

Tyne Amateur Rowing Club

Risk Assessment (with action points) for Ponteland Junior Head

Last reviewed and updated on 27 February 2023

Location: River Tyne, Ryton Ferry House to Stella

Date of competition: 18 March 2023

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

1.1	Excessive entries	Too many entries accepted and thus too many boats on water. Crews not sufficiently experienced to cope with possible conditions.	Competitors	High	Unlikely	Medium	Agree maximum entry per division. Ensure sufficient assistance available to boat. Include warnings about competence in race information. Marshals to refuse to let visibly non-competent rowers boat if they consider they will be a danger to others.	Organising committee	Two months in advance onwards, on day	Make sure step marshals on day have guidance
1.2	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 on way	All participants and spectators especially competitors, marshals, launch crews; trailer drivers	Moderate	Likely	High	Have tide tables ready, monitor rainfall 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.	Organising committee, race committee chairman, safety adviser	During week before	Check daily from 7 days before
1.3	Debris in river	Excessive amounts of debris in river, of a size likely to damage boats and maybe cause capsize	Boats, blades, competitors	High	Very 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
1.4	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 silt and debris.	Host clubs	Day before	
1.5	Setting up race control and monitoring volunteer presence	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 blank pro forma for day ready on GoogleDocs 1 month before, filled out by 1 week before and then updated daily for changes. Ensure publicised to all shown so they turn up.	Organising committee, club committee	Month in advance onwards	Race control in place early on race day and monitor
1.6	Equipment condition	Critical safety equipment not working on day leading to inability to respond to, in particular, calls for rescue	Competitors	High	Likely	High	Check all crucial equipment in week preceding, notably radios, loudhailers, lifejackets, launches and engines.	Organising committee, safety adviser	During week before	
1.7	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	High	Unlikely	Medium	Instructions on radio protocol and list of mobile numbers for all key personnel including all launches to be distributed on the day, if not before.	Organising committee	By preceding Thursday	
1.8	Lack of knowledge of course and it 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	All participants	Slight	Unlikely	Low	Ensure sufficient provision ordered well in advance from reputable supplier. Check regularly during race day. Unlikely to be needed for Pont Junior Head.	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, 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	Ensure coordinator is appointed early
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 brideway users of competition and risks. Trailer and car parking to be supervised to ensure access routes kept. Marshalls to be briefed about need to keep brideway 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 or getting cold if low temperature	Competitors	High	Likely	High	Set boating and starting times with agreed tolerances and time penalties and publish in well in advance. Warnings / instructions to be included in pre- race information. Step marshalls in all locations to ensure prompt boating on the day - warning well before first boating time, using loudhailers as necessary.	Organising committee	On day	Key volunteer task. Proably just TARC for Pont Head
2.6	Unsafe boats, lack of key equipment or insufficient clothing	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 before race day. Race officials will check as far as possible key boat safety items of bowball, shoe restraints and hatches/buoyancy plus plus flotation devices for coxes and adequacy of clothing. Boats found to be unsafe or crews under-provided will not to be allowed to go on water until corrected.	Competitors and their clubs, organising committee	Before boating	
2.7	Steps at all clubs where there is boating for competing crews	Bumps / slips / falls / trips	Competitors, helpers, marshalls	Moderate	Likely	Medium	Final check on debris and silt before boating starts. Sufficient marshalls 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). Marshalls to advise caution & extreme care if steps slippery. Steps to be kept clear of blades.	Organising committee	On day	Ditto. Club helpers should help with blades.
2.8	Moving launches between club house and steps	Launches damaged on way to steps or floating off steps before or between divisions, causing reduced ability to provide safety or marshalling cover	Competing crews	Slight to moderate	Unlikely	Medium	Tie up launches securely especially in windy conditions or on rising tide. Check equipment before race. Ensure sufficient assistance to carry launches to steps (well before first boating time).	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	Launch drivers	Inexperienced launch drivers causing collision or other hazardous event with the risk of injury	Launch crews, competing crews, boats	High	Unlikely	Medium	All launch drivers to be qualified to RYA Level 2 or formally assessed by the club in advance as of equivalent capability. Pre-race instructions/reminders about rules of the river location on river, speed and wash, etc.			
3.2	Launch engine breakdown or running out of fuel	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 or engine.	Organising committee	Day before	
3.3	Crews boating without authorisation and no safety cover before official boating time	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 marshalls and launch drivers to ensure no crews released before safety and marshalling launches in place with all necessary equipment. Pre-race instructions to forbid early boating.			

3.4	Inexperienced rowers not coping with conditions	Collisions with other craft, bridges, banks, obstacles. Injury. Damage to boats, blades, rowers.	Competitors	Moderate	Unlikely	Medium	All marshalls and bank monitors, steps onwards, to monitor crews once on the water for obvious inexperience and if necessary, especially in poor conditions, recall to steps. Marshalls to give clear instructions, direct to rowers if necessary. Clear guidance given to start umpire before race.	Organising committee	On day	
3.5	Obstacles in / near edges of river	Shallow areas and /or navigational markers	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. Use temporary marker buoys for less visible obstructions if possible. Launch drivers to be briefed on day.	Organising committee	Map in advance, briefing on day	Buoy if possible
3.6	Debris in river	Collision with risk of injury or damage to boat	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 and warn race control if necessary, remove debris if possible.	Organising committee	On day	
3.7	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	Moderate to high, depending on water conditions	Likely	Medium	Ensure vigilant marshalling is carried out and there are sufficient launches and bank monitors. Monitor weather and water conditions in conjunction with race control.	Organising committee	Bought-in provision booked month ahead	Volunteers found two weeks ahead
3.8	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	
3.9	Waiting for race start with boats unable to control position because of wind and tide and thus colliding whilst manoeuvring or grounding	Capsize, swamping, damage to boats, injury	Competitors	Moderate to extreme	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.	Organising committee	Close monitoring on the day. Abandon if necessary	
3.10	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 marshalls/launches/bank monitors/coordinator. Call emergency services and inform Port of Tyne immediately if large numbers of competitors involved, serious injuries, very cold conditions, far from boathouse.	Organising committee	On day	
3.11	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, safety adviser	On day, plan in advance	
3.12	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, safety adviser	On day	
3.13	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	
3.14	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	
3.15	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
3.16	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. Finish officials to push boats through finish towards safety launch further upstream well beyond the finish line.	Organising committee	On day	
3.17	Boats returning to south bank clubs crossing racing line	Racing boats being hit with danger of damage or injury	Competitors, boats	High	Likely	High	Sufficient launches and marshalls at or near bridge to prevent unauthorised movement and crossings. Pre-race instructions to have clear information about crossing points.	Organising committee	On day	Limited number for Pont Head

3.18	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	
3.19	Crews not hearing instructions	Key instructions not followed leading to damage or injury	Competitors, boats	Moderate	Likely	High	All key personnel to have loudhailers. Adequate number of volunteers provided and checked beforehand.	Organising committee	On day	

4 Race day on land after finish

4.1	Effects of racing - crews or others getting cold	Hypothermia	Competitors / marshalls / 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, club committee	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	On day	
4.3	Overcrowding in clubhouse	Slips, falls, burns, scalds	All participants within club house	Moderate	Unlikely	Low	Monitor numbers and place marshalls on doors if necessary to direct people to other sheltered spaces.	Organising committee	On day	
4.4	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
4.5	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. First aiders to remain until all boats secured.	Organising committee	On day	Helpers rota agreed in advance
4.6	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 competitions responsible for the overall planning and coordination and for operations on the day. Actions can and will be delegated to individuals and a list of tasks as allocated to named people is vital in this. It will ensure a *Race Committee* is formed and a Chair appointed well in advance. It will appoint a safety adviser, a welfare officer and the very important race day coordinator *inter alia*.

The *Race Committee* for an event has a very limited remit - essentially it is made up of the umpires on the day of the event, but with the chair, in effect the chief umpire, appointed well in advance by the organising committee with guidance from the regional umpiring committee. The Race Committee deals primarily with umpiring issues, including disqualification etc. However, the Chair of the Race Committee will be consulted in advance on overall arrangements, in the immediate run-up on possible cancellation due to weather conditions, and on the day on postponement of cancellation in case of bad weather or unforeseen incidents.