

Risk Assessment

Event		JUNIOR HEAD (North)			Date:			Sun 18-Jan-26				
Author		(Water Safety Advisor)			Issue:			v1.1 Jan-2026				
No:	Hazard	Reduce probability a Hazard causing a Hazardous Event		Hazardous Event	Reduce the Severity of Harm		Harm	Severity (1-5)	Probability (A-E)	Level of Risk (L/M/S/I)	Action Owners	
		Barriers	Action to maintain barriers		Controls	Action to maintain controls					Event / Race Committee	Event / Club WSA
Water (Wa)												
Wa1	Rough Water prior to event.	Cancel Rowing if conditions unsafe	Water Safety Advisor decides if conditions are unsafe AND Guidance with criteria for unsafe conditions.	Capsize or swamping of boats.	The Race Committee on advice from the Water Safety Advisor may choose to curtail, alter or suspend the race.	Cancel event	Rower(s) get wet and cold, risk of hypothermia	4	D	Intolerable	X	X
Wa2	Fast Flowing Water (perhaps following heavy rain prior to event).	Cancel Rowing if conditions unsafe	Water Safety Advisor decides if conditions are unsafe AND Guidance with criteria for unsafe conditions.	Crew(s) cannot steer effectively.	The Race Committee on advice from the Water Safety Advisor may choose to curtail, alter or suspend the race.	Cancel event	Rower(s) get tired and frightened	4	D	Intolerable	X	X
Wa3	Rough Water during event.	Stay in Sheltered Waters AND Cancel Rowing if conditions unsafe	The Race Committee on advice from the Water Safety Advisor may choose to curtail, alter or suspend the race. All competitors are members of Rowing Clubs affiliated to British Rowing and will have been taught procedures to deal with capsize. Qualified umpires and use of Safety Launches. Qualified Safety Launch Drivers. Event Safety Plan details emergency procedures for imminent danger to loss of life.	Capsize or swamping of boats.	The Race Committee on advice from the Water Safety Advisor may choose to curtail, alter or suspend the race. All competitors are members of Rowing Clubs affiliated to British Rowing and will have been taught procedures to deal with capsize.	Qualified umpires and use of Safety Launches. All launch drivers will have a RYA National Powerboat Level 2 Certificate and are in radio contact with Race Control, who can summon 1st aid if required. Coxes wear life jackets and athletes are coached in capsize and person (man) overboard drills.	Rower(s) get wet and cold, risk of hypothermia	2	D	Moderate	X	X
Wa4	Floating debris	Cancel event if too much debris is coming down stream	Inspect course for debris before allowing boats to launch. Remove or secure debris to the bank.	Collision with debris resulting in capsize or damage to boats	The Race Committee on advice from the Water Safety Advisor may choose to curtail, alter or suspend the race.	Safety Launch crews will observe for floating debris and advise participants by loud hailer as they pass. All launch drivers will have a RYA National Powerboat Level 2 Certificate and are in radio contact with Race Control, who can summon 1st aid if required. Coxes wear life jackets and athletes are coached in capsize and person (man) overboard drills.	Rower(s) get wet and cold, risk of hypothermia. Damage to boats and equipment.	3	C	Moderate	X	X

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Weather (We)														
We1	Adverse weather (excessively cold, windy, foggy, etc.).	Cancel rowing if conditions unsafe AND if rowing takes place ensure that rowers are correctly dressed.	Water Safety Advisor, Launch Drivers decides if conditions are unsafe AND Guidance with criteria for unsafe conditions AND information for rowers on appropriate dress.	Swamping of a boat due to adverse weather, capsize, collision	The Race Committee on advice from the Water Safety Advisor may choose to curtail, alter or suspend the race. All competitors are members of Rowing Clubs affiliated to British Rowing and will have been taught procedures to deal with capsize.	The Race Committee on advice from the Safety Advisor may choose to curtail, alter or suspend the race. Competitors' boats and equipment are checked prior to embarkation to ensure their fitness to race. This includes clothing appropriate to the weather conditions. Safety boats, and Marshals at the Start, carry exposure blankets to use in an emergency. Measures have been adopted to ensure the minimum amount of waiting time for crews. Crews will be listed on the Draw (crews listing) to take to the water in the sequence below. This aims to avoid vulnerable people being exposed to cold, wet or windy weather any more than necessary.	Rower(s) and safety Boat Crews get wet and cold, risk of hypothermia	2	C	Low	X	X	X	X
We2	Hot weather.	Ensure that rowers are correctly dressed	Coaches or Water Safety Advisor decides if conditions are unsafe AND Guidance with criteria for unsafe conditions.	Exposure to sun and high temperatures.	Competitors and coaches are warned that if the weather is hot and sunny, crews must have access to sun-screen, hats and water bottles while afloat.	Ensure that rowers carry drinking water and have access to sun-screen, hats and water bottles.	Sunstroke, sunburn or dehydration.	1	C	Low	X	X		X
We3	Cold and exposure.	Ensure that rowers are correctly dressed	Coaches or Water Safety Advisor decides if conditions are unsafe AND Guidance with criteria for unsafe conditions.	Exposure to low temperatures.	Competitors' equipment checked for clothing appropriate to the weather condition to ensure their fitness to race.	Safety boats, and Marshals at the Start, carry exposure blankets to use in an emergency. Measures have been adopted to ensure the minimum amount of waiting time for crews. Crews will be listed on the Draw (crews listing) to take to the water in a specific sequence. This aims to avoid vulnerable people being exposed to cold, wet or windy weather any more than necessary. Heavy duty tents (typically 3m x 3m x 2m) will be provided for timekeepers if continuous or heavy rain is forecast.	Rower(s) and Safety Boat Crews get cold, risk of hypothermia	1	C	Low	X	X	X	X

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		Barriers	Action to maintain barriers		Controls	Action to maintain controls					Event / Race Committee	Event / Club WSA	Safety Launch Drivers	Coaches	Coxes / Others
Other water users (U)															
U1	Other rowing boats on the river	Rowers comply with the navigation rules AND keep a good lookout	Navigation rules communicated during coxes briefings and reminders to members to keep a good lookout.	Collision with another rowing boat	Marshalls, Safety Launches throughout the course.	All competitors are members of Rowing Clubs affiliated to British Rowing and will have been taught procedures to deal with capsize. Qualified umpires, marshals and Safety Launches marshal competitors up to the Start. Experienced Marshals supervise the start mar shalling areas above the Start. All launch drivers will have a RYA National Powerboat Level 2 Certificate and are in radio contact with Race Control, who can summon 1st aid if required. Coxes wear life jackets and athletes are coached in capsize and person (man) overboard drills. Coxes wear life jackets and athletes are coached in capsize and person (man) overboard drills.	Capsize, Injury or Boat Damage.	2	D	Moderate		X	X	X	X
U2	Other boats on the river - pleasure craft and commercial vessels.	Rowers comply with the navigation rules AND keep a good lookout	Navigation rules communicated during coxes briefings and reminders to members to keep a good lookout.	Collision with a boat.	Marshalls, Safety Launches throughout the course.	All competitors are members of Rowing Clubs affiliated to British Rowing and will have been taught procedures to deal with capsize. Qualified umpires, marshals and Safety Launches marshal competitors up to the Start. Experienced Marshals supervise the start mar shalling areas above the Start. All launch drivers will have a RYA National Powerboat Level 2 Certificate and are in radio contact with Race Control, who can summon 1st aid if required. Marshalls, umpires and safety launch drivers in constant contact with Race Control to communicate the presence of other vessels. Coxes wear life jackets and athletes are coached in capsize and person (man) overboard drills.	Capsize, Injury or Boat Damage.	2	D	Moderate		X	X	X	X

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U3	Other boats on the river - pleasure craft and commercial vessels.	Communication with other potential river users	Notices/Marshalls/safety boats erected/positioned at either end of the course.	Other River use on course and unaware of racing	Marshalls, Safety Launches including start and finish areas to communicate with any boat users. Note. The main boat near finish of the course "The Danny" is away being serviced so will not venture on course. Other boat users (e.g. narrow boats) are less frequent at this time of year; Start and finish marshals can inform and persuade these boats to await passage down course until between divisions - each division is small and may last between 30 and 60 minutes, and is easily navigable before racing starts and a division ends.	Qualified umpires, marshals and Safety Launches marshal competitors up to the Start. Experienced Marshals supervise the start marshalling areas above the Start. All launch drivers will have a RYA National Powerboat Level 2 Certificate and are in radio contact with Race Control, who can summon 1st aid if required. Marshalls, umpires and safety launch drivers in constant contact with Race Control to communicate the presence of other vessels - especially if vessel decides to continue on course rather than watch racing for a few minutes.	Capsize, Injury or Boat Damage.	2	D	Moderate	X	X	X	X	X
					Notices erected in both the START and FINISH areas of the course	Signs erected and visible from both sides often river indicating the race course - supporting the communication of the land and river based start and finish marshals.	Capsize, Injury or Boat Damage.	2	D	Moderate	X	X	X		
U4	Other river users - e.g. fishermen	Communication with other river users	Communication of event and each racing division	Entanglement/breakage of Equipment	Known local clubs (angling) informed of event.	Good friendly communication maintained. Communication in advance to angling secretary. (Weston Angling Club Runcorn; Northwich Anglers Association) Communication with any fisherman / river users seen in the days before the event to repeat communication and to verify earlier communication had been shared.	Entanglement of equipment or conversations on awareness	1	D	Low	X	X			
U5	Race Start Intervals contribute to contact between crews. (Crews start at staggered intervals)	Define start intervals/gaps, and communicate these to start marshall , starter and crews; monitor actual start intervals v planned intervals.	Define start intervals/gaps, and communicate these to start marshall , starter and crews; monitor actual start intervals v planned intervals.	Entanglement/breakage of Equipment	Start Intervals between crews - standard start gap and additional gaps based on expected relative crew speeds. Guidance to competitors on overtaking slower crews should this situation occur.	Review start and finish gaps between crews from previous year. Before race day consider the experience of each crew (given by their Crew Ranking index, CRI) to add additional start gaps to reduce risk of incidents from crews overtaking.	Racing crews getting close and making contact if they converge.	1	D	Low	X	X			

Local Environment (L)

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L1	Taking the wrong course (at Frodsham Cut or at Frodsham Sluices channel).	Rowers comply with the navigation rules AND keep a good lookout	Navigation rules communicated during coxes briefings and reminders to members to keep a good lookout.	Rowing into sluices.	The 2 cuts each have an Umpire and safety boat at that point to warn Competitors.	Coxes and scullers are briefed prior to the race. Clubs are sent a map of the course as part of the Event Safety Plan. Crews can evaluate the hazard on their way upstream to the Start. These cuts are marked off with lines of red buoys for the race (other buoys placed at occasional hazards as needed, or hazards removed). Coxes wear life jackets and athletes are coached in capsized and person (man) overboard drills. The 2 cuts each have an Umpire and safety boat at that point to warn Competitors.	Capsize, Injury or Boat Damage.	4	B	Moderate	X	X	X	X
L2	Traffic on the parking areas.	Crews comply with Parking Marshalls Instructions.	Parking Marshalls communicate with crews.	Collision with vehicles and trailers.	Provision of first aid AND quarantine damaged boats.	Area marshalled by NW Rowing volunteers. Traffic marshals are in radio contact with each other, and with Race Control.	Injury or Boat Damage	2	C	Low	X		X	X
L3	Chemical incident at local chemical works.	Clubs communicate to crews.	Details of response are provided in the Event Safety Plan sent to all Clubs and Umpires attending.	Chemical leak.	Chemical Factory are informed when races are scheduled and we become part of their off-site Emergency Plan.	The event has a Public Address system in the boathouse / boat-trailer park area and marshals are present to control competitors. Details of response are provided in the Event Safety Plan sent to all Clubs and Umpires attending.	Chemical exposure.	5	A	Moderate	X	X		X
L4	Overhanging trees	Communicate rowers to keep a good lookout and stay away from the trees.	Signs and displays, reminders to rowers and coaches AND mark on navigation plan AND Orange warning markers placed on some overhanging trees	Rowing into a tree and becoming entangled	First aid treatment.	Maintain First Aid equipment.	Minor injury (scratches).	2	B	Low	X	X	X	X
L5	Biological contamination of the water	Rowers avoid undue skin contact with the water, cuts and scratches are kept covered	Information from Notices and at Coxes Briefing.	Contact with Biological contamination of the water	Availability of showers and washing facilities, infected rowers seek medical attention.	Provision by Event Committee. Information for rowers.	Water borne diseases (e.g. Weil's disease).	3	B	Low	X	X	X	X
L6	Awareness of Emergency Access Points	Race officials, monitors, launches and safety aware of Emergency Access Points	Information shared on web and provided with a summary handout on the day	Delay in finding or communicating Emergency Access Points	Clear Documented Emergency Access Points; on course map, including what-3-words.	Documented Emergency Action Points reviewed in consultation with local Rowing club members.	Delay in Emergency service access	3	B	Low	X	X	X	X
Going afloat and landing (G)														
G1	Slippery (muddy) surface on the Landing Stage.	Reliance on vigilance of coaches, rowers, coxes and Landing Stage Marshalls.	briefings and reminders to rowers and coaches	Slips when launching or recovering boats.	Provision of first aid.	Maintain training and equipment.	Minor injury, potential damage to boat	2	C	Low	X		X	X
Around the boathouse (including handling boats on land) (A)														
A1	Boat Handling	Clubs train rowers how to handle boats correctly	Competitors are generally experienced members of rowing clubs	Injury caused by boat handling on land	Provision of first aid AND quarantine damaged boats.	Maintain First Aid training and equipment.	Minor injury, potential damage to boat	2	C	Low	X	X		X

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A2	Trailer loading and unloading	Clubs train members how to load boat trailers.	Briefings and reminders to members. Parking Marshalls communicate with crews.	Injury caused when loading boat trailers.	Provision of first aid AND quarantine damaged boats.	Maintain First Aid training and equipment.	Minor injury, potential damage to boat	2	B	Low				
A3	Fire	The event has a Public Address system in the boathouse.	Briefings and reminders.	Injury caused by fire.	Fire extinguishers are available. Fire Brigade will be called in an emergency.	Boat-trailer park area and Marshals are present to control competitors. Details of response are provided in the Event Safety Plan sent to all Clubs and Umpires attending.	Major Injury.	4	B	Moderate	X	X	X	X
A4	Interaction.	Crews keep a good lookout when handling boats.	Parking Marshalls and Crew Call communicate.	Collision between competitors and spectators.	Provision of first aid.	Parking Marshalls and Crew Call throughout trailer area.	Minor Injury.	2	B	Low	X	X	X	X
Faulty, incorrectly set and poorly maintained equipment (F)														
F1	Gate not correctly closed.	Check boats before going afloat.	Notices and reminders to rowers and coaches.	Scull or oar comes out of gate	Participating clubs to ensure all rowers have done a swim test and a capsize drill. AND teach the Buddy Rescue Technique AND provide safety launches with qualified drivers AND provision of first aid.	Qualified umpires and use of Safety Launches. All launch drivers will have a RYA National Powerboat Level 2 Certificate and are in radio contact with Race Control, who can summon 1st aid if required. Coxes wear life jackets and athletes are coached in capsize and person (man) overboard drills.	Capsize	3	B	Low			X	X
F2	Boat not correctly set up and adjusted for rower.	Ensure correct adjustment before going afloat.	Notices and reminders to rowers and coaches.	Rowers suffers musculo-skeletal injury.	Provide First Aid treatment and possibly provide physiotherapy or other appropriate treatment.	Maintain First Aid training and equipment.	Musculo-skeletal injury	2	C	Low			X	X
Pre-existing health conditions and low levels of fitness (P)														
P1	Sudden Illness	Clubs are responsible for ensuring all competitors are competent to row the course without putting themselves an others at risk	Notices and reminders to rowers and coaches.	Illness or collapse of a rower on land	1 st aid provision. All safety launches carry a First Aid kit. AED's located along the course and online training provided.	Maintain training and equipment.	Unknown health effects	2	B	Low	X	X	X	X
P2	Cardiac Arrest	Clubs are responsible for informing the Organising Committee if they have athletes with any pre or existing health conditions that will impact their safety and that of others	Notices and reminders to rowers and coaches.	Recovering an incapacitated person	Emergency Response Plan	Marshals and Umpires Briefed on the Emergency Response Plan	Fatality	5	A	Low	X	X	X	X

