

Advice to Competitors and their Supporters.

Under ideal conditions, the race calls for strenuous and sustained effort. In bad weather, it can be extremely arduous and below Teddington on the Tideway, dangerous. Only experienced paddlers who are able to swim and who have trained for at least three months prior to Easter, should attempt the Race.

ALL INTENDING COMPETITORS ARE REMINDED THAT IT IS VITALLY IMPORTANT THAT THEY WEAR BUOYANCY AIDS DURING ALL TRAINING SESSIONS.

TRAINING

Competitors are advised to spare no effort in training over long distances and in portaging locks with the weight of kit and with the boat that they intend to use for the race. Training should take place in all conditions, within reason, both by day, and for Senior Doubles, by night. Up-to-date information as to any special dangers on the Thames is available from the Environment Agency. The canal presents particular hazards of its own and should therefore be incorporated in any training schedule.

HAZARDS

- Portaging across roads. (Support crew should watch for traffic)
 - Swans.
 - Weirs – keep well clear.
 - Barges on the tideway.
 - Class V passenger vessels on tideway.
 - Stakes and submerged obstacles.
 - Low bridges. (Canal only – if in doubt, portage round).
 - Savernake Tunnel (in event of capsize, ledge on right and chains can assist re-entry)
 - Allow powered craft to use centre of canal as they require more draft
- Drinking canal or river water
 - Inappropriate clothing.
 - Weather conditions.
 - Lack of public facilities.
 - Fatigue.
 - River traffic.
 - Richmond Draw Lock.

ACCOMMODATION

DEVIZES

Free of charge, in Scout Headquarters and/or the Corn Exchange in Devizes on Thursday night. Sleeping bags will be necessary. Under no circumstances may boats be taken into the buildings. Competitors in the Senior Doubles race have the use of the above arrangements on Good Friday night. Crews must rise in time to clean up and put all refuse in the bin provided.

© Devizes' Tourist Information Office: - 01380 729408

NEWBURY

Camping is available at the Northcroft Leisure Centre for all competitors in the 'Stages' event, in the case of Junior Doubles this is compulsory.

© Newbury Tourist Information Office: - 01635 30267

MARLOW

Camping is available at Longridge Scout Boating Centre for all competitors in the 'Stages' event, in the case of Junior Doubles this is compulsory. No pets on site.

© Marlow Tourist Information Office: - 01628 483597

TEDDINGTON

Camping is available at Thames Young Mariners for all competitors in the 'Stages' event, in the case of Junior Doubles this is compulsory.

© Richmond Tourist Information Office: - 0208 940 9125

SENIOR DOUBLES

Competitors in the Senior Doubles event may stop anywhere along the course providing they do not move 100 metres or more from the course. They must notify Race Control when they stop, their intended restart time and their start time if it varies from the intended time.

LIGHT STICKS

Will not be provided this year so ensure you have an adequate supply of white light sticks to cover the hours of darkness for your race.

TIDE TIMES ETC.

High Tide at Teddington is approximately one hour after High Tide at London Bridge. Times of high tide at London Bridge are given in the Tide Tables, the AA Handbook, Old Moore's Almanac and the Thames Book. Richmond Draw Lock is raised 2 hours before and lowered 2 hours after high tide at Teddington. (i.e. Clear passage is only possible during these four hours.) If the way is closed, portage on the left-hand side (boat rollers), this portage is extremely slippery.

LICENCES ON CANAL AND RIVER.

Competitors are reminded that their entry fee covers only the period of the Race. At all other times their boats must carry a current licence plate issued by the appropriate authority. These are obtainable as follows:

CANAL LICENCES

Pleasure Craft Licensing Officer

British Waterways Board

Willow Grange

Church Road

Watford

WD1 3QA

01923 26422

RIVER LICENCES

Environment Agency

Craft Registration Department

Kings Meadow House

Kings Meadow Road

Reading

RG1 8DQ

0118 953 5000

Please do not use the waterways without the appropriate licence, as this could easily prejudice permission being granted to run the Race. Comprehensive BCU membership incorporates both Thames and Canal licences

ENTRY CHANGES

Please ensure any changes, particularly changes of address for correspondence, are notified promptly to the Competition Secretary.

RESULTS

A full list of provisional results will be posted on the Internet during the course of Easter Monday and a finalised set of results sent to each crew shortly after the Race. The date of the Presentation of Trophies will also be notified at this time.

LOST PROPERTY

Competitors and support parties are requested to hand all lost property in at the Wokingham Waterside Centre or Westminster where all enquiries regarding such property should be made.

LOCKS CLOSED TO SUPPORT PARTIES

Crews and supporters should note that facilities for contacting crews at County, Shiplake, Boveney and Blake's Lock are not available. Support vehicles are not permitted on access roads to locks. The Runnymede Hotel grounds are out of bounds. No vehicles are allowed on the Sonning Lock access road or in the Boulter's Hotel car park. *Other locks may be put out of bounds before the start of the race.*

SUPPORT CREWS.

Supporters tend to be too far ahead of their crews and cause panic and chaos as they race along the course looking for them. Remember the average speed of a paddler is less than 6 miles per hour. Supporters are asked to keep mobile phones switched on at all times.

THAMES BRIDGE LIGHTS.

Thames bridges now carry a white isophase light above the centre arch. If this light is in use it indicates that a large or towing vessel is about to pass under the bridge. Arches of bridges which carry an up-side-down triangle (lit red at night), are closed to all traffic.

© Carry an adequate number of light sticks.

DREADNOUGHT REACH

On Dreadnought Reach, just downstream of Kennet Mouth (Wokingham Waterside Centre), there is a compulsory portage. All competitors must portage at this point.

FINISHES

Arrangements for finishing on both Sunday and Monday will be published over Easter Weekend