

# **General Instructions for the Vesta Veterans Head**

**3<sup>rd</sup> April 2011**

**The river is closed from 0800 to 1100. The race will start at 0900 BST (GMT+1).**

**The race runs with the tide from Mortlake to Putney over the Championship Course.**

**Starting on time is crucial, so we will be strict with the timings shown below.**

**All boats and equipment must comply with the requirements of Row Safe and the British Rowing Rules of Racing and in particular all boats must display the British rowing three letter, three digit identification at all times.**

**Crews need to know the Tideway Rowing Code of Practice and be aware of the Regulations of the Port of London Authority. Outside of the river closure the normal navigation rules are in force.**

**All crews must conduct their own risk assessment on the day, to make sure the conditions and their equipment are safe for them to race in.**

## **1) Marshalling**

**Key times –**

- Boat at Putney by 0800, Hammersmith by 0815 and Barnes Bridge / Chiswick by 0830.
- If coming from Putney, you need to be at the Chiswick Steps Crossing point no later than 0835.
- Crews boating from the Middlesex side of the river at Hammersmith must be across the river on to the Surrey bank by 08.45.
- All crews wanting to start in their allotted start position must be in the marshalling area by 0845 and in position by 0850.

The crews will be arranged in 4 divisions. The first 3 divisions will be of 50 crews each. The fourth will be made of approximately 50 crews. The size of this division depends on the size of the entry and how many latecomers we have.

Division 1 – No 1 will marshal immediately upstream of the lock gates beside MAABC on the Middlesex bank, bows pointing upstream. The rest of the division will then marshal upstream of No1 in number order so that No 50 is nearest to Kew Rail Bridge.

Division 2 – No 51 to 100 will marshal in a mirror image of division 1 on the Surrey bank, starting by Putney Town Rowing Club.

Division 3 – No 101 to 150 will marshal below Chiswick Bridge on the Middlesex bank,

bows pointing upstream. Crew No 150 will marshal immediately downstream of the Boat Race finish marker, facing upstream. The rest of the division will then be marshalled in **reverse** order downstream so that No 101 is closest to Barnes Bridge.

Division 4 - Crew 151 to 212 in a mirror image of division 3 on the Surrey bank.

Warming up is not allowed in the marshalling area. This is defined as the section of river from Kew Rail Bridge to Barnes Bridge.

**Crews will proceed to the start following the standard navigation pattern for the Tideway.**

**There is one exception to this -**

All crews proceeding up to the start from Putney and Hammersmith will proceed upstream on the Surrey bank to the Chiswick Steps crossover point (a marshal will be positioned here to monitor crews). Crews for division 1 (No 1 to 50) and division 3 (No 101 to 150) will crossover onto the Middlesex bank all the way up to their marshalling positions. Crews for divisions 2 (No 51 to 100) and 4 (No 151 to 212), should **not** cross over at the Chiswick Steps crossing but stay on the Surrey bank all the way to their marshalling positions.

**CREWS MUST NOT AT ANY TIME PROCEED UPSTREAM IN THE MIDDLE OF THE RIVER AGAINST THE TIDE.**

**Key control times –**

- 1) **Chiswick Steps crossing to be shut at 0850.** After this time crews will proceed up the Surrey bank and start as latecomers at the end of division 4.
- 2) **Chiswick Bridge to be shut at 0845.** No marshalling crew shall pass through Chiswick Bridge in either direction after this time (see note on late crews below).

**Crews arriving late -**

**Crews arriving late will be held back and set off last.**

**0850 is the time from which we handle crews not in their allotted marshalling positions as late comers.**

**Crews must not cross from one side of the river to the other after 0850.**

The Chiswick Steps Crossing will close at 0850, and then all late crews coming from Hammersmith or Putney will proceed up the Surrey Bank to join the downriver end of division 4 abeam the White Hart pub.

Crews who are between the Chiswick Steps Crossing and Barnes Bridge after 0850, will stay on whichever side of the river they are on and marshal at the downriver end of division 3 or 4, as applicable.

Crews for divisions 1 and 2 who are between Barnes Bridge and Chiswick Bridge will continue up the bank they are on, past divisions 3 and 4 keeping tucked into the side of the river and then stop upriver of divisions 3 and 4 immediately downriver of Chiswick Bridge. They are not to pass through Chiswick Bridge at this time. When divisions 3 and 4 move upriver prior to starting these crews will proceed up to Kew Rail Bridge, and will start at the end of either division 3 or 4 depending on which side of the river they are on.

Crews for divisions 3 and 4 who are upriver of Chiswick Bridge after 11.45am will not pass downriver through Chiswick Bridge but they will instead be held on the appropriate bank (Middlesex for crews 101 to 150 and Surrey for crews 151 to 212) immediately upriver of Chiswick Bridge. When divisions 3 and 4 move upriver prior to the start, these crews will proceed up to Kew Rail Bridge, and will start at the upstream end of either division 3 or 4 depending on which side of the river they are on.

### **The start –**

Division 1 starts first. As division 1 turns and rows down to the start, division 3 is moved upriver along the bank (it is very important crews remain tucked into the bank) to take the place of division 1. Division 2 will be started once all of division 1 has started. As division 2 starts, division 4 moves upriver along the bank to take the place of division 2. Divisions 3 and 4 will be started in turn after division 2.

## **2) The Race**

Safety is paramount

Crews being overtaken **MUST** give way and overtaking crews must proceed safely.

Racing crews should stay in the centre of the river. They must not pass through the inside arches of any bridges along the course nor cut the corners of bends to the extent they risk collision with returning crews.

Racing crews must not pass along the inside (Surrey side) of the moored boats at Putney.

At the finish, do **NOT** stop. Proceed through both Putney and Fulham Rail bridges and only then spin on to the Surrey shore. Crews should then proceed in single file and those returning to boathouses upriver of Putney should **NOT** stop until they are upriver of the Black Buoy.

Be aware that as the tide drops returning crews will have to come outside Putney Pier. This brings returning crews close to racing crews and so all crews must be particularly alert and careful at this point. Officials will be in position on the pier to help you. Coxes in returning crews should be ready to counteract the effect of the stream (which will catch the bows and try to pull the boat out into the middle of the river) as you move out to go around the pier.

### **3) Incidents –**

If in the unlikely event of an incident during the race, crew/s must STOP rowing immediately and retire from the race.

Race officials are positioned along the entire length of the course. They will all be issued with a radio and are the first point of contact if an incident occurs.

Telephones can also be found in rowing clubs along the course.

#### **Race cancellation / Adverse Weather Plan**

Officials waving red flags and/or sounding air horns = Cancellation

##### **Before the race and before crews have boated -**

If due to significant problems the race has to be abandoned before the start, the umpires/marshals positioned at the main boating points will be contacted and instructed to prevent any further access to the river.

##### **Before the race, with crews afloat –**

Crews proceeding up to the start will be marshalled in to the bank. The bank chosen will be the one that provides most shelter and ideally be the side of the river consistent with the normal navigation rules. Crews will keep in to the bank and keep the middle of the river clear. Crews at the start will then (if conditions permit) return to their boathouses. Once the start area is clear, marshals will instruct crews waiting on the bank to proceed back to their boathouses. If this is not possible, then crews will seek shelter at the nearest boathouse until the weather improves.

This plan may be adapted on the day. We plan to prioritise the start area as experience tells us that in difficult conditions this is the area of greatest risk. However we cannot plan for all conditions and so if another area is more challenging, Race Control will adopt a zonal approach, prioritising the zone with the most challenging conditions first. Race Control will communicate with the race officials and they will tell you what to do. Any response will try to adhere as closely as possible to the standard Tideway navigation rules so if conditions are such that you cannot hear officials' instructions then your best course of action is to follow the standard Tideway navigation patterns and keep a good look out.

##### **During the race –**

Crews at the start will be stopped and those already on the course will be carefully monitored. If conditions are such that crews are unable to complete the course they will be told to stop, and then directed out of the middle of the river towards the bank that provides most shelter and ideally the side of the river consistent with the normal navigation rules.

Again Race Control will use a zonal approach, prioritizing those crews in areas with the most challenging conditions. Race Control will aim to return crews to where they boated from but in poor conditions crews should expect to be instructed to seek shelter at the nearest available boathouse, until the weather improves.

Crews at the start will either return to their boathouses or seek shelter at the nearest rowing club until the weather improves.

#### **4) Numbers**

Numbers and race information will be available at Vesta Rowing Club, between 1430 and 1600 on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> April and from 0700 on race day.

Crews must have an Empacher number plate attached to their boat. Bow and the cox must also clearly display the paper numbers provided.

#### **5) Cycling along the towpath**

Following a crew on a bicycle along the towpath is NOT something we encourage. The towpath is not a flat surface and in some places is quite challenging. We are also concerned that cyclists following a crew will not pay enough attention to other people on the towpath.

#### **6) Warning**

All entrants should be aware that they enter at their own risk.

They should ensure that they are fully insured against that risk.

They should be competent oarsmen, oarswomen, coxes and competent swimmers.

It is their responsibility to ensure that their equipment is in good order and compliant with Row Safe and the British Rowing Rules of Racing

It is also their responsibility to comply with the Tideway Rowing Code of Practice and the Regulations of the Port of London Authority

They must also be satisfied that they are sufficiently fit and competent to participate safely in this event.

#### **7) Complaints**

Please direct them to the Chief Umpire, at Ranelagh Sailing Club on Putney Embankment within ONE hour of the last crew finishing (Or telephone: 07967 997609).