

ROWING PAD

NEIRA Championship Regatta Instructions

1. The Overall Rules: There will be a coaches and coxswains' meeting via Google Meet on Thursday, May 23, 2024 at 7:00 PM. All coaches and participants are responsible for information presented at this meeting. The NEIRA Regatta will be run in accordance with the USRA's Rules of Rowing. *In addition, coaches should make certain that each participant from their organization has completed the necessary Release of Liability Waiver via RegattaCentral. No paper submissions. Also, please note lanes 1-5 are fully buoyed. Lane 6 does not have a buoy line on the port side (Shrewsbury shore side).*

2. Important features for your equipment:

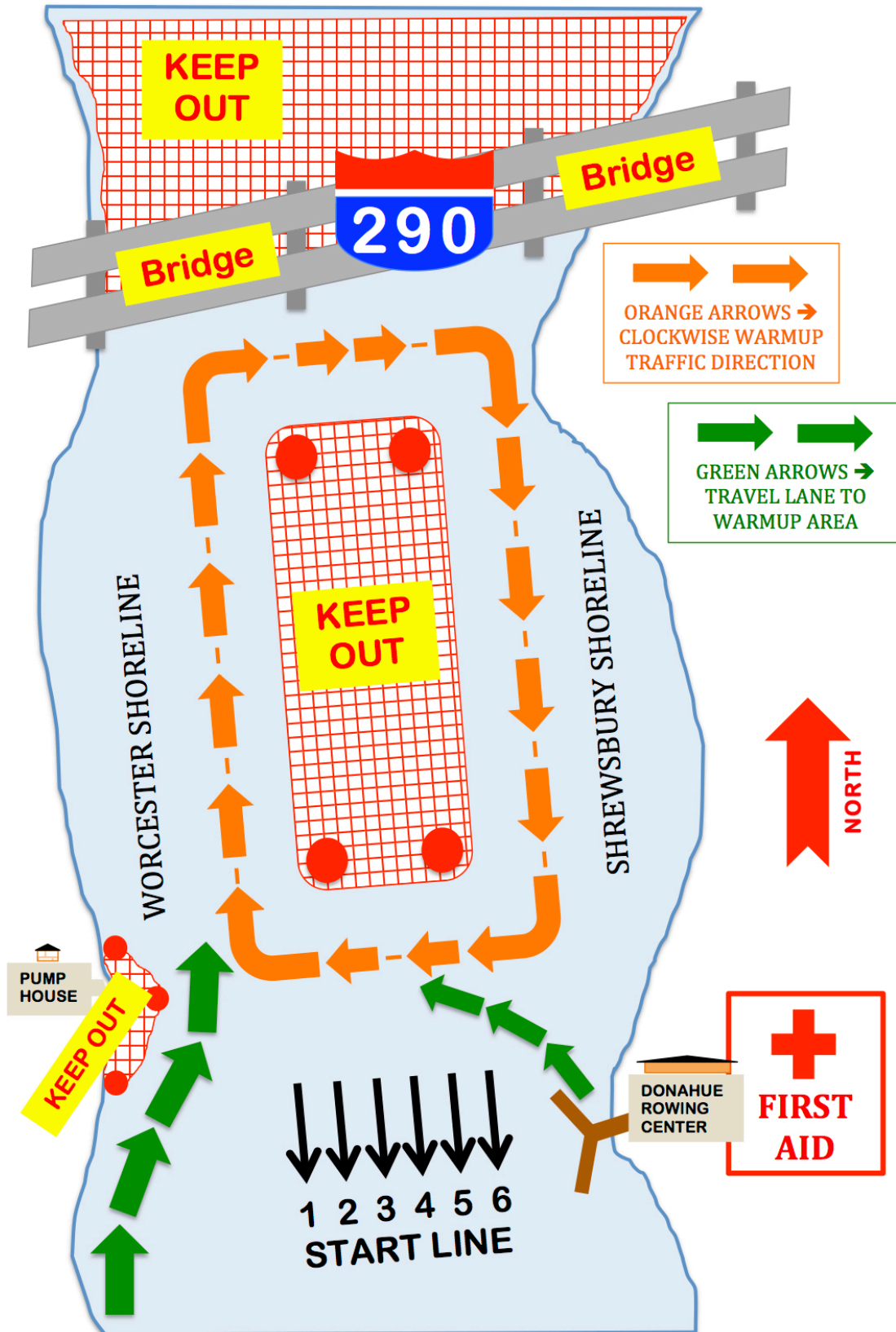
- a. All coxswains should have on their person a **wrist watch set to regatta time**, which is cell phone time.
- b. All shells must have a bow ball or its equivalent.
- c. Make certain that heel tie-downs do not allow rowers to raise their heels from the footboard more than **three (3) inches**. This will allow quick release of their feet in case of emergencies.
- d. Coxswain bow openings in fours should be at least 70 cm (2.3 feet) long and at least 50 cm (1.65 feet) wide.
- e. A Control Commission official at each launching will check the bow balls and the heel tie-downs. Let's make this a 100% year for getting this done before the regatta.

3. Bow Markers: Each school is responsible for supplying its own bow marker(s). Secure marker properly to the bow so that it will withstand wind and rain. Crews appearing without bow markers may be assessed a warning. Bow markers should be sturdy, clearly visible, and not some nominal attempt to satisfy the rules. The best most visible design is a large, rectangular, hard plastic, waterproof, white background, black number. Bow numbers with shapes that differ from this are exceptionally challenging to be seen from the finish line.

4. Warm-ups: Regatta time is on your cell phone. We will stick to the schedule. Crews must be within hailing distance of the start no later than 8 minutes prior to the published starting time. All schools should note that a crew with one warning for a bow marker, uniform or traffic violation **risks exclusion from its race**, if that same crew is assessed a second warning, which includes false starts. Also, please note the following points:

- a. **Note the race day traffic pattern located below on the next page.** Crews launching from the Donohue Rowing Center are not to row down the length of the course as the first part of their warm-up.
- b. Crews scheduled to race in the first race of the morning, or the first race of the afternoon should warm-up within hailing distance of the Start. Keep track of your time. We do not want you to miss your race. Coxswains should have a **wrist watch** with them set to cell phone time, or their **cell phones**. You will note that in the Rules of Rowing, the restriction against electronic devices has been deleted.
- c. As crews approach the 500-meter mark, a Race Marshal may stop boats temporarily to allow oncoming races to pass safely through this narrow point on the course. Once released by the marshal, crews rowing northward should stay off the racecourse.
- d. Crews rowing to the Start should stop their boats as a race comes down the course. Once the boats have passed. The crews may continue their course toward the starting area.
- e. **Avoid the Shallows at the Pump House:** When rowing northward beyond the starting line, coxswains should keep their boats to the right of the shallow water marked by buoys on the Worcester shore. This is extremely important. *If you go between the shore and the buoy you will risk losing your skeg and/or subject your shell to worse damage.*
- f. Crews should warm up over a large course between the starting dock and the Rte. 290 bridge. Please observe a **clockwise, rectangular traffic pattern**, keeping the neutral zone in the middle free of boats. Failure to observe the traffic pattern is a safety hazard and may result in a warning. No one is to row north of the 290 bridge. We will have a marshal there who will also direct traffic back down toward the start. This warm-up pattern is not the EARC, or college pattern, nor is it the one videoed on the NEIRA website.

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5. Voiding: There shall be **NO** urinating into the lake. This is strictly forbidden and will result in disqualification from the regatta. This may also mean that you and/or your crew will be arrested.

6. Approaching the Start Assembly Area: There will be an Assembly Marshal stationed on the dock at the Donohue Rowing Center (DRC). Approximately 8 minutes before each race, the marshal will direct the crews to line up in numerical order (1-6) on the Shrewsbury/DRC side of the lake. The crews on the Shrewsbury (EAST) side of the Lane 6 dock and then turn to starboard so that they will cross the course to enter Lanes 1-5. They will turn their shells and back into their starting platforms. Lane 6 has it easy: All they need to do is row parallel their starting dock and back into position without turning. **CREWS SHOULD BE WELL TRAINED IN THE FOLLOWING:**

- a. **Approach to Start Platform:** Coxswains should row across the course, close to the starting platforms and, when they are in their lane, turn the boat so the stern is pointing toward the starting platform. Then back into the waiting hands of the stake boat person.
- b. **Backing:** If the coxswains practice the approach described above, there should be a minimum of backing. **However, crews will still need to practice backing.** Crews should back keeping the boat level, without catching crabs. Coxswains and crews should be ready to hold water so as not to back into the starting dock. This is most effectively done if the entire crew is told to square up their blades when they need to stop the boat. This is especially important if there is a strong south wind. In this case, crews should be ready to hold water by actually taking a half-stroke. Coxswains should keep their rudders straight while backing. In bow-loaded coxed fours, the coxswains cannot see the stern, therefore **the stern pair** should work together to back the shell into place. Stroke or three can make the commands.
- c. **Pointing the Boat:** Coxswains may need to point their boats to the right or to the left of the targets on the bridge, depending upon the wind direction and its force. If the wind is strong from either side, it may mean pointing the boat 10-15 degrees away from the target so the bow presses against the wind.
- d. **Pinching the Boat:** If the wind is blowing lightly, this usually means that bow or two will take short strokes (**arms only** and at full slide, full body angle, and full reach) to keep the boat angled properly. When "pinching," keep the blades square. If the wind is blowing hard, then two may need to take bow's oar, or three will take two's oar. If the wind is blowing very hard, coxswains of eight-oared shells may direct four to take three's oar or five will take four's, in addition to the other person who is already pinching the boat. The rest of the crew should keep the boat set up. Coaches should have trained their crews in the proper techniques. **Crews should NOT use their legs, or slides, to pinch the boat.** If all crews cooperate, then no boat will pull off the dock prematurely. Coxswains should remember that their "point" might be to the right or to the left of the target, depending upon the direction of the wind. Coaches should teach their crews these techniques far in advance of the regatta. It is not the officials' duty to teach them how to do these things. It helps ease your crew's anxiety at the start if they have practiced it **many times** before coming to the regatta.

7. The Starting Commands will be per USRowing rules of rowing for all races: alignment will begin once two or more crews have walked onto the starting platforms. Crews should be actively working to maintain their points during this process. If a crew feels that it does not have satisfactory point down the course or is not ready for any other reason, the coxswain's arm should be raised as high as possible --**FULLY EXTENDED**--and the crew should be taking corrective action. **In bow-coxed boats, bow should raise his/her hand, not the coxswain.**

Once all hands are down, the Starter will announce the names of each of the crews. Once this process begins, the starter shall not recognize hands however adjustments may continue to be made until announcing is complete. After all crews have been announced, the starter shall call out **Attention!**, raise the starters flag overhead, and then call out **Go!** There will be a distinct pause between "Attention!" and "Go!" There should be **NO MOVEMENT** in the boat until the Starter says, "Go!"

Coxswains are expected to manage their boats so that as the final starting command is given, all shells will be in the proper position. During the countdown and before "Attention!" one or two of the rowers may continue to pinch the boat to keep it in position.

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8. Once the announcing has begun, the Starter will NOT recognize coxswains' hands. Thus, coxswains and crews must do all that is necessary to keep the boat aligned. Once again, DO NOT to use the legs, or the slide, in pinching the boat.

9. Quick Start: If weather or other conditions prevent use of the normal starting procedure, the Starter may dispense with the announcement of crews and the Countdown Start. The Starter first shall announce to the crews that a "quick start" will be used. When all crews appear to be properly pointed and ready to race, the Starter shall immediately call out "Quick Start!" followed by the starting commands: "Attention!" (Pause) "Go!" **Once the announcement of "Quick Start" is made, the starter shall disregard any crew signaling that it is not ready.**

10. Equipment Breakage: All crews are responsible for a complete check of equipment prior to leaving for the start. In the event of equipment breakage or any major mishap within the first 100 meters (see Article 8 of "Rules of Racing"), the coxswain should raise his/her hand immediately and stop the boat. The Referee will stop the race and determine the severity of the breakage and the appropriate action -- restart, postponement, etc. A crew that falsely claims breakage or any major mishap within the first 100 meters, and as a result stops the race, may be penalized by the assessment of a Warning. If that crew already has a violation for traffic, uniform, or bow marker, the false start of a race, which is now a second warning, will result in Exclusion.

11. HEED THE WHITE FLAG--Adherence to Referees' Directions: As each race proceeds, each crew is expected to maintain their proper course in their own lane. If a boat is moving into another lane, the following referees will call to that boat and direct it in the proper direction with a white flag. **The stern pairs of the offending crews should alert their coxswains to take action. In bow-loaded fours, the bow pair should alert the coxswain.** Failure to follow the referee's instructions may result in a collision and subsequent exclusion from the race.

12. Objections and Protests: In the event of an objection, it must be made on the water at the end of the race. The referee on the water shall hear out the objection and attempt to resolve it on the water. If the crew does not agree, the referee shall red flag the race and the protest must then be presented in writing to the Committee of Management or the Regatta Director within one hour of the completion of the race in question.

13. Questions? Call Dug Stowe at 617-592-4834 or send an e-mail to dstowe@lutco.com

Last revised: 5/14/2024