

MARLOW SPRING REGATTA

Saturday 3rd May, 2025

INSTRUCTIONS TO UMPIRES & OFFICIALS

General

The regatta is organized in three waves. These are in effect three separate mini-regattas and the events in each wave are independent of each other and will operate on a winner stays on basis.

Each umpire's launch will be provided with a laminated, waterproof sheet for each of the three waves and a waterproof pen. Please note that the crew names of all possible winners of a heat have been carried through to the final. It is not therefore necessary to write in the names of the winning crew for the final – only to mark the crew that goes forward to the next round. On change of umpire duties, the laminated sheets for each wave should remain with the launch.

Masters' crews will also have their handicap time in seconds included against their name. This is to facilitate the handicap calculation in the event of a handicap time difference.

If any of the adaptive races have a "Head Start" time to be applied these will be marked on the sheets.

Racing lanes are named Bucks, Centre and Berks, with Bucks to the left when looking in the direction of racing.

As there are no stakeboats, the precise start point is variable and will depend largely on when alignment is achieved.

Umpires do not have to ask the RCC permission to 1) start a race early or 2) out of order – just take any race that has been presented to them. The Start Organization Team will advise the finish what race that will be next to be started.

If required, any Masters' handicap start procedures should be completed before the crews get to the start; this will allow alignment to be done as quickly as possible by the Aligner. Crews must be ready to start once aligned. The race should be started immediately by the launch umpire once the crews are aligned.

All adaptive races will be raced with only 2 crews, so please ensure that they are centralized within the buoys to ensure that they are away from both navigation lanes. Should either or both crews require steering assistance an additional launch or launches will follow the race and they will use a radio headset to guide the boat. Umpires should consult with the adaptive athlete or their coach as to what (if any) assistance is to be provided during the Start or the Race.

Please remember when starting a Masters or adaptive race that a watch or BR app must be used for the countdown between starts.

There are 2 safety boats on the course, and these will be stationed at the start and near the finish. If required the umpire will call them directly stating which one is required and exact location, If necessary, racing will stop and only continue on the authority of the RCC or his representative.

Communication

Start, Finish, Race Committee Representative, Race Control and Registration are on the main radio net – Channel 1.

The umpires' launches and the safety boats are on channel 2. This is to provide a 'quiet' channel to call a safety boat in the event of an incident.

- Umpires may switch to channel 1 to call any station on the main net. Similarly, an umpire's launch may be called by switching to channel 2.
- Channel 2 must not be used for conversations while racing is in progress. If a long conversation is necessary, this should be held by mutual agreement, on any channel other than 1 & 2, those dedicated for the regatta, using the instruction "switch to channel "x".

Pre-Start

The Start Organisation Team along with the "Sheepdog" will organise the next races and then present crews to the umpire in race order. If required an umpire will assist with this to ensure that racing is kept as near to schedule as possible. Races will be taken in any order to ensure that the regatta is kept on time.

The Start Organisation Team, "Sheepdog" and "Upstream spotter" will ensure they maintain an accurate record of which crews have proceeded through the start and are in the marshalling area.

Should the Start Team and "Sheepdog" require assistance to locate any crew, they will call the "Upstream spotter" to ask whether they have been identified moving upstream towards the start. All reasonable efforts should be made to find a missing crew provided that the race program is not held up. The decision to exclude latecomers will be taken by umpires at the start.

The Start Team will advise Finish which race will be next on the course and communicate the same information to Race Control.

Once the race has been handed to an umpire, crews are under the control of the race umpire and aligner. No other party should attempt to intervene in the Start procedure.

Umpires should ensure that the crews are made aware of:

- 1) how the race will be started,
- 2) what they will do if they have to warn the crew i.e., flag drill, and
- 3) what they will do if they have to stop the race. then do the race announcement etc..

Once the umpire has assembled and briefed the race, they should ensure that there is sufficiently space between crews before presenting them to the aligner.

Aligning Area

Our use of Bisham Abbey grounds for Starting the regatta is conditional on observing limitations on the alignment and start areas throughout the day. The limits and constraints are in place to ensure the safety and commercial rights of other users of Bisham Abbey. Please follow the guidance given below to help us maintain good relationships with our hosts at Bisham; above all be aware of the boundaries in place.



Boundaries and Other Users at the Start

Photo 1, Left above. View Upstream from Bisham Abbey Landing Stage.

- Access to the mooring pontoons, right of picture, is to be kept clear at all times. The access steps and pontoons are reserved for customers of Thames Boat Rentals. Expect those customers and employees of the rental company to appear intermittently during the day.
- White posts and double rope fence, marked with a red arrow, define the right or downstream boundary of the area allocated to Start Team and Umpires.
- Row of white posts and double rope fence, marked with blue arrow, defines the front boundary of the area allocated to Start Team and Umpires. Life jackets must be worn by anyone who moves forward of the fence. Life jackets need not be worn by any official who remains behind the fence.

2. **Photo 2, Right above.** View Downstream from Thames Boat Rentals' Site

- X marks the spot for the Start Tent
- Last 10m of the Aligners' path is marked by the green line.

Alignment

The race umpire will present the crew to the aligner and should ensure that there is sufficient space between the crews before alignment commences. If you are concerned, please communicate with the umpire before commencing alignment.

Once the crews have been aligned the umpire will start the race.

Start

After the race umpire has presented the crew to the aligner, they should ensure that there is still sufficient space between crews. Once the crews are aligned the umpire will start the race as quickly and safely as possible.

Race

All normal rules of racing apply; but please be aware that this may be the first race for some crews. Be understanding but act quickly if a warning is needed. As there will be crews with limited race experience taking part, instructions must be clear. For example, in addition to raising your flag you may have to use the verbal instruction "turn harder right/left".

Remember safety first, -and if you judge it necessary to steer a crew please do so.

If you stop a race for any reason, please inform the start area immediately so they can hold the start of the next race if required, and then inform Finish that the race has been stopped.

Please do not disqualify crews unless that is really necessary, especially younger junior crews. I am not worried about Senior or Masters crews: if you feel it appropriate to disqualify them, then my view is that *they should know better*.

If you have stopped a race and you feel it appropriate that a restart is required, instead of taking the crews back to the start, you may restart them from where you stopped them. However, please inform both the Start and Finish of your intentions and be aware of where you are located in the overall course.

If you do need to overtake a slow crew in a race, please ask your driver to do this safely and try not to wash them down. If you are unable to overtake slower crew or have to stop for any crew, please ask any umpire's launch returning to the start to pull in to take the race.

Finish

Please ensure that the umpire's launch is positioned to make sure that crews take the final bend safely, *remember please be proactive and not reactive*. Remain on the course, ensure that crews completing their event take the course around the turning buoy correctly. This is essential to ensure that they avoid other crews returning up the boating lane and the Salter's pier and post. This may require you to position your launch nearer the enclosure / Bucks bank.

Please ensure you use the correct flag

- White – race is clean, and you finished with all crews that started
- Red – if you
 - 1) want time to think, do not be afraid to do this
 - 2) want to consult with the finish, for example the race is close
 - 3) have not finished with the all the crews you started with
 - 4) if you picked up a race, and need to consult the previous race umpire

If you have shown a Red flag, please advise Finish of the reason for the flag.

Once you have closed the race off, please ensure the crews in your race turn around the turning buoy safely. This may need verbal instructions from you if they have not read the Instructions. Do not proceed back up to the Start until they have done so, and are starting to move back up the course.

Please make sure that the winner of the heat knows to return to the Start for their final. Losers of the heats should be directed back to the landing raft.

Please ensure that you check for any communication from the finish prior to returning to the start.

Umpire Launches Returning to the Start

Umpire launches returning to the start please ensure that the wash is kept to a minimum.

If at all possible, the launches are in "suppléant" formation, unless instructed otherwise, just in case you have to pull into take a race already on the course.

Please ensure you watch races on the course, monitor your radio and if required be prepared to pull into a race if required or return to the start faster, still keep the wash to a minimum, due to the lack of umpire there.

Adaptive/Supported Races

These will start from the shorter start, which is around Bisham church, the first race will start after the final long-start race has finished in the "wave".

Boating for the adaptive races will not commence until the last crew from the wave has passed the boating area thus ensuring that crews going to the long start do not have to go into the course to pass them. There will be a launch, manned by a coach for the adaptive athletes, who will receive the

scullers/crews, arrange/line the races (just like “Sheepdog” on the long start) ready for alignment and the umpire to take the race.

Aligning of the crews will be done by an umpire from a launch. I would, if possible, like to have the launches in “suppléant” formation , as for the long start, to ensure that if required a launch can pull into a race.

When umpiring an adaptive race, remember normal rules of racing do apply. Please ensure that you are aware that you may need additional verbal comments i.e., at the start when you raise the red flag you say “Red Flag”, and during the race if you raise the white flag tell the crew which way you require them to move. Umpires may have to use instructions like harder right/left or red/green if required, just as if you are umpiring younger crews.

Please be proactive when umpiring the race, warn early if you feel it is appropriate as reactions times could be slower than usual.

At the finish, please as stated above, ensure that the umpires launch is positioned to make sure that crews take the final bend safely, *remember please be proactive and not reactive*; remain on the course and avoid returning crews and the Salter’s pier and post. This may require you to position your launch nearer the enclosure side.

If you are required to return to the start please to “**Umpire Launches Returning to the Start**” above.

NOTES FOR CONTROL COMMISSION

Entry forms

1. Marlow Spring Regatta may perform a random check of crew names to ensure that the racing crew names match those on the entry form.
 - Registration will hold copies of entry forms and these can be provided to control commission umpires (or their deputies) to check against the names of individuals before they boat.
2. All winning crews will NOT be required to present themselves to registration with proof of identification (normally BR racing licenses) before prizes can be issued. The coach or one representative of the winning crew will collect medals from Registration.
3. Any crew with undeclared substitutes will be told:
 - They **will** be allowed to race if substitutes are reported to registration before the crew boat (provided the substitution is allowed within the rules of rowing).
 - They will **not** be allowed to collect any prizes without proof of identity.
4. Any disputes shall be referred to the Race Committee Chair for resolution.

Boat check area

1. It is the responsibility of the crew to ensure that the boat is safe to race, only random checks will be made.
2. Visually check the following, and investigate further if required:
 - Bow ball - is it secure, not held on loosely with tape
 - Heel restraints are secure
 - Cox's lifejacket must fit securely, and they must know how to operate it. If the lifejacket is not fitted correctly any adjustment should be done by either a member of the crew or coach. Remember that coxes of bow-loaders must wear a manually operated inflatable lifejacket and NOT a buoyancy aid or automatic inflatable lifejacket.
 - Buoyancy compartments closures are present and intact
 - The rudder is free moving
 - 6-digit ID number is correctly displayed on both sides of the boat
 - Coxes will be provided with a green wristband if they meet the required weight, or a red one if they do not. The make weight will be written on the red wristband. Control Commission should check that in these cases the cox is safely carrying their make weight with them for boating

Launching & landing rafts

The main duty of Raft Marshals is to ensure the safety of competitors and the public. This is a congested and dangerous area, often surrounded by members of the public who are quite oblivious to the risk of being hit by a boat, blades or being knocked into the water.

Generally

The Head of the Control Commission will inform, by radio, of any Official Warnings and all umpires will make a note of such warning. He will also inform the Race Committee Representative at the Finish.

Regatta Contacts:

Race Committee Chair	Mel Sage	07974 927913
Regatta Secretary	Graeme Gordon	07973 782656
Registration	Helen Thompson	07902 352217
Child Welfare Officers	Julie Lyons	07771 870223
Safety Adviser	Jim Cotter	07973 241044
Start	Helen Essa	07787 502602

Any Regatta official can be contacted via Registration, Race Control, the Finish or any official with a radio, however do consider your audience. Mobiles may be a better option for more sensitive information.