Row Safe guide to good practice in rowing which gives broad advice to those involved in the sport of rowing both in and out of competition.

- Expected participants: Juniors (aged 13-18). No adaptive categories are currently offered
- Expected racing craft: Fine boats (eights, fours, quads, pairs, doubles, single sculls)
- Competition format: Multi- Lane Regatta over 1,000m and 2,000m.
- Racing takes place during daylight hours.
- When racing over the full 2000m course, crews will proceed from the embarkation rafts to the start zone via the warm-up lake only.

1.2. Organising Committee

Role	Names	Email
Chairman	Mike Martin	<i>chairman@nationalschoolsregatta.co.uk</i>
Hon. Secretary	Steve Hermes	<i>secretary@nationalschoolsregatta.co.uk</i>
Treasurer	Mark Blandford-Baker	<i>treasurer@nationalschoolsregatta.co.uk</i>
Entries Secretary	Adrian Cassidy	<i>entries@nationalschoolsregatta.co.uk</i>
Welfare & Safety	Carol Cornell	<i>nsr.welfareandsafety@gmail.com</i>

Details of other Committee Members are available upon request

1.3. Location

- The National Schools' Regatta takes place at the Eton College Rowing Centre, Dorney Lake, Windsor SL4 6QP (OS Grid 493700,177400 / SU937773).
- The course at Dorney Lake is built to international standards; it is approximately 4 meters deep, has gently shelving banks and contains clean, still water.
- Water temperature is commensurate to summer expectations.

1.4. Rules Applying to the Event

- The Regatta is run in accordance with the British Rowing Rules of Racing and the Row Safe guide to good practice in rowing.
- All crews must be apprised of the local rules as defined by the Organising Committee. These rules have been designed as addenda to the above in order to facilitate the smooth running of the Regatta and to ensure the safety of competitors, spectators and the general public.

1.5. Vehicle and Trailer Access

- Entry and exit from the Dorney Lake site must only be made via Lake End Road (B3026) and not via Marsh Lane.
- Only official vehicles and emergency vehicles are permitted access to the island between the warm-up channel and main lake.
- Once on-site, drivers must follow the instructions of marshals who will direct traffic to the appropriate parking facilities.
- Boat trailers will be directed to the car park situated at the North-Eastern end of the Lake. Marshals will be on hand to direct parking and full cooperation from drivers is expected.
- Coaches and minibuses transporting crews will be parked on the South side of the Lake on Drove Road, entering and leaving via the access at the West end of the Lake.
- All other vehicles will be parked on the North side of the Lake.
- Note that weather conditions may dictate that car parking and trailer parking facilities are changed at short notice.
- All drivers must observe the posted speed limits and ensure that extreme care is taken in pedestrian areas.

1.6. Decision-Making Process

1.6.1. Agreement to Commence Racing

- Before racing starts on any day the Race Committee Chairman and Safety Officer will assess the conditions of the course and must agree unanimously that racing should start.
- The Race Committee Chairman and Safety Officer will ensure that all items in the Regatta Safety Checklist (*see Appendix E*) are satisfied prior to the commencement of racing and monitor these items over the course of the day to ensure continued safety.

1.6.2. Temporary / Permanent Suspension of Racing

See Appendix G

1.6.3. Resumption of Racing

See Appendix G

1.7. Weather Conditions

The Organising Committee shall monitor weather conditions throughout the event. Racing shall be suspended when conditions are deemed unsafe as per Paragraph 1.6.2 - Temporary / Permanent Suspension of Racing.

1.7.1. Wind

- Where wind conditions affect the safety of crews, the Regatta may suspend or cancel racing.

1.7.2. Poor Visibility / Low Light

- In the event of poor visibility (less than 250m) or low light, the Regatta may suspend or cancel racing.

1.7.3. Lightning

- See Appendix H

1.8. Communications

- Regatta Officials are supplied with radios to facilitate communication.
- Command and Control is coordinated in the Finish Tower.

1.9. Rescue Boats and First Aid

- Up to five rescue boats will be present on the main lake and the warm-up lake to give assistance where necessary.
- Paramedic facilities, (Ambulance & Car in separate locations), will be available near to and in the boating area.
- The nearest A&E department is in the Wexham Park Hospital, Wexham, Slough, Berkshire, SL2 4HL, a distance of @7 miles from the course.

1.10. Safety Reporting

- The Regatta supports a continuous improvement programme for safety. To facilitate this, all incidents should be reported and acted upon.
- Further information is given in Appendix M

1.10.1. Incident Reporting

- All incidents shall be reported via a Regatta Official to the Regatta Safety Officer. These incidents shall be reported through the British Rowing online reporting mechanism.

1.10.2. Medical Return

- In the event of an accident or incident resulting in significant injury or requiring transfer to hospital, the Regatta Safety Officer and /or Paramedic Team shall complete a Medical Return Form to be sent to the British Rowing Chief Medical Officer.

1.10.3. Control Commission Reporting

- Control Commission may spot check crew equipment at embarkation. In accordance with British Rowing Rules of Racing, crews will be prevented from boating if their equipment does not meet the minimum standards set by Row Safe.
- Control Commission will retain a list of crews presenting inadequate equipment. The Regatta Safety Officer will forward this information to the relevant club and regional Water Safety Officers.

1.11. Emergency Action Plan

- *See Appendix J*
- Thames Valley Police have allocated reference number **EOP-1936-23-4300-3168** to the event. This should be quoted when liaising with the Police in relation to this event.

1.12. Child Welfare

- The Organising Committee believes that the welfare of all children is paramount and working in conjunction with all appropriate personnel, will seek to implement the guidelines of the British Rowing Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy.
- All children, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, religion or ability, have equal rights to safety and protection. All suspicions, concerns and allegations of harm will be taken extremely seriously and responded to both swiftly and appropriately.
- A welfare officer/coordinator for the competition will be appointed annually and will act as the point of contact for any concerns or allegations. The contact number for the Welfare Officer will be posted in the boating area throughout the duration of the competition.

- For clarity, a child is defined as a person under the age of 18 by The Children Act of 1989.
- Please refer to the *Child Welfare Policy and Plan in Appendix F*

1.13. Water-Borne and Infectious Diseases

1.13.1. General Advice

- Competitors should take the following action to reduce the risks of infection from water-borne disease:
 - Do not drink water from the lake.
 - Only drink from your own water bottle.
 - Wash hands thoroughly and shower if necessary before eating or drinking.
 - Avoid immersion in the water.
 - Cover cuts and abrasions (including blisters) with waterproof dressings.
 - Do not splash water from the lake onto your face or body to cool down.
 - Shower as soon as possible after contact with the water.
 - Wear footwear to avoid cuts and protect feet when paddling in the water (launching a boat).
 - Avoid contact with Algal scum.

1.13.2. Leptospirosis (Weil's Disease)

- The risk of contracting Leptospirosis from recreational water is small, however the serious nature of the disease is such that everyone must be aware of the dangers and should take the simple precautions outlined in section 1.13.1 to reduce the risk of infection.
- If 'flu-like symptoms develop shortly after contact with the water (1-3 weeks) then your doctor should be contacted and advised of the circumstances of exposure.

1.13.3. Blue-Green Algae (Cynobacteria)

- Cynobacteria are commonly found in fresh and brackish water during mid to late summer. In favourable, stable conditions, blooms may form and scum may accumulate downwind on the surface of the lake.

2. GENERAL INFORMATION FOR COACHES, COMPETITORS, SPECTATORS AND OFFICIALS

2.1. Responsibilities

The Regatta implements the recommendations of the British Rowing Row Safe guide to good practice in rowing, and competitors are reminded of their obligations under Row Safe. As such ALL **Competitors and Spectators must follow posted safety notices and obey instructions from Regatta Officials.**

- Coaches are expected to be aware of competitors with **significant pre-existing medical issues** should wherever possible inform the appointed Welfare Officer at nsr.welfareandsafety@gmail.com 24 hours in advance of racing competition.
- Coaches are reminded they are, in the first instance, responsible for the welfare of all Juniors under their control whether spectating or participating
- Coaches and competitors are specifically reminded that persons using the lake do so at their own risk and are solely responsible for:
 - Their own safety and their ability to meet the minimum standards required by Row Safe i.e., ability to swim, awareness of capsizе procedures.
 - Ensuring that their boats are safe and are prepared to the standards required by the British Rowing Row Safe guide and the British Rowing Rules of Racing.
 - The strict observance of the circulation pattern (*see Appendix B*) and the minimum standards set by Row Safe.
 - Deciding, together with their coaches, whether they are competent to use the lake in the prevailing weather conditions

If a competitor falls out of a boat for any reason, the crew must stop and render assistance.

2.2. Equipment Checks

- Whilst it is the duty of competitors to ensure their boats and blades are safe in line with the guidance in “Row Safe”, the Control Commission may spot check boats, and shall exclude any boat that fails to meet the standard laid down.
- Control Commission shall maintain a record of boats failing inspection. The Regatta Safety Officer shall forward this to the Regional Water Safety Officer within seven days of the Regatta.

2.3. Protection against Weather Conditions

- British weather can be varied, even in summer. All persons present should ensure that they bring kit and clothing appropriate for all possibilities.

2.4. Cold Water Immersion

- All competitors should be aware of the actions to take in the event of immersion:
 - Stay with the boat and use it to keep you afloat
 - Get on top of the boat and attract attention immediately
 - If you have to stay in the water, retain warmth by keeping arms and knees tucked into the body
 - Stay calm and breathe deeply
 - Do not waste energy by trying to right the boat
 - Do not swim away from the boat because your swimming ability in cold conditions is dramatically reduced

- o Know the emergency procedures to be able to help effectively if you see a capsized
- o Keeping warm and dry in the boathouse between races.

2.5. Incident Reporting

- All safety incidents, (including near misses), must be reported to a Regatta Official and the incident recorded appropriately.
- If any aspect of the Regatta gives a Volunteer or Official cause for concern with regard to safety, this should be reported through normal communication channels or directly to the Safety Officer.

2.6. Practice, Warm-Up and Cool-Down

- There is no Thursday practice session within the scope of this regatta – crews wishing to train are required to make their own arrangements with Dorney Lake.
- Crews may **NOT** boat on the River Thames from Dorney's grounds. During hours of racing, crews will only be permitted to go afloat on the Lake to race.
- Crews may warm up in the areas indicated on the Circulation Patterns (*see Appendix B – Circulation Pattern*) and must adhere to the circulation pattern and obey all instructions from umpires and marshals in this area. Crews failing to comply shall be penalised.
- Cooling down is **NOT PERMITTED**. Crews failing to comply shall be penalised.

2.7. Circulation Pattern

- All competitors must familiarise themselves with the Circulation Pattern for crews (*Appendix B*). Crews failing to follow the circulation pattern may be disqualified.
- The racing lanes are numbered 1 to 8 from the spectator side of the course.
- At 1,000m, only crews returning to the boat house from the Return Lake to effect emergency repairs will be allowed to enter the main racing lake.
- Crews must be attached two minutes before race time.
- Races will be started without reference to absentees.

2.8. Violation of Safety Rules

- Any crew that violates the declared circulation pattern, is observed executing a dangerous maneuver or acting contrary to the British Rowing Row Safe guide to good practice in rowing may be awarded an 'Official Warning' by any Umpire acting as a Key Race Official or any member of the Race Committee.

2.9. Insurance

- All crews should ensure that they have sufficient third-party insurance cover.

2.10. Security

- The Regatta Organising Committee can take no responsibility for equipment left overnight
- All equipment must be removed from the site at the end of racing on Sunday night

2.11. Boat Racking and Storage

- It is the responsibility of competitors to ensure that their boats are secured correctly when stored on permanent or temporary racks, trestles, boat trailers or roof racks.
- Crews are requested to exercise consideration when racking or storing boats, so as to minimise restriction to access or movement by others.

2.12. Spectators, Pedestrians & Cyclists

- Cars, Motorcycles, Scooters etc. **MUST NOT** drive along on either side of the course following crews or races.
- **Pedestrian** access to the island formed between the main lake and warm-up lake is strictly forbidden.
- **Cyclists** are reminded that their first duty is to the safety of those around them and they must ensure that they remain aware of the dangers around them.
- **Cycling is NOT PERMITTED** on the North side of the Lake or in the boating area.
- **Cyclists** must note the “No Cycling” areas on the circulation plan and follow the one-way system.
- Only coaches will be permitted to access the island formed between the main lake and warm-up lake, for the purpose of following their crews. Parents (who are not coaches responsible for a crew on the water at the time) discovered cycling at any time may cause the disqualification of their child's crew.
- Cyclists must take care at all times and must obey the instructions of the Marshals. In addition to being situated at the access to the island road, Marshals on the bridges will stop cyclists when the commentary car is approaching, to minimise the risk of collision.

2.13.3.1 Drones

- The use of drones is **ONLY PERMITTED** via the authorized NSR media partner Onside Productions.

