

Tyne Amateur Rowing Club

Annual General Meeting – 22 November 2018

Report of Club Water Safety Adviser for 1 Dec 17 – 4 Nov 18

Overview

I believe the club runs a safe environment for its members to row in, but that there always remains room for improvement. The best way to ensure that we do improve and learn from experience is to be more systematic in what our procedures are and how we disseminate them. I know I said this last year and there is quite a lot still to be done - see later in the report.

But we can and should be reminding members of good practice all the time on the basics as well as on more specific issues, such as on rules for launch supervision of juniors and novices, night time rowing and lone single scullers. And we need to pay more attention to briefing new recruits (learn to row or otherwise) on all this. Many river-wide, club and event documents are now a bit long in the tooth (or missing) and require work.

Incidents

There has been a significant increase in incidents reported online through British Rowing as compared with 2016-17 (37 up from 22 last year). This may be due in part to better reporting (I suspect we are amongst the most diligent in the region) and also to a lot more rowing members. Whilst any incident report needs to be considered carefully it is reassuring that in no case of capsizes was there a significant delay in dealing with the situation, as far as I am aware. Some incidents should be expected especially in the summer when juniors and others are trying out skills training or moving into fine boats.

Reported online:

Incidents reported included 21 simple capsizes (up from 14 last year), all singles or doubles, a case of mild hypothermia in a cox, a broken thumb after a clash of blades, a collision near the bridge with an inexperienced cox, a non-club junior riding a bike down the new steps into the water (not deliberate, rescued), a capsized single with no heel restraints, and a potentially serious head on collision of an eight and quad very recently.

The full list is given in the table at the end. Each incident reported apart from most simple capsizes has a learning point or points for us and actions have been taken each time to address these and improve safety. This has often been yet another reminder about keeping a good look out and sticking to the rules of the river!

At events:

No serious on-water incidents were reported at our events (Tyne Head, Pont Head, Explore Series, Tyne LDS) - Rutherford 2017 was dealt with last year. But we are aware from comments that the crossing by finished crews across the racing line below Newburn Bridge and queuing at NUBC or TURC is a risk not yet fully addressed (in hand for imminent Rutherford Head 2018). BUCS 4s & 8s Head (not our event but supported by

us) had challenging weather, but they coped though course changes, etc. We also supported Tyne Single Scullers Head run by NUBC without significant problems.

Status of key tasks

- The club needs to prepare a club-wide risk assessment and safety plan for everyday operation (rowing and non-rowing). Out of this will flow a review our safety documents and club rules. This is in hand between me and the Club Manager in the first instance. We need to pick up activities such as rowing camps, one off outdoor events, etc.
- It is also an opportunity to look at the wider River Tyne Code – a process started in 2017 with other clubs, but stalled.
- The club's safety documents for major events have been reviewed recently for the upcoming Rutherford Head 2018, but there is still room for significant improvement.
- Swim test and capsized drills - these are held twice a year, one recently for L2R-ers.
- The signing out board was reinstated in 2017, but the task of checking it after sessions, especially on dark nights, needs urgent attention allied to consideration of communication issues, again especially in the dark; a duty officer rota is planned.
- Lifejackets and launch bags are checked weekly (full inflation of former 6-monthly).
- Launch driver training and assessment needs bringing in as soon as possible, to comply with club rules; this is done rather informally at the moment.
- Cox / steerperson training has been trialled with the juniors led by Jess Harris (thanks) and provides a good template for possible senior training.
- Whilst slightly beyond my remit, maybe, I have assisted in keeping the trailers in good repair; trailer driver training has been discussed at committee.
- A meeting with the Club Welfare Officer to discuss overlaps in our roles is due.
- Discussions with Northumbria University BC officers on how we mesh safety work are in hand.
- Finally on tasks I would like to have more regular contact with coaches and coordinators to drill home the key messages; I have met the junior coaches most, partly prompted by specific incidents, as in the table below, but also to reinforce the usual central messages - risk assessment before each outing (taking into account numbers of rowers, number of coaches/launches, weather, tides, experience of crews etc) and importance of standard boat safety checks every session.

Final words

Thanks to all who have helped on safety, especially the committee, coaches and squad coordinators. In addition John Mulholland as Regional Rowing Safety Adviser deserves a second round of thanks in that role.

And in signing off, I would welcome help in any of the above tasks, maybe even as a formal Assistant Water Safety Adviser. See me afterwards!

Colin Percy

Club Water Safety Adviser

Incidents reported on British Rowing's online system 1 Dec 17 to 4 Nov 18

No	BR ref	Date	Summary – incidents reported
1	9838	03/12/17	Launch hit double near steps, rigger damaged on another club's double
2	9913	28/12/17	Junior cox suffered mild hypothermia due to inadequate clothing
3	9919	28/12/17	Junior dismounted spinning bike with pedals moving; ligament damage
4	10084	04/02/18	Simple capsize - senior double
5	10206	11/03/18	Simple capsize - junior double
6	10304	04/04/18	Simple capsize - novice masters single
7	10464	22/04/18	Senior double; entanglement with fishing lines
8	10637/8	13/05/18	Simple capsize - junior single
9	10639	12/05/18	Senior quads doing piece clashed blades; broken thumb
10	10680	13/05/18	Simple capsize - junior single at Durham Regatta
11	10734	20/05/18	Single on steps washed down by another club's launch; damage to fin
12	11017	23/06/18	Simple capsize - junior single doing skills
13	11025	17/06/18	Simple capsize - junior single
14	11027	24/06/18	Simple capsize - junior single; twice in one outing
15	11084	01/07/18	Simple capsize - senior very novice single in fine boat; twice in one outing
16	11085	01/07/18	Simple capsize - junior singles; 2 doing drills, 1 racing
17	11199	09/07/18	Simple capsize - single
18	11025	15/07/18	Collison near bridge involving junior coxed quad with inexperienced cox; slight injury
19	11271	16/07/18	Simple capsize - junior single
20	11303	25/07/18	Simple capsize - adult novice stable single
21	11356	06/08/18	Unaccompanied non-club junior cyclist rode bike down new steps (involuntarily) into river; rescued and parents found
22	11391	12/08/18	Senior coxless quad collided with submerged object near bank; damage to rigger
23	11460	26/08/18	Simple capsize - single
24	11501	30/08/18	Simple capsize - junior double doing skills; at Lakeland RC
25	11502	30/08/18	Simple capsize - junior single doing skills
26	11516	26/08/18	Simple capsize - senior single
27	N/A	11/09/18	Junior seizure during land training; ambulance attended and parents; recovered
28	11594	30/08/18	Simple capsize - single
29	11600/1	15/09/18	Senior double collided with another club's single; poor lookout/wrong side
30	11603	23/09/18	Simple capsize - junior single
31	11710	25/09/18	Simple capsize - junior single
32	11726	25/09/18	As 11710, but escalated, as capsized junior single had no heel restraints
33	11741	30/09/18	Simple capsize - junior single
34	11812	06/10/18	Simple capsize - senior single (CWSA) just off steps in front of many at Tyne SBH
35	11816	06/10/18	Junior sculler in four in Tyne LDS suffered severe muscular spasms at finish
36	11825	14/10/18	Novice senior sculler drifted into Newburn bridge; poor lookout; bow damaged
37	11998	04/11/18	Head-on collision between senior men's eight and senior women's coxless quad; severe damage to eight's bow and quad rigger; no serious injury