



INFORMATION FOR COACHES & COMPETITORS

This document highlights the key points from the NSR SAFETY PLAN applicable to ATHLETES AND COACHES. The full NSR Safety Plan and Appendices are available on the website.

1.1 Responsibilities:

- a) 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.
- b) All Competitors must follow posted safety notices and obey instructions from Regatta Officials.
- c) Competitors with significant pre-existing medical issues should advise the Welfare team 24 hours in advance of racing on welfare@nationalschoolsregatta.co.uk@gmail.com . Relevant information will be passed through to the medical and safety teams in advance of racing.
- d) Coxswains must provide and wear a suitable buoyancy aid or lifejacket when afloat.
- e) Competitors are specifically reminded that persons using the lake do so at their own risk and are solely responsible for:
 - i) Their own safety and their ability to meet the minimum standards required by Row Safe i.e. ability to swim, awareness of capsizing procedures.
 - ii) 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. Any boat that fails to meet the standard shall be excluded. See British Rowing Rules of Racing rules 7-2-8 & 9 for details.
 - iii) The strict observance of the Circulation Pattern (see Section 2) and the minimum standards set by Row Safe.
 - iv) Deciding, together with their coaches, whether or not they are competent to use the lake, including getting attached to the stakeboats, in the prevailing weather conditions.

1.2 Equipment:

It is the responsibility of the competitors to ensure that their boats are safe and are prepared to the standards required by the British Rowing Row Safe guide to good practice in rowing.

- a) Control Commission may inspect the boats prepared by the competitors before each race and shall exclude any boat that fails to meet the standard laid down.
- b) 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.



1.3 Incident Reporting:

- a) All safety incidents must be reported to a Regatta Official and the appropriate incident report forms completed.

1.4 Practice:

- a) Crews wishing to train on the lake on Thursday or before must book in with, and pay, Eton College Services Ltd: 01753 832756.
- b) No crews may practise on the course nor in the warm-up lake on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.
- c) 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.

1.5 Circulation Pattern and race starts:

- a) **The circulation patterns for Friday's racing and that for the Saturday and Sunday racing are different.**
- b) Copies of circulation patterns will be posted on the side of the cabin at Race Control.
- c) All side-by-side races throughout the Regatta will start from the 2000m start pontoons.
 - i) On Friday the J14 and J15 crews will finish at the 1500m mark, 500 m from the full course finish line.
 - ii) Saturday and Sunday ALL crews will race over 2000m.
- d) All competitors and coaches must familiarise themselves with the Circulation Patterns, for crews including those for proceeding to the start and racing (see Section 2). Crews failing to follow the circulation pattern may receive an official warning or be disqualified.
- e) The racing lanes are numbered 1 to 8 from the spectator side of the course.
- f) Crews may warm-up in the areas indicated on the Circulation Pattern (see Section 2), must adhere to the warm-up circulation pattern and obey all instructions from umpires and marshals in this area. Crews failing to comply may be penalised.
- g) Crews must be attached to the start pontoons two minutes before race time. Races will be started without reference to absentees.

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- h) In side-by-side racing, crews will generally be permitted two attempts to attach to the stake boats and hold a straight position. Crews which cannot attach in reasonable time risk being excluded from the race.

1.6 Insurance:

- a) All clubs should ensure that they have sufficient third-party insurance cover for attendance at the Regatta.

1.7 Safeguarding and Child Protection:

- a) The Regatta has appointed a Child Welfare Officer ("CWO") whose duties include understanding and implementing, where appropriate, the British Rowing Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy.
- b) The CWO may be contacted in advance via welfare@nationalschoolsregatta.co.uk. On the day contact details are available via Race Control, any Race Official or member of the onsite team.
- c) All Regatta officials and volunteers are apprised of their responsibilities under the Regatta's Child Welfare Policy.
- d) It is the responsibility of all Schools and Clubs to ensure that all coaches or school / club staff working with Children and Young People have the appropriate DBS check through British Rowing or their school and to follow their own Child Protection Procedures in line with British Rowing Guidance.

1.8 Security:

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

1.9 Boat Racking and Storage:

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

1.10 Vehicle and Trailer Access & Marquees:

- a) Entry to and from the Dorney Lake site must only be made via Lake End Road (B3026) and not via Marsh Lane.

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- i) Trailers can access the site from 12:00 to 21:00 on Thursday 21st May. Trailer drivers must follow the instructions of the parking marshals on duty and park their trailers in the designated trailer parking areas only.
 - ii) b) **Boat trailers** will be directed to the car park situated at the Eastern (boathouse end) end of the lake on the Southern side or alternative location as directed by the traffic marshals. Marshals will be on hand to direct parking and full cooperation from drivers is expected. Parking passes will be allocated to coaches/boatmen
 - iii) **NOTE that schools and clubs should NOT pitch any gazebo/tentage in the trailer park before 07.00am on Friday morning and, any marquee put up must be within the marked designated trailer parking area.**
 - iv) Those wishing to put their Club or School Marquee up, along the side of the course, before the Regatta can do so from Thursday morning. Please ensure that you are in your allocated spot.
 - v) Gates will be open from 06.00 to 21.00 Friday, Saturday and Sunday.
 - vi) All trailers and equipment must be removed from the venue by Sunday night.
- b) **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 Western (start) end of the lake.
 - c) **Drivers transporting competitors** will need to identify themselves at the entrance and will be directed to park on the Drove Road. This applies to parents and rowing coaches. If drivers wish to park on the North side of the lake to view the racing a parking ticket will need to be purchased in advance.
 - d) **Parking on the North side of the lake:** Those wishing to park on the North side of the lake near the School and Club Marquees will be required to pay for parking access. Details can be found on the NSR website at [Parking - National Schools' Regatta](#)
 - e) **Only official vehicles and emergency vehicles are permitted access to the island between the warm-up channel and main lake.**
 - i) **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.
 - j) Allocated Marquee locations can be found on the NSR website at [NSR-marquee-allocation-2026.pdf](#)

1.11 Pedestrians, Bicycles and Drones:



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- a) Pedestrian access to the island formed between the main lake and warm-up lake is strictly forbidden.
- b) 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.
 - i) Coaches will only be permitted to access the island formed between the main lake and warm-up lake, for the purpose of following their crews. Nobody else, other than officials, safety crews and film / commentary crews will be permitted to access the island.
 - ii) **NB: No more than 2 cycles may follow each crew in a race - Cycle passes will be issued with numbers at registration. Any club / school failing to follow this instruction will be treated as exhibiting “unsportsmanlike behaviour” and, under Rules 8.5 and 8.6 of British Rowing Rules of Racing risks sanction and / or disqualification of their crew.**
 - iii) 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.
 - iv) 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.
 - v) Cyclists are encouraged to wear safety helmets at all times when cycling.
- c) Use of drones is **NOT PERMITTED** anywhere at any time during the Regatta.

1.12 Cox Weights:

- a) All coxswains shall be weighed each day prior to their first race (including Time Trials) and, if required, may be re-weighed after any race in an event.
 - i) The weigh-in scales will be located in the Boathouse adjacent to the boathouse reception.
 - ii) In accordance with British Rowing Rules of Racing (as updated from 1st April 2025 – which still apply in 2026 until updated), Rule 7-2-7d, states that the minimum weight for Coxswains is 45kg for all J15 and younger crews, and 55kg for all other crews.
 - iii) Coxswains competing in more than one event of a similar age category need to be weighed once only each day to qualify for all such events.
 - iv) Coxswains shall be weighed in the clothing that they expect to wear in the race, inclusive of buoyancy aids. Please ensure the Coxswain is wearing clothing fit for the weather conditions on the course.

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- v) To make up this weight a lighter coxswain shall carry dead-weight. Any dead weight carried may be checked after any race in any event. Wristbands will be issued to all coxes showing if carrying weight or not. Different coloured wristbands showing the weight to be carried will be issued to all coxes carrying weight.
- vi) If there are specific circumstances that prevent a cox from being weighed the coach MUST notify nsr.welfareandsafety@gmail.com in advance of weighing in taking place.

1.14. Boating:

Time Trials:

- a) Crews are expected to boat 30 min before racing having completed their warm-up on land. A schedule of boating times will be issued and should be followed. Announcements for crews to boat will be made over the public address in the boating area at boating times.
- b) Once on the water, and while in a holding pattern, crews should endeavour to get in number order. Coaches are asked to assist with this process and communicate with their crews on the way up to the start.

Semi-finals and Finals (side by side racing):

- a) Crews are expected to boat 40 min before the published racing time. Please follow the circulation pattern. No announcements of boating times will be made and it is the crew and coaches responsibility to ensure that they boat on time.

2.CIRCULATION PATTERNS:

2.1 General instructions applying to all crews:

- a) Numbers can be collected from the Regatta Marshals Office before racing. Crews must carry their racing numbers on their training top, racing top and in the Empacher slot on the front of their boats.
- b) Crews should carry their boats from the trailer park following the one way system around the back of the boathouse to the outgoing pontoons (rafts 1 and 2 on plans) where they should join the queue for boating.
- c) A schedule of "boating times" will be issued. It is imperative that all crews and scullers comply with these boating times. If you miss your boating time, unless you can demonstrate extenuating circumstances, you will not be allowed to boat and will miss your race.

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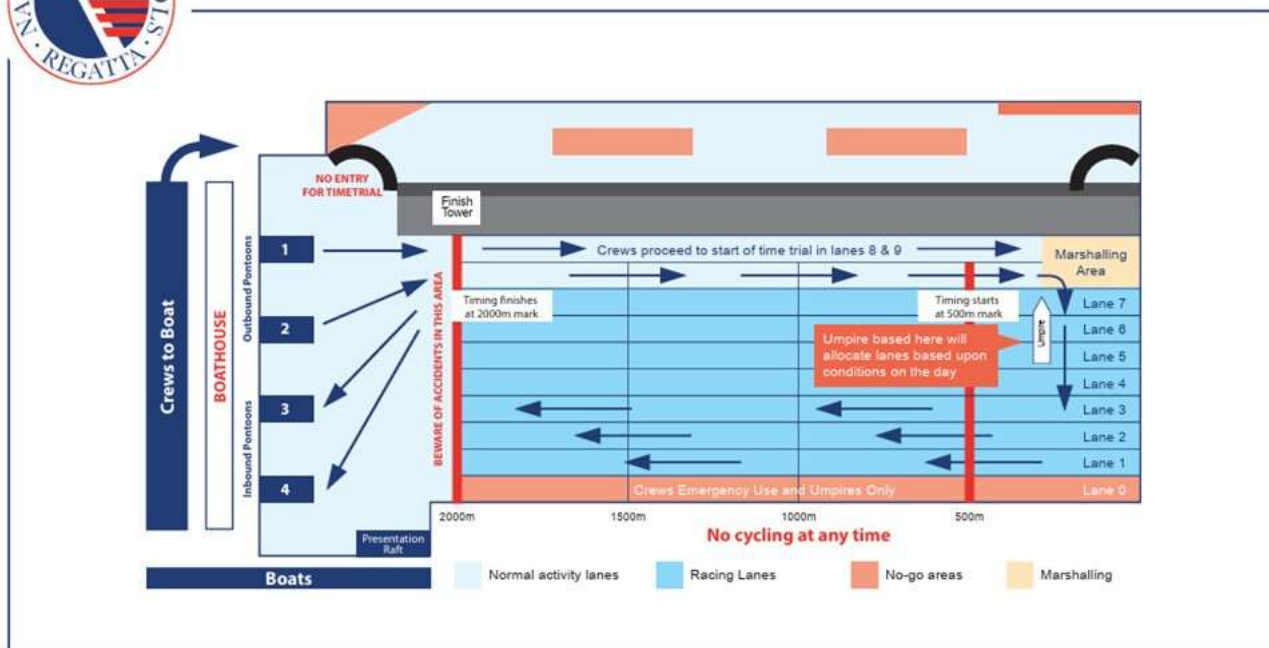
2.2 TIME-TRIALS on Friday morning J14s and J15s 1,500m (read in conjunction with Plan 1 below)

- a) Once boated crews will paddle slowly towards the start in lanes 8 and 9 only. Warming up by turning into lanes 1 to 7 is NOT allowed.
- b) 250m (from the 2000m Start) all crews will be stopped by the Marshal on the bank and told "Tops off". Crews should then be ready to race at this point.
- c) A Marshal at this point will direct crews across the lake towards the launch in lane 7 at the 200m mark and encourage them to keep moving. The launch in lane 7 will allocate crews their racing lane (dependent on conditions 1, 2 and 3) and direct them towards that lane. Aim to row round in a continuous semi-circle ("hard on stroke side, bow side light / easy / hold") into lanes 1, 2 or 3, as directed.
- d) Lanes 0, 4, 5, 6 and 7 are safety lanes and are not in use for racing. Lane 0 is to be used only for crews in distress. A launch in lane 4 will sort the crews into lanes and set them off towards the start. Crews should proceed in their allocated lanes toward the start at the 1,500m mark.
- e) Crews will be started at intervals of approximately 20 seconds, with successive crews in different lanes to ensure a gap of at least 1 min between crews in each lane.
- f) The Starter will say "Go" approximately 50m before the timing line and crews will be timed as they cross the start line.
- g) Time trials for the J14 and J15 crews will finish at the 2,000m (finish) marker.
- h) It is the responsibility of crews that are being caught to move across to allow faster crews to overtake.
- i) All Crews should be careful in the Finish area, and, under the directions of the Marshals in launches at the finish, proceed straight to the rafts 3 and 4 (or 1 and 2 if available) quickly and safely; crews may not cool down on the course after their Time Trial as they may obstruct other crews racing.

PLAN 1



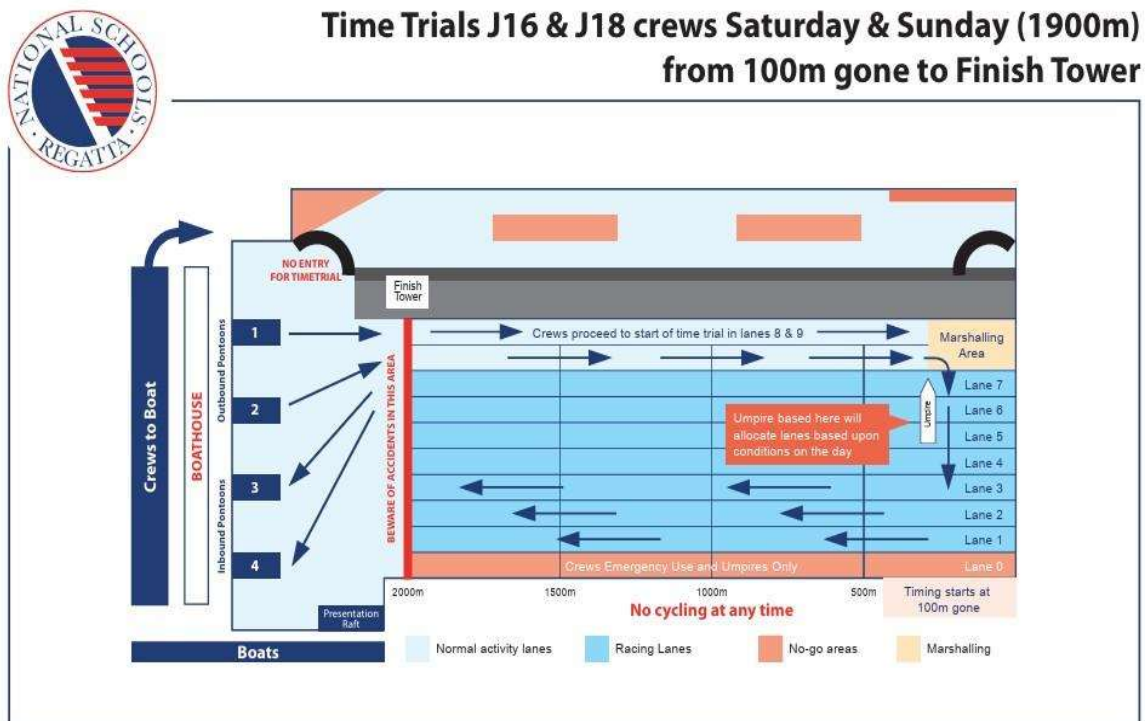
Time Trials J14 & J15 Friday (over 1500m)



2.4 TIME-TRIALS Saturday and Sunday over 1900m (read in conjunction with Plan 2 below)

- The circulation for **all** time trials on Saturday and Sunday is the same as for the crews on Friday except that the timing starts at 100m from the 2,000m start – see section 2.3 and Plan 2 below.

PLAN 2



2.5 Stopping Time Trial and amending Time Trial distance:

- In the event of it being necessary for a Time Trial race to be stopped for any reason the signal to stop will be a loud series of blasts from an air horn. This will be repeated from all umpire and rescue boats on the water. ALL RACING CREWS MUST STOP IMMEDIATELY and follow instructions from umpires and rescue boats.
- In the event that prevailing conditions dictate that the start or finish line for any Time Trial should be altered all crews will be notified before boating.

2.6 MULTI-LANE RACING on Friday over 1500m J14s and 15s (to be read in conjunction with Plan 3 below)

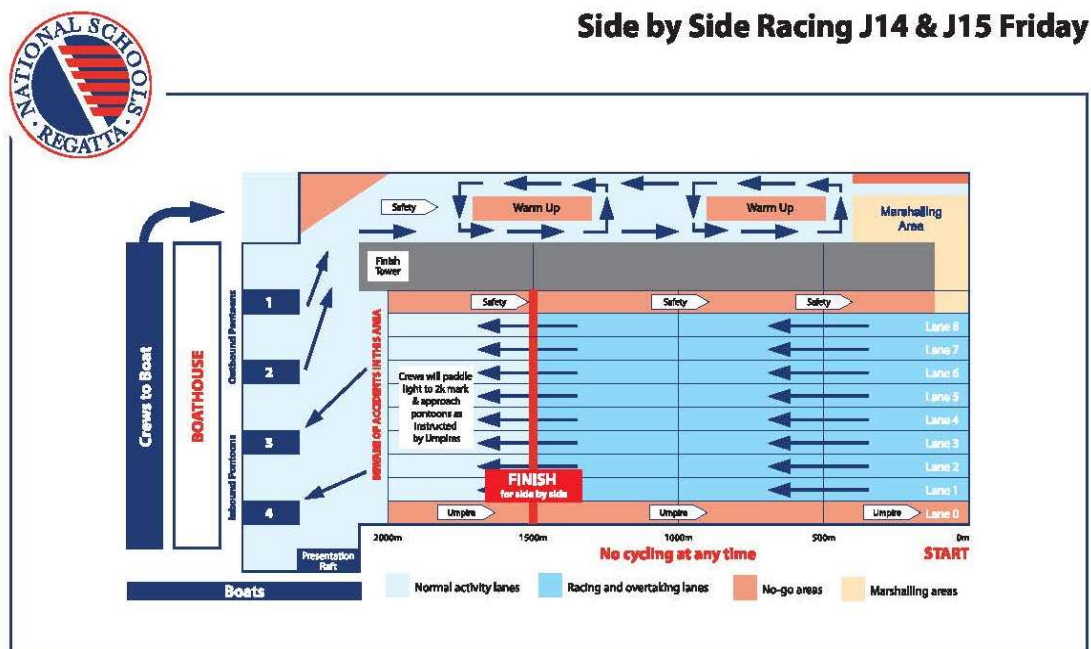
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- a) Once boated all crews will proceed to the start via the warm-up lake – access under the bridge to the left of the boating pontoons. Warm-up is permitted in the warm-up lake following the circulation pattern shown in Plan 3 below.
- b) Each crew is responsible for being in the start area, within 250m from the warm-up lake exit bridge (see plan 3) and ready to race 10 minutes before the scheduled time of their race (or such other time as advised by race control)
- c) Crews will assemble under the direction of a Marshal on the bank 200m from the start bridge at which point they will be directed by the Start Marshal to **wait in Lane Number Order (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)**.
- d) As soon as the start pontoons are clear from the previous race, crews will be directed to move towards the return lane exit bridge staying in lane number order.
- e) When at the bridge and when the Starter calls the race, under the Bridge Marshals instructions, crews will paddle under the bridge and then across the start pontoons to their allotted lane and will then back down onto the start pontoon. Please stay close (10 – 20m max) to the start pontoons before you turn and back down to the start pontoon. Do not turn 100m from the start and then try to back down to the start pontoon.
- f) If a crew is not attached to the start pontoon two minutes before the published race time (or such other time as advised by race control) it may not be allowed to race.
- g) **NB: please note that all J14 and 15 crews will finish side by side races at the 1500m point, 500 m before the finish tower (2000m finish marker).**
- h) Upon finishing their race, as indicated by the finish signal, crews should wind down but continue paddling, under the directions of the launch Marshal, to the incoming rafts (number 3 and 4 on the plans).
- i) **Cooling down** is NOT PERMITTED at any point on the lake.

PLAN 3



2.7 MULTI-LANE RACING side by side on Saturday and Sunday over 2,000m (to be read in conjunction with Plan 4 below)

- Once boated all crews will proceed to the start via the warm-up lake – access under the bridge to the left of the boating pontoons. Warm-up is permitted in the warm-up lake following the circulation pattern shown in Plan 4 below.
- Each crew is responsible for being in the start area, within 250m from the warm-up lake exit bridge (see plan 4) and ready to race 10 minutes before the scheduled time of their race (or such other time as advised by race control)
- Crews will assemble under the direction of a Marshal on the bank 200m from the start bridge at which point they will be directed by the Start Marshal to **wait in Lane Number Order (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)**.
- As soon as the start pontoons are clear from the previous race, crews will be directed to move towards the return lane exit bridge staying in lane number order.

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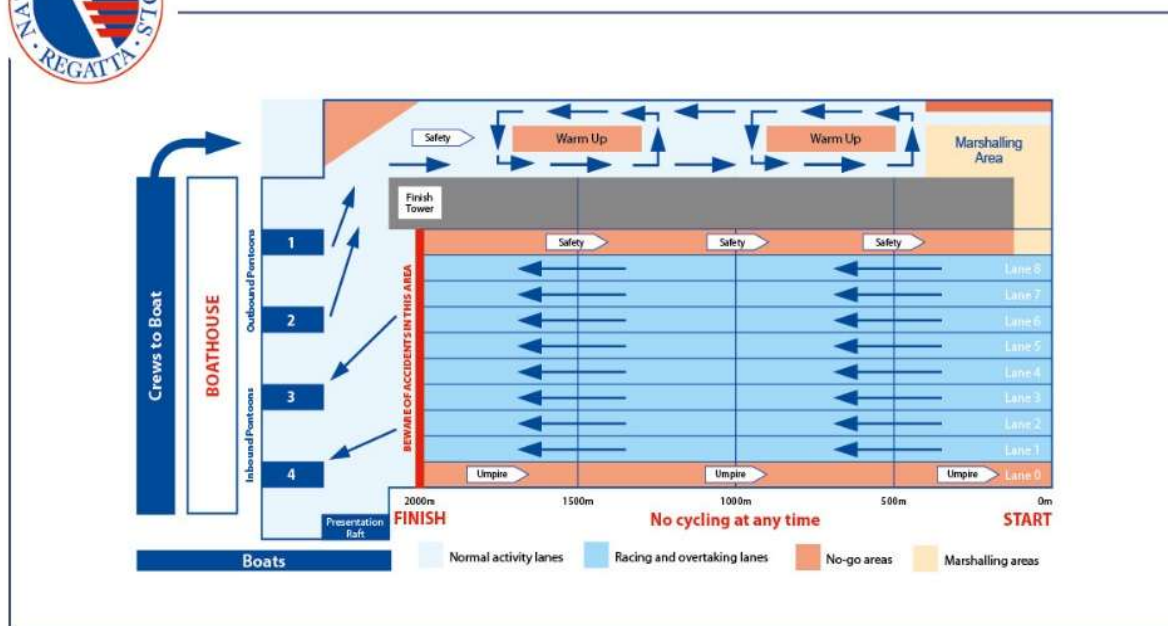
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- e) When at the bridge and when the Starter calls the race, under the Bridge Marshals instructions, crews will paddle under the bridge and then across the start pontoons to their allotted lane and will then back down onto the start pontoon. Please stay close (10 – 20m max) to the start pontoons before you turn. Do not turn 100m from the start and then back down.
- f) If a crew is not attached to the start pontoon two minutes before the published race time (or such other time as advised by race control) it may not be allowed to race.
- g) Upon finishing their race, as indicated by the finish signal, crews should wind down but continue paddling, under the directions of the launch Marshal, to the incoming rafts (numbers 1 and 2 on plan).
- h) **Cooling down** is NOT PERMITTED at any point on the lake.

PLAN 4



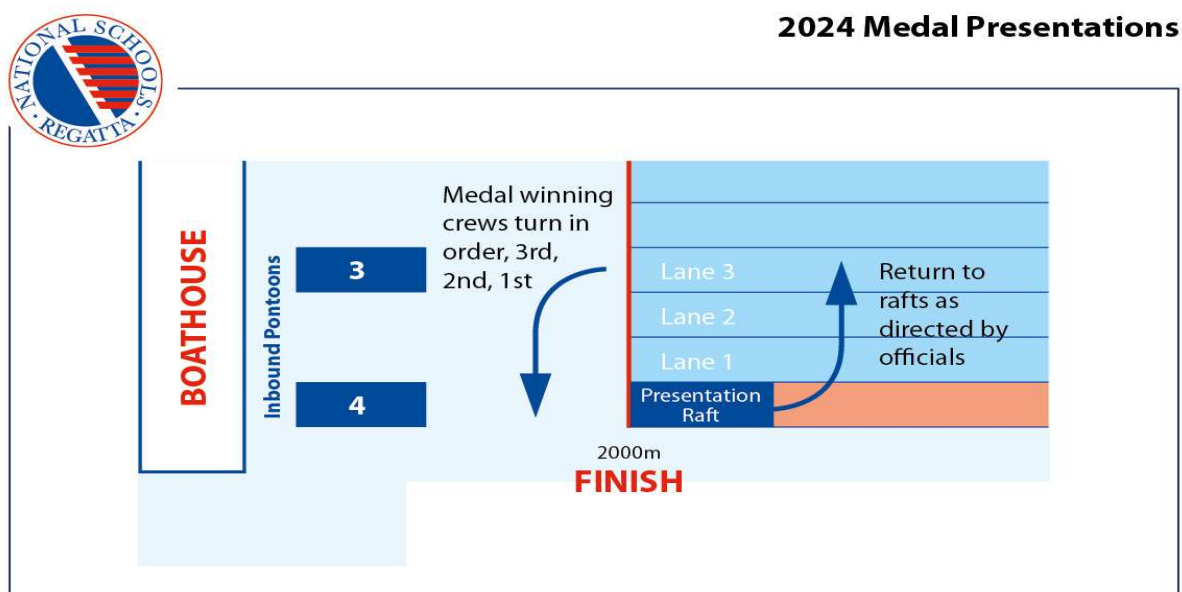
Side by Side Racing J16 & J18 Saturday and Sunday



2.8 Medal Presentations (to be read in conjunction with Plan 5 below)

- The presentation raft will be located in Lane 0, attached to the bank about 75m beyond the Finish line. It is 48m long and can accommodate up to three eights.
- Medals will be presented to the first three crews in each final, provided that at least one further crew has entered the event.
- Medal winning crews must turn, immediately following their race, into lane 0 and proceed in reverse order (3rd -2nd -1st) to the presentation raft taking great care to avoid other boats and launches.
- Following the presentation crews must stay in lane 0 facing the Start until it is safe to turn onto the course and return to the boathouses via lane 3, *OR AS DIRECTED BY AN OFFICIAL*
- Instructions from umpires marshalling crews must be followed immediately.

PLAN 5



2.9 In Case of Emergency - 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.

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- b) In the event of an incident or other event reducing the number of available rescue boats but not requiring the suspension of racing, the remaining rescue boats shall be redeployed to provide maximum effectiveness.
- c) Paramedic facilities INCLUDING AN AMBULANCE AND RAPID RESPONSE VEHICLE will be available IN THE BOATING AREA AND AT THE 1000m MARK.
- d) The nearest A&E department is in the Wexham Park Hospital, Wexham, Slough, Berkshire, SL2 4HL.
- e) Incident Number: **Thames Valley Police is: EOP-1936-23-4300-3168.**

2.10 Risk Assessment and Safety Plans

- a) The Regatta Risk Assessment and Safety Plans are published on the Regatta website under the Competitors drop down menu at [Competitors - National Schools' Regatta](#). All coaches and competitors should familiarise themselves with these.

END/