



## GENERAL RULES

The Devizes to Westminster Race is run by the Devizes to Westminster Organisation Ltd. The Organisation is referred to variously and interchangeably as 'DW' the 'Organisation', the 'Organiser', and the 'Company'. The event is run entirely by volunteers.

<b>General Rules</b>	<b>All Classes</b>
<b>Individual Class Rules and Trophy Lists</b>	<b>See Specific Class Rules</b>
<b>Compulsory Equipment</b>	<b>All Classes</b>
<b>Portage Diagrams</b>	<b>All Classes</b>
<b>Emergency Response Plan</b>	<b>All Classes</b>
<b>Advice to Competitors</b>	<b>All Classes</b>
<b>Supporters' Code of Conduct</b>	<b>All Classes</b>
<b>Penalties</b>	<b>All Classes</b>
<b>Eligibility Rules</b>	<b>All Classes</b>

All of the above form the Rules of DW and must be read by all participants and their supporters.

### Course information

The course starts at Devizes Wharf, passing along the Kennet and Avon Canal joining the River Thames at Reading. Immediately after the canal joins the river there is a compulsory portage at Dreadnought Reach. The course continues downstream to Teddington reaching the finish 50 metres beyond Westminster Bridge via the tidal section of the Thames. In the course of the 125 miles there are 77 portages.

Only the navigation channels of the Kennet and Avon Canal and the River Thames may be used. The backwater cut at Windsor passing under the dual carriageway is not regarded as a navigation channel for the purposes of these rules.

All portages must take place on the tow path except where otherwise shown on the official Route Plan, Portage Diagram or as ordered by an official.

No other route is permitted. All relevant bylaws from Canal and River Trust, Environment Agency and Port of London Authority must be adhered to. PLA bylaws require boats to keep to the correct side of the river, so do not cut corners or paddle against the left-hand bank on the Tideway. See the section "Navigating the Tideway" on page 2.

### Entry information

All Entry Forms and Fees, excluding Team Entries, must be received by the Competition Secretary in line with the Entry Form deadline published on the DW Website [www.dwrace.org.uk/paddinfo.html](http://www.dwrace.org.uk/paddinfo.html) Entries must be submitted using the on-line system.

All competitors aged 18 or over must sign the Indemnity Declaration when checking in. For competitors aged under 18, a Parent or Guardian must sign on their behalf.

Entries are only accepted on this basis.

Please note that the boat crew consists of both the paddler(s) and the lead member of the support crew, known as the Chief Supporter. Penalties can be awarded to the Chief Supporter which will apply to the boat.

Any changes to crew information must be notified to the Competition Secretary at Check-In.

Team Entries must be completed online, no later than midnight on the Wednesday preceding the race. This can be done using the online form or PDF linked in Section 3 of the How to Enter page of the DW Website.

**No late entries will be accepted. The Organisation reserves the right to refuse any entry.**

In the event of retirement or emergency, call Race Control on 0207 620 0298

**At Devizes**

Crews must report for Kit Check at least one hour before their intended Start time.

A number plate will be issued to each crew and must be secured on the boat as directed. Any crew not displaying their number plate will be deemed to have retired from the Race.

Crew members must wear an identity wristlet provided and attached 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.

The Chief Supporter of each crew must confirm/provide the Competition Secretary with their name and mobile phone number as required on the Entry Form. They should also supply a landline number of a supporter who can relay messages should mobile communication fail. Support crews must be readily available at all times to be contacted by DW Control. If you cannot be contacted immediately you may receive a text asking you to make contact. You should check for messages at regular intervals. Penalties will be imposed on crews whose supporters are found to be un-contactable on the numbers provided.

Unsupported paddlers must provide the number of a phone to be carried with them in the boat, and they are responsible for checking this phone at regular intervals.

Should a boat pass the finishing line in such a manner that its number plate cannot be read by the time-keeper, it will be the responsibility of the crew's support party to inform the time-keeper of the number. This is of particular relevance for Canadian canoes as stickers attached to their hulls cannot easily be read from the Finish Line on Westminster Bridge.

**Navigating the Tideway**

The tidal Thames is a very busy and potentially hazardous stretch of water. See map on page 6.

The following rules apply, and any breach of them may lead to a major time penalty or even disqualification:

1. Obey the instructions of PLA, Harbourmaster, Police and DW rescue craft.
2. Always keep to the right hand side of the centreline of the river.
3. If passing through the central arch of a bridge, keep to the right hand side of that arch.
4. Never use a bridge arch displaying three orange lights or three coloured discs.
5. Keep out of the way of rowers.
  - 5.1 Rowers are a particular hazard. On the upper part of the tidal Thames between Putney ❶ and Syon (Kew) ❷ they are allowed to 'work the slacks' and row on the inside of the bends - what may appear to canoeists to be the 'wrong' side of the river when rowing against the stream.
  - 5.2 Competitors must paddle sufficiently far away from the right hand side of the bank to allow a rowing eight to pass safely between themselves and the bank.
  - 5.3 Rowers have designated points at which to cross the river in this area and do not have a right of way when they cross. Canoeists should still beware of approaching rowers and assume they cannot be seen. If there is danger of collision, shout "Ahead Rowing Boat" very loudly and change direction.
6. At Lambeth Bridge ❸, less than a mile before the finish, competitors may only use the right hand arch and must then stay inside the line of moored boats as they approach Westminster. Normally a DW motor boat will be there to alert competitors.

**At Westminster**

On arrival at Westminster all boats must be carried to vehicles parked in car parks or along roads around the South Bank and Festival Hall.

There is no parking in the Hospital Car Park for school minibuses, high vehicles, canoe trailers and other vehicles with roof or canoe racks. Support vehicles without roof racks may use the car park. . Any attempt to load boats in the vicinity of the Hospital will be penalised. The car park will be marshalled by DW Staff.

Food, showers and changing facilities will be available for paddlers in the Hospital Gardens.

**General**

Race Officials, acting on the instructions of the Chief Umpire, can stop any crew for any reason at any time. Time allowances are at the Chief Umpire's discretion; they will normally be awarded for kit checks, should everything comply with the Rules; or when crews are stopped on the course to permit larger craft to navigate, such as at the Bruce Tunnel, or when the race is stopped for safety reasons.

Time allowances **will not** normally be given when a crew has been injured or involved in an accident.

All crews and their supporters shall race in a fair and considerate manner and maintain a satisfactory standard of conduct throughout the Race. Unsporting conduct by either paddlers or their supporters will be penalised. The decisions of the Organisation on all matters shall be final.

Inspected kit which has been presented and passed in Devizes must be used throughout the Race. Any competitor found not wearing or replacing the inspected kit with an inferior or non-compliant version will be disqualified.

Kayaks must carry spraydecks at all times. Below Teddington Lock all kayak crews must use a spraydeck. This excludes Stages competitors finishing at Thames Young Mariners just downstream of Teddington Lock on Day 3.

Competitors must be able to swim 100 metres in canoeing dress.

Number discs from previous DW races must be removed or covered over entirely.

**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 is by single or double bladed paddle only. 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 is considered within the scope of these rules – this includes rafts, paddleboards, surf skis and other sit-on or stand-on boards.

Boats must contain sufficient buoyancy to support their crews in the event of capsize. 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 compartments built in by the original manufacturer may be accepted at the Chief Umpire's discretion but must have adequate buoyancy at both ends.

The expected volume of buoyancy is approximately 20 litres for a K2 and 12 litres for a K1. This should be distributed in both bow and stern. As a guide, a block of foam 50 mm x 300 mm x 670 mm is 10 litres. For Canadian doubles a centre air bag or foam of sufficient volume can be used. If there are concerns at scrutineering, the decision of the Chief Umpire will apply.

Substitution of boats or personnel, or transport over land or by water for the purpose of shortening the course, is forbidden. If a crew cannot paddle the course they may walk it, carrying their boat, paddles and full kit. No short cut or transport is allowed.

In the event of retirement or emergency, call Race Control on 0207 620 0298

**Buoyancy Aids.** Competitors must wear an Integral Foam Buoyancy aid or lifejacket conforming to one of the following European standards: EN 393 or EN 395 or ISO12402-5 or ISO12402-6. The standard must be clearly displayed via a label attached by the manufacturer.

Buoyancy aids or lifejackets are **not acceptable** under any circumstance if:-

- They only display certification to BA83.
- Require partial or total inflation by mouth, or by the use of a compressed air/gas cylinder.
- Appear to be more than five years old and have been subjected to heavy use, thus degrading their flotation value.
- Have been tampered with or modified in any way.

Buoyancy aids made outside the EU (and not carrying the relevant EN or ISO standard mark) will not be accepted unless they are:

(a) Individually certified by the manufacturer as meeting EU requirements;

or

(b) Presented by a paddler who can prove that he/she is not resident in the EU. By definition this will exclude anyone competing for a canoe club or organisation from within the EU.

**Survival Bags.** Competitors must carry one survival bag **each** in their boat. The only one permissible 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, weighing about 290g each. No space blankets, silver blankets, thin gauge or other forms of translucent or coloured plastic bags of any sort will be acceptable.

The following survival bags are acceptable: Dalesman; Lifesystems (in original packaging).

Survival bags known not to conform are: Hi Gear.

**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.
- Remove identity wrist tags during the race.
- Overtake in the Bruce Tunnel (Savernake Forest).
- Relieve themselves in public.
- Use trolleys or portage devices unless they have carried them, at all times, from the Start.

**Crews are permitted to receive:**

- Assistance from any source in the event of 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.
- Medical assistance in the event of illness or injury.
- Crews may stop anywhere along the Course provided they stay within 100m of the course.

**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.

**GPS Tracker**

Every crew will be issued with a GPS tracker at Devizes. This will be attached to the shoulder, normally to the buoyancy aid. One tracker per crew. This tracker must not be removed or tampered

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with. It is for additional crew safety and is an aid to support crews, in that the crew's position is available via a dedicated website. Stages race paddlers should NOT remove it overnight.

The trackers will be collected at Westminster.

### **Retirement**

If crews are compelled to retire from the race, competitors or support crews must, WITHOUT FAIL, inform Race Control immediately (0207 620 0298). The crew must return the GPS tracker to a DW umpire, marshal or other official as soon as possible. Race Control will be able to assist in locating the nearest point if necessary.

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 will be penalised.

Any failure to observe the rules or obey the instructions of any Race Official at any time may render the crew liable to disqualification or other penalty, which may include the individual, crew, club, school or unit being barred from entering future races.

Breaches of the Rules must be communicated to Race Control 0207 620 0298:

### **Complaints and protests**

Senior Doubles: Complaints/protests must be registered, at the time of the incident or prior to, the crew's departure from the course. To register a complaint/protest you must inform one of the following:

- Checkpoint
- Umpire or marshal
- Race Control 0207 620 0298

Stages Events: Complaints/protests must be registered with an Umpire prior to the daily team leader briefing which is held each afternoon at or about 1600 hours or, for complaints/protests arising out of racing on Easter Monday, no later than 1 hour after the end of racing on Easter Monday.

It is the responsibility of the crew(s) to establish whether a complaint has been raised against them. This can be done either by checking their results on-line, if there is a "P" against the crew details a protest has been made; or by telephoning Race Control (0207 620 0298) Any such complaint will be raised at the Protest Meeting on Monday morning.

### **Protest meeting**

All crews have the opportunity of delivering a written statement and/or being heard at the Race Protest Committee Meeting on Easter Monday morning.

That committee meets within 2 hours of the end of racing on Easter Monday. At this time any crew, including Stages crews, reported or already penalised will have the opportunity to 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.

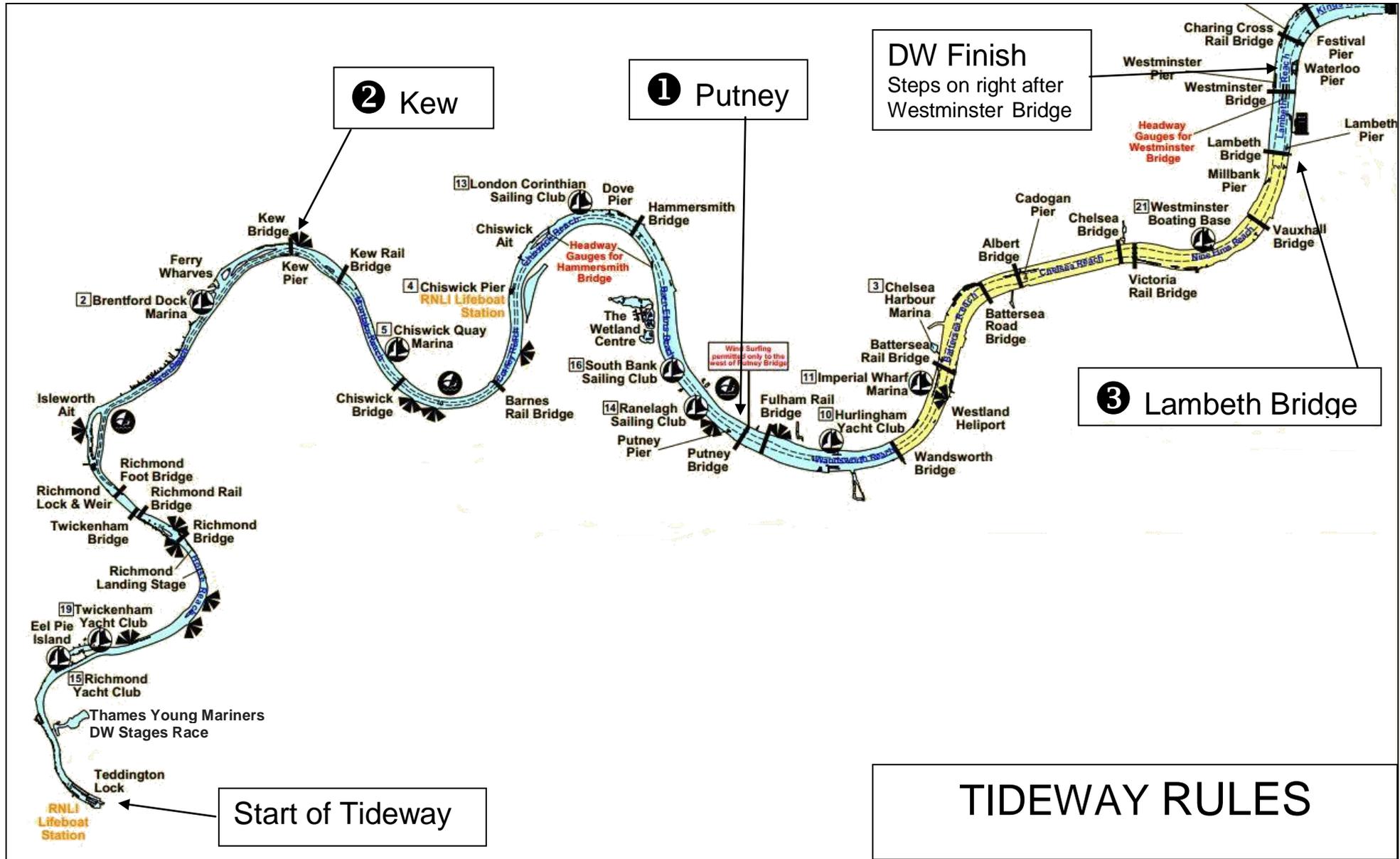
### **Assaults and/or abusive behaviour**

Abuse and/or threatening behaviour of any kind, including verbal or physical assault, will not be tolerated. Any competitor found to have carried out a verbal or physical assault, or whose supporters/support crew do so, will be disqualified and may also be banned from taking part in future events.

Anyone impeding any race official in the conduct of their duties will be severely penalized.

The Organisers will not hesitate to report incidents of verbal or physical assault to the police. They also reserve the right to notify such incidents to any organisation(s) with which the paddler or individual concerned is involved.

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## Devizes to Westminster Race Trophies

It is against the spirit of the DW race to attempt to subvert the rules or manipulate entry details in any way in order to compete for trophies. Trophies are awarded for bona fide entries only.

### Trophies for which all competitors are eligible:

#### 98. THE PFEIFFER CUP

For the crew which raises the most sponsorship

#### 99. THE SIR LOUIS AND LADY GLUCKSTEIN TROPHY

For the crew, or crewman displaying exceptional courage and fortitude.

This trophy will only be presented if, in the opinion of the Committee, the actions of a crew or crewman are judged to be of outstanding merit. Written nominations from the public for this trophy will be considered, together with recommendations from Race Officials.

Nominations for this trophy must be submitted to the Competition Secretary, in writing, within seven days of Easter Monday. Medals also awarded.

#### 100. CERTIFICATES

Are awarded to all competitors who complete the course.

### Team Trophies (Senior Race)

#### 6. THE DEVIZES-WESTMINSTER TEAM TROPHY

Donated by the Lancashire Regiment, for the team of three crews registering the lowest aggregate time. (Team is drawn from maximum of four nominated crews). A team certificate is also awarded.

#### 7. THE PARACHUTE COMMANDOS TROPHY

Donated by the Parachute Commandos, Belgium, for the team in second place.

Plus CERTIFICATES.

#### 8. CERTIFICATES

For the team taking third place.

#### 24. THE ROYAL ENGINEERS TROPHY

Donated by the Corps of Royal Engineers, for the Services team of three crews registering the lowest aggregate time. Teams are to be drawn from a maximum of four nominated crews. Open to HM Regular Forces and Reserve Forces teams from RNR: RMFVR: R Aux AF and TAVR.

#### 27 THE GILLINGHAM TROPHY

Donated by Gillingham Canoe Club, for the fastest civilian team of three crews.

### Team Trophies (Stages Race)

#### 34. THE JUNIOR TEAM TROPHY

Donated by the Lancashire Regiment, for the team of three crews registering the lowest aggregate time. Team drawn from a maximum of four nominated crews.

A team certificate is also awarded.

#### 39. THE JUNIOR LADIES TEAM TROPHY

Donated by Kimbolton School, for the fastest ladies team of two crews (2 of 3).

A team certificate is also awarded.

#### 43. THE SCHOOLS TEAM TROPHY

Donated by Geoff Good. To be awarded to the team of three crews all of whom must be pupils at the same school. Team drawn from a maximum of four crews.

#### 47 THE HMS ALACRITY MCKAIG CUP

Donated by the Second Sea Lord & Commander in Chief Naval Home Command, for the fastest team of three Combined Cadet Force crews.

#### 56. THE SINGLES TEAM TROPHY

Donated by John Dudderidge for the team of three crews registering the lowest aggregate time. Team drawn from a maximum of four crews. A team certificate is also awarded.

### Team Trophy (Combined classes)

#### 97. THE TRANS CLASS TEAM TROPHY

Awarded to the fastest team consisting of one Senior Double, one Junior Double and one Senior Single from the same club.