

Tyne Amateur Rowing Club

Competition: Rutherford Head of the River

Date: 2 December 2023

Location: River Tyne, Scotswood to Newburn

Risk Assessment (with action points)

Last reviewed and updated on 10 November 2023

Highlighted cells are as amended in light of incident at BUCS Head (pre-race collision) and prior to Tyne LDS (high rainfall overnight)

Potential source of risk	Risk Identified	Who/what at risk	Seriousness	Probability	Acceptable risk ?	Planned actions to address the risk	By whom?	By when?	Notes	
			Extreme, high, moderate or slight	Very likely, likely, unlikely, very unlikely	Very low or low risk - no action needed; medium risk - reduce if practicable; high/very high risk - needs action to reduce	Note: In all cases, emergency services will be summoned if incident, injury, illness, etc is serious.				
1 Prior to race day (and on race day in some cases)										
1.1	Excessive entries	Too many entries accepted and thus too many boats on water.	Competitors	High	Unlikely	Medium	Agree maximum entry overall or per category in advance. Match number of boats with number of helpers on job rota	Entries secretary	Two months in advance onwards	
1.2	Crews not sufficiently experienced to cope with possible conditions.	Slow progress on water, delays for them or others leading to possible hypothermia	Competitors	High	Likely	High	Include warnings about competence in race information and query very low pointed crews with clubs on entry. Brief marshals in advance that they should be ready to identify crews that are visibly non-competent in the prevailing conditions and may be a danger to themselves or others and report to race control with a view to them being turned back.	Entries secretary	Two months in advance onwards	Make sure that marshals have clear guidance on turning back such crews.
1.3	Weather and river conditions	Unsuitable / deteriorating weather causing poor water conditions and possibility of anyone outdoors getting cold and/or crews not coping and capsizing; trailers overturning in wind	All participants and spectators especially competitors, marshals, launch crews; trailer drivers	High	Likely	High	Look at tide times early and match to wind direction, monitor rainfall in week before and check weather forecasts regularly over preceding week and inspect water conditions day before. If possible cancel the competition a day or two before if severe weather is forecast, so rowers and trailers do not travel abortively. Inspect conditions first thing on race day and cancel if necessary.	Organising committee, safety adviser	During week before and on day.	Check forecast daily from 7 days before. Keep race committee chair informed
1.4	Debris in river	Excessive amounts of debris in river, of a size likely to damage boats and maybe cause capsize, usually caused by a high tide and/or a lot of top water after heavy rain	Boats, blades, competitors	High	Unlikely	Medium	Monitor rainfall and river levels upstream and check tide tables for very high tides; check debris in river day before and on day and cancel competition if necessary.	Organising committee, race cttee chairman, safety adviser	Day before and on day	Small non-critical items removed on day where possible
1.5	Clubhouse/s and facilities	Clubhouse facilities or steps not fit for use, causing trips and slips or other injuries	All participants and spectators	High	Unlikely	Medium	Ensure clubhouse/s are secure and clean, kitchen and toilets, heating and lighting in working order in advance of competition. Fire extinguishers, alarms, fire blankets in place and in working order. Outdoor areas including steps clear of debris.	Host clubs	Week and day before	
1.6	Lack of personnel	Too few volunteers to help on the day. Volunteers not in place at the right time. Both leading to greater danger of incidents and injury.	Competitors, marshals	Moderate	Likely	Medium	Ensure task rota pro forma for day ready 1 month before and put online, filled out by 2 weeks before, and then updated daily for changes and then put on web site etc.	Organising committee, club committee	Month in advance onwards	Make sure monitored on the day for key gaps
1.7	Equipment condition	Critical safety equipment not working on day leading to inability to respond to, in particular, calls for rescue	Competitors, helpers	High	Likely	High	Book externally sourced equipment and services well in advance. Check all crucial equipment in week preceding, notably radios, loudhailers, lifejackets, launches and engines.	Organising committee, safety adviser	Book early, inspect during week before	
1.8	Lack of shared information on communication protocol and on mobile phone back-up numbers.	Not able to communicate leading to general inability to respond to, in particular, calls for rescue	Competitors, launch crews	High	Unlikely	Medium	Instructions on radio protocol and list of mobile numbers for all key personnel including all launches to be distributed in advance	Organising committee	By preceding Thursday at latest	
1.9	Lack of knowledge of course and its potential challenges	Crews not being aware of the river and potential risks and of competition arrangements, leading to possible collision, capsize or other incident on day	Competitors	Moderate	Likely	Medium	Pre-race instructions for clubs, crews and coxes to be prepared along with a course map and marshalling plans for start and finish; all published in good time for clubs to acquaint their coaches and rowers with the information.	Organising committee, safety adviser	Month in advance onwards	

2 Race day on land before and during race

2.1	Portaloos	Blocked and/or insufficient for numbers attending with hygiene risks	All participants	Slight	Unlikely	Low	Ensure sufficient provision ordered well in advance from reputable supplier. Check regularly during race day.	Organising committee	In place day before	
2.2	Club house/s, including entrances, stairs and storage areas, boat houses.	Bumps / slips / falls / trips	All present	Slight	Likely	Medium	Tidy up premises in advance. Put up warning signs if necessary, if dangers etc are present. First aid provider in attendance all day.	Organising committee	Week in advance	Book first aid 3 months in advance
2.3	Kitchen/s	Slips, falls, burns, scalds, contamination of foods with health risks, fire, gas escape. Theft / loss of takings.	Kitchen users including juniors if permitted	Moderate	Likely	High	No juniors under 14 in the kitchen/food serving area. Kitchen to be out of bounds to all other members and juniors not on the rota. Suggested max 6 persons in TARC kitchen at any time. Warn all helpers at start of each shift of dangers, of hot oil & pans in particular. Ensure system for secure deposit of takings as the day proceeds. Follow standard hygiene procedures. Ensure all pre-cooked food is thoroughly heated.	Organising committee, kitchen co-ordinator	Kitchen and servers rota fixed as part of overall task rota a week before then with updates	Appoint coordinator early. Liaise with TURC to ensure similar measures in place there
2.4	Club grounds Car park Trailer parking area Boat trailers Boats	Bumps / slips / falls / trips	All present including passing members of the public	Slight	Likely	Medium	Notices put out early warning riverside bridleway users of competition and risks. Trailer and car parking to be supervised to ensure access routes kept clear. marshals to be briefed about need to keep bridleway clear of boats and blades except when being moved and to generally monitor for trip hazards and obstructions.	Organising committee	On day	Check notices are ready week before
2.5	First crews starting to boat late, other crews boating slowly or late, overall impact getting last crew on water late	Race start delayed with increased possibility of crews having difficulty marshalling if windy, risk of getting cold	Competitors	High	Likely	High	Set boating and starting times with agreed tolerances and time penalties and publish well in advance. Warnings / instructions to be included in pre-race information. Step marshals to ensure prompt boating on the day - warning well before first boating time. N.B. Threat of time penalties in instructions for late boating.	Organising committee	On day	Key volunteer task. Check TURC and NUBC have marshals.
2.6	Steps at all clubs boating crews for competition	Bumps / slips / falls / trips	Competitors, helpers, marshals	Moderate	Likely	Medium	Sufficient marshals present to assist at boating times. Steps to be kept clear of blades and other items. All rowers to wear boots or other suitable footwear, take into boats and adjust feet on the water (in pre-race advice). Marshals to advise caution & extreme care if steps slippery (including central 'ramp' on NUBC steps). Steps to be kept clear of blades.	Organising committee	On day	Ditto. Club helpers should help with blades.
2.7	Unsafe boats	Drowning, capsize, collision, loss of blades, loss of or damage to boat or boat parts	Competitors	Slight to Moderate	Likely	Medium	Pre-race information to underline need for clubs to check boats <i>before</i> race day and that competitors on the day should be able to demonstrate that key safety features are in place. Control Commission may undertake spot check inspections of boats and shall exclude any crew with a boat that fails to meet the standard. In addition crews under-provided with clothing to suit the prevailing conditions will not be allowed to go on water until corrected. N.B. The safety of boats is ultimately the responsibility of the clubs and crews, not the organising committee.	Competitors and their clubs, organising committee, Control Commission lead umpire and helpers	Before boating	
2.8	Launches and other craft	Going adrift. Capsize. Engine failure, damage to steps, muscular injury	Launch crews, boats	Slight to moderate	Unlikely	Medium	Check equipment before race. Ensure sufficient assistance to carry launches without dragging over steps well before first boating time. Tie up launches securely especially in windy conditions or on rising tide.	Organising committee	On day	On task rota
2.9	Boats & trailers, changing facilities, car park, club	Theft / vandalism as outdoor areas cannot be closed off	All participants, vehicles, belongings	Slight	Unlikely	Low	Warn in advance of risk. Ensure vigilance during the races. Offer secure storage if possible.	Organising committee	On day	Regular patrols if possible

3 Race day on water

3.1	Crews boating without authorisation before safety cover in place.	Collision with non- racing craft preparing for the race or other incident and inability of organisers to effect rescue or assistance quickly, leading to possible aggravation of injury or illness.	Competitors	Moderate	Unlikely	Medium	Close liaison between safety adviser, step marshals and launch drivers to ensure no crews released before safety and marshalling launches in place with all necessary equipment. Clear warning in in pre-race information not to boat early, with threat of possible disqualification.	Safety adviser, lead step marshal and launch coordinator	On day	
3.2	Inexperienced rowers not coping with conditions	Collisions with other craft, bridges, banks, obstacles. Injury. Damage to boats, blades, rowers.	Competitors	Moderate	Unlikely	Medium	All marshals steps onwards to monitor crews once on the water for obvious inexperience and if necessary, especially in poor conditions, order back to steps. marshals to give clear instructions, direct to rowers not just cox if necessary. Clear guidance given to start umpire before race.	Organising committee	On day	
3.3	Obstacles or shallow areas near edges of river.	Damage to boats, blades, rowers.	Competitors, boats, launch crews	High	Likely	Medium	Competitors to be advised of any navigation issues in pre-race instructions or on day direct to clubs if necessary. Course map to show these where known in advance. Buoy less visible obstacles if possible. Launch drivers to be briefed on day on navigation hazards..	Organising committee	Map in advance, briefing on day	Buoy if possible

3.4	Debris in river	Collision. Damage to boats, blades.	Competitors	Moderate	Unlikely	Low	Rowers to be made aware of hazards in pre-race information, also local navigation rules. Launches to check for river debris before each division, warn race control if necessary, remove debris if possible. Cancel or postpone racing as necessary.	Organising committee	On day	
3.5	On way to and at start - poor lookout for other boats, poor water conditions, wind,	Collisions with other craft, bridges, banks, obstacles. Injury. Damage to boats, blades.	Competitors, launch crews	Moderate to high, depending on water conditions	Likely	Medium	Ensure vigilant marshalling and sufficient launches en route to start and at start, including downstream of lowest boat. Monitor weather and water conditions in conjunction with race control. Pre-race instructions to emphasise normal rules of the river on way to start.	Organising committee	Bought-in provision booked month ahead	Volunteer launch drivers found two weeks ahead
3.6	Low temperature and wind chill	Hypothermia	Competitors and launch crews	High	Likely	High	Pre-race instructions to emphasise need for warm clothing for waiting time. Keep waiting time to minimum by clear instructions from steps onwards. Regularly check with all crews about coldness if adverse conditions. All launches to have space blankets.	Organising committee	On day	Other items cover this issue as well
3.7	Waiting for race start at Scotswood with boats unable to control position because of wind and tide and thus colliding whilst manoeuvring or grounding.	Capsize, swamping, damage to boats, injury, cold	Competitors	Moderate to extreme depending on conditions	Low but weather dependent - more probable in very poor conditions	Medium to high	Pre-race instructions and start area map to be issued well in advance. Clear instructions given on day in start area. Safety launches and marshalling launches deployed and in position before start of boating. Regular checks on weather and water conditions; launch crews to report to race control on water conditions. Emergency access to shore at start agreed in advance with Sea Cadets and Gateshead CRC.	Organising committee	Planning for scenarios in start area in advance, plus close monitoring on the day.	
3.8	Collision during race between racing boats or with other objects, through bad overtaking, bad steering, not allowing opponent sufficient water or general poor lookout.	Capsize, swamping, damage to boats, injury	Competitors	Moderate	Likely	Medium	Pre-race instructions issued to rowers. Safety launches at regular points on course plus bank monitors. Provide radio contact between shore marshals/launches/bank monitors/race control. Call emergency services if large numbers of competitors involved, serious injuries, very cold conditions, far from boathouse.	Organising committee	On day	See also 1.2
3.9	Deterioration in weather, tidal flow and/or top water current and thus worsening water conditions	Capsize, swamping of boat, damage / collisions to boats	Competitors, launch crews	Moderate	Unlikely	Medium	Race control to be ready to issue instructions to launch crews to announce to crews postponement of start or cancellation with return to club steps.	Organising committee, race committee, safety adviser	On day, plan in advance	
3.10	Lightning	Electrocution	Competitors, launch crews	Very high	Unlikely	Low	If lightning occurs on the day, then the 30/30 rule will apply: rowing shall stop when the flash-to-bang count is 30 seconds (or less), and shall not resume until at least 30 minutes after the last lightning. If crews are on the water, they will all be instructed to return to the home club and land there or at one of the adjacent clubs or at the emergency landing spots in the start area as quickly as possible.	Organising committee, race committee, safety adviser	On day	
3.11	Jet skiers or other motor craft, including rescue/marshalling launches speeding and/or causing wash	Wash causing swamping. Collisions	Competitors, boats, blades	Slight	Unlikely	Low	Marshalling and safety launch crews to be reminded of danger of wash or speeding even in emergency at briefing. Launches at top and bottom of course to intercept motorised users and advise of race and vulnerability of rowing boats.	Organising committee	On day	
3.12	Non-injury illness of competitor whilst on water	Inability to treat if serious	Competitors	Slight	Unlikely	Low	Pre-race instructions to ask that clubs ensure crews are fit, have any necessary medication such as inhalers and are not carrying injuries. Marshalling and safety launches ready to assist backed up by first aid provider on shore	Organising committee	On day	
3.13	Launch engine failure	Inability to help or rescue	Launch crew, other participants	Moderate	Unlikely to likely	Medium	Ensure that all launches, fuel levels and engines are checked as working before race day. Provide back-up launch / engine.	Organising committee	Day before	
3.14	Failure of radio communications	Inability to monitor conditions and state of race leading to not coping with incidents quickly	All participants	Slight	Unlikely	Low	Check equipment before hand; have spares. Mobile phones to be available as alternative, pre-set with necessary numbers if possible. Numbers to be issued to all key personnel and on web site.	Organising committee	During week before	Collate mobile numbers in week before
3.15	Crews just finished stopping too soon	Following boats hitting with danger of damage or injury	Competitors, boats	High	Likely	High	Pre-race instructions to emphasise need to keep moving. Bank monitor to push boats through finish towards safety launch further upstream well beyond the finish line.	Organising committee	On day	
3.16	Boats returning to clubs on south bank crossing racing line	Racing boats hitting with danger of damage or injury	Competitors, boats	High	Likely	High	Sufficient launches and marshals at or near bridge to prevent unauthorised movement and crossings. Pre-race instructions to have clear information about crossing points	Organising committee	On day	
3.17	Possible lengthy queue for landing at steps	Chill, hypothermia, tiredness, lack of concentration	Competitors, boats	Moderate	Likely	High	Launch and marshals on the bank to monitor and instruct progress. Advise rowers to put on warm clothes and feet out of shoes in readiness. Helpers ready to assist landing.	Organising committee	On day	

4 Race day on land after finish

4.1	Effects of racing - crews getting cold	Hypothermia	Competitors / marshals / launch crews / spectators	Slight	Unlikely to likely, depending on temperature	High	Returning crews to be monitored for signs of hypothermia. Warm showers, warm food and drinks, spare clothing to be available.	Organising committee, host clubs	On day	
4.2	Effects of racing - various incidents as above or illness	Injury or illness symptoms	Competitors	Moderate	Likely	Low	Ensure first aid kit, stretcher, fleece and space blankets available in all host clubs. First aid provider to be on hand at Tyne ARC until well after last crew on land. Call emergency services if serious.	Organising committee, host clubs	On day	
4.3	Overcrowding in clubhouse	Slips, falls, burns, scalds	All participants within club house	Moderate	Likely	Low	Monitor numbers and place marshals on doors if necessary to direct people to other sheltered spaces.	Organising committee, host clubs	On day	
4.4	Incidents before or during race leading to boats being left on shore but not at host clubs.	Damage to boats	Boats and blades	Slight to moderate	Likely	Medium	Ensure assistance available to retrieve damaged craft by trailer or to leave stored in safe location, e.g. at Gateshead CRC	Organising committee	On day	
4.5	Launches	Left on steps, going adrift. Misuse by members of public. Theft	Boats, engines, equipment	Slight	Unlikely	Low	Ensure launches not left unattended and safely put away after use	Organising committee	On day	Helpers rota agreed in advance
4.6	Boat de-rigging and trailer loading	Slips, trips, bumps scrapes, poorly secured boats.	People, passers by, boats, blades	Slight	Unlikely	Low	Ensure no blades, clothes or other equipment left on steps, grounds. Warnings to public path users. Volunteer helpers to monitor boat loading area, especially after darkness deepens. First aiders to remain until all boats secured.	Organising committee	On day	Helpers rota agreed in advance
4.7	Trailers leaving getting bogged down	Mud, rutted surface, trailers bogged down.	Visiting rowers and helpers, boats	Moderate	Likely	Medium	Have helpers to push trailers in wet conditions. Straw ordered in advance if conditions look likely to be poor.	Organising committee	Straw in advance, on day	Helpers rota agreed in advance

Queries to Colin Percy at entries@tynearc.com or on 07985 003304

Note on roles

The *Club Committee* ensures that the overall planning process for competitions is in place each year after the AGM and that the clubhouse and grounds are in a safe and clean condition before each event. It will ensure an *Organising Committee* is in place for each event

The *Organising Committee* for a competition is responsible for the overall planning and coordination and for operations on the day. The Organising Committee will appoint a safety adviser, a welfare officer, a person to take charge of race control on the day and any other necessary coordinators. Actions on the day can and will be delegated to individuals and a list of tasks and names of those to carry them out (the 'job rota') is vital in this. The Organising Committee will ensure the Race Committee Chair is appointed in good time and check with him or her that umpires will be in place and that a Race Committee is being formed.

The *Race Committee* for an event has a limited but important remit - it is made up of three or more of the umpires present on the day of the event. The Race Committee deals primarily with umpiring issues, including penalties and disqualification. However, the Race Committee Chair will be consulted in advance on overall arrangements, in the immediate run-up on possible cancellation due to weather or water conditions, and on the day on possible suspension of racing or cancellation in the case of bad weather or unforeseen incidents.