



### GENERAL RULES

The Devizes to Westminster Race is run by the DW Organisation, a Limited company. The Organisation is referred to variously and interchangeably as the 'Organisation', the 'Organiser', and the 'Company'.

The **Emergency Response Plan** and **Advice to Competitors and Supporters**, the **Portage and Lock Diagrams** and the **List of Trophies** also form part of these general rules and must be read by all participants. Signing the participants' kit check form indicates that participants have read the rules and agreed to abide by them.

Race Officials, acting on the instructions of the Chief Umpire, shall have the authority to stop any crew for any reason at any time. If allowed to continue, crews may, under some circumstances, claim for time lost. Competitors must be prepared for tests to be conducted to establish that their boat and equipment comply with the Rules.

#### General disclaimer

All competitors aged 18 or over must sign the Indemnity/Declaration form when booking in. For competitors aged under 18, a Parent or Guardian must sign on their behalf. Entries are only accepted on the basis that competitors and/or their parents/guardians sign the Indemnity/Declaration form and agree to be bound by its contents.

Details of the Indemnity/Declaration are presented here:

- I, the undersigned, declare that I have read and accept the Limitation of Liability (below) on behalf of myself and my supporters and I undertake to read and comply with the Rules and Advice as published from time to time and to ensure that all of my supporters are acquainted with such Rules and Advice.
- I, the undersigned, hereby give my consent for my son/daughter/ward to compete in this event. I also join in the above Indemnity and accept the Limitations of Liability as stated below.
- For the avoidance of doubt, the term 'Competitor' shall include crew member, support crew member and fellow club/unit members and the term 'Organisation' shall mean "The Devizes to Westminster Organisation Ltd."
- Every Competitor is referred to the rules dealing with safety requirements and the accompanying section dealing with advice. (These may be read in advance by browsing the DW web site - [www.dwrace.org.uk](http://www.dwrace.org.uk))
- Every Competitor, by signing the indemnity/declaration form, accepts that Canoeing is an Assumed Risk Sport and that given the nature of the event Competitors must be responsible for their own safety should they get into difficulties.
- Competitors accept that it is their responsibility to know the course and to withdraw from the race if they cannot cope with the conditions. This shall not remove the right of the Organisation to require any Competitor(s) to stop should this be necessary for the safe running of the event.
- Every Competitor, by signing the indemnity/declaration form, agrees to comply with the rules and to take all necessary precautionary measures to minimise his/her own risk and shall be solely responsible for any loss, damage, personal injury or death suffered by him/her, or caused to third parties as a result of any act, default, neglect or omission by him/her.
- Furthermore, every Competitor undertakes to indemnify the Organisation in relation to any loss or damage suffered by the Organisation arising from the Competitor's participation in the event.
- Entry fees will not be refunded under any circumstances.
- The Organisation reserves the right to cancel or vary all or any part of the event before and/or during the event.

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### Entry information

Entry forms and fees for all classes must be in the hands of the Competition Secretary not later than Waterside 'D' (which takes place on the Sunday two weeks before Easter) and if posted must be postmarked the preceding Friday to Waterside 'D'. Any late entry fees must be paid before starting. The Organisation reserves the right to refuse any entry.

At Devizes a numberplate will be issued to each crew and must be secured on the boat as directed. Any crew not displaying the numberplate will be deemed to have retired from the Race. Should a boat pass the finishing line in such a manner that its number plate cannot be seen by the time-keeper, it will be the responsibility of the crew's support party to inform the time-keeper of the crew's number. This is of particular relevance for canoes as stickers attached to their hulls cannot easily be read from the bridge at Westminster.

Before leaving Devizes crewmembers must have an identity wristlet, which includes the emergency number, attached to their wrist by a Race Official. This must not be removed during the Race and will be used for verification purposes when awarding Finishers' Medals at Westminster.

### Course information

The course starts at Devizes Wharf, passing along the Kennet and Avon Canal to join the River Thames at Reading, continuing downstream to Teddington (B108) reaching the Finish 50 metres beyond Westminster Bridge via the tidal section of the Thames (A17). In the course of the 125 miles there are 77 portages. All relevant bylaws must be adhered to.

Only the navigation channels of the Kennet and Avon Canal and the River Thames may be used. All portages must take place on the towing path except where otherwise shown on the official Route Plan, Portage Diagram or as ordered by an official. No other route is permitted. The backwater cut at Windsor passing under the dual carriageway is not regarded as a navigation channel for the purposes of these rules.

### General principles

- All crews and their supporters shall race in a fair and considerate manner and maintain a satisfactory standard of conduct throughout the Race remaining subject to these rules until the end of the Protest Committee Meeting on Easter Monday.
- Conduct, by either paddlers or their supporters, prejudicial to the good order and discipline of the Devizes to Westminster Race will be penalised.
- Supporters shall observe restrictions as may be imposed from time to time by the Organisation on the use of public highways, footpaths, rights of way, lock areas and other areas adjoining the course.
- The decisions of the Organisation on all matters shall be final.

### Boats and equipment

- Canoes and kayaks are referred to in these Rules as boats and must be manned by a crew of one or two persons, depending on the class in which they are entered.. Propulsion shall be by means of single or double bladed paddle. (In order to qualify for the Canadian Trophy only open canoes propelled by single bladed paddles are permitted. Rudders are not permitted). No other form of craft are considered within the scope of the rules – this includes rafts, paddleboards, surf skis and other sit-on or stand-on boards).
- Substitution of boats or personnel, or transport over land or by water for the purpose of shortening the course, is forbidden. If a crew is not able to paddle the course they may walk it, carrying the boat, paddles and full kit. No short cut or transport in any form is allowed.
- All boats must contain sufficient buoyancy to support their crews in the event of a capsized. Sandwich construction boats are not presumed to have sufficient inherent buoyancy and must carry additional foam or other non-porous buoyant material. Closed and water-tight

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compartments built in by the crafts' original manufacturer may be accepted at the Chief Umpire's discretion.

- All competitors must wear an Integral Foam Buoyancy aid or life jacket offering the wearer a minimum 50 Newton of inherent buoyancy and must conform to one of the following European standards: EN 393 or EN 395 or ISO12402-5 or ISO12402-6. Buoyancy aids or life jackets displaying certification to BA83 are not acceptable under any circumstances. Inflatable lifejackets requiring partial or total inflation by oral inflation or through use of a compressed air or gas cylinder are not acceptable. A buoyancy aid or life jacket that appears to be more than five years old or which has been subjected to heavy use may not offer the user the protection envisaged when new and is likely to be rejected at inspection. Buoyancy aids or life jackets that have been tampered with or modified in any way will be rejected. Life jackets and buoyancy aids passed for use must display conformance to the EN standards via a label attached at the time of manufacture by its maker. The buoyancy aid or life jacket presented for and passed at inspection at kit-check at Devizes is the only one that may be worn throughout the duration of the race and any competitor who is found either not wearing it or who has replaced it with an inferior or non-compliant version at any point during the race will be disqualified.
- Competitors must carry one survival bag each in their boat. The only permissible bag is the 'classic' survival bag, a heavy duty 500 gauge tear-proof/water-proof/wind-proof polythene bag measuring at least 1800 x 900 mm, in highly visible day-glo orange for easy visibility as a distress signal by rescue or emergency services. Designed to reduce the loss of body heat in an emergency, the Survival Bag serves as a personal emergency shelter. Only bags complying with at least the above specifications will be accepted. No space blankets, silver blankets, thin gauge or other forms of translucent or coloured plastic bags of any sort will be acceptable. Typical examples weigh about 290g each. The actual survival bag presented for inspection and passed at kit-check before the start at Devizes must be carried in the boat throughout the duration of the race and any competitor who is found either not carrying it or who has replaced it with an inferior or non-compliant version at any point during the race will be disqualified.
- Competitors in the Senior Doubles race may not move more than 100 metres from the course of the race at any time, even to camp overnight, as set out in the rules.
- Kayaks must carry spraydecks at all times and all kayak crews below Teddington Lock must use a spraydeck. Race Officials may, in addition, require spraydecks to be worn at any time on any waterway.
- Competitors must be able to swim 100 metres in canoeing dress.

### Competitors are not permitted to:

- Shoot weirs
- Take pace or wash-hang from any vessel not in the race.
- Replace boats
- Remove numbers from boats during the race
- Overtake in Bruce's Tunnel (Savernake Forest). Any boat held by a marshall because of traffic in the tunnel will be given a time allowance.
- Relieve themselves in public places
- Use trolleys or portage devices unless they have carried them in the boat at all times from the start

### Crews are permitted to receive:

- Assistance from any source in the event of a capsize or other dangerous circumstance.
- Food and drink at any point along the course unless otherwise directed.
- Replacement paddles, boat fittings, clothing, spraydecks and emergency rations if used, lost or damaged.
- Help with the repair of the boat, provided it is not moved away from or along the course by anyone other than the paddlers.
- Medical assistance in the event of illness or injury.

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### **Drugs**

The taking of drugs as defined in International Canoe Federation (ICF) Rules is forbidden and all competitors are liable to a drug test. Refusal to submit to such a test shall incur automatic disqualification.

### **Retirement**

If crews are compelled to retire from the race, competitors or support crews must, **WITHOUT FAIL**, inform Race Control immediately (0207 620 0298). Failure to do so may jeopardise future entries, as much time can be wasted by emergency services searching for missing crews who may simply have gone home to bed.

All crews must have completed the course and vacated the finish site four hours after the Easter Monday Start time.

### **Disciplinary matters**

Inappropriate behaviour by supporters and/or competitors may result in time penalties being imposed on either the paddlers or their teams. Failure to observe the rules or obey the instructions of any Race Official may render the crew liable to disqualification or other penalty, which may include the crew, club, school, unit etc being barred from entering the race in future.

Any Race Official, crew member or member of a support party wishing to protest a breach of the rules shall lodge a formal complaint by telephoning Race Control (0207 620 0298) with confirmation in writing submitted to the Chief Umpire or a Senior Race Official no later than two hours prior to the umpires' daily meeting. The protest should include as much information and supporting evidence as possible.

The Umpires will meet daily at each stage finish point at (or about) 1900 hours to consider infringements of the Rules. Penalties imposed at these meetings can be appealed to the Race Protest Committee Meeting on the Monday morning. It is the responsibility of the crews to enquire either in person or by telephoning Race Control (0207 620 0298) to see if any protest or report has been made concerning them. Crews have the opportunity of delivering a written statement and/or being heard at the Race Protest Committee Meeting on Easter Monday.

The Race Protest Committee will meet, at Westminster, within 4 hours of the start time on Easter Monday. At this time crews reported or already penalised will be heard or their written statements presented. Any penalty, including disqualification, may be imposed. There is **NO APPEAL** against the decisions of the Race Protest Committee.

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### Teams

- A crew may only represent one team.
- Unless otherwise stated, teams competing for trophies will consist of three or four crews, with the times for the fastest three being considered. Teams competing for trophies 47 and 97 will consist of three crews, and one competing for trophy 39 will consist of two or three crews. The criteria for each trophy are listed.
- All teams must be pre-nominated by the team manager who must submit a completed team entry form to the Competition Secretary, prior to any crew in the team starting. Crews will not count as a team in any other circumstances.
- All civilian crewmembers making up a team must have been valid members of the club or organisation, be based in one area, and have trained from that club for six months or more prior to the event.
- All crewmembers making up a team:
  - (a) Entered on behalf of a military unit must be on the roll of, or attached to that unit.
  - (b) Entered on behalf of a club or association of military organisations other than a unit must consist of regular servicemen or women or reservists or must be on attachment to that service
  - (c) Entered on behalf of commercial companies must consist of employees of that company or their families