

Head of the Avon Gorge 18th January 2009

Notice to Visiting Crews

If you are travelling on the M4 motorway, exit by junction 20 to join the M5 motorway, southbound. Exit the M5 by junction 18 at Avonmouth and follow the A4 towards Bristol, turning right at the crossroads at Hung Road, Shirehampton.

If you are travelling from Bristol, follow the A4 towards Avonmouth, turning left at the crossroads at Hung Road. (This is the only crossroads junction between Avonmouth and Bristol)

Cars only Follow Hung Road to its end in a T-junction. Turn right into Nibley Road. After 100 metres, a small lane on the left leads into the Port of Bristol Social Club, where permission has been granted for cars only to park on the disused tennis court on the right hand side. Do not park in the members' car park proper or your vehicle will be towed away.

Boat trailers Proceed along Nibley Road and turn left into Dursley Road. Follow Dursley Road, turn right into Stroud Road and then right again into Nibley Road. Marshalls will arrange temporary parking until there is an instruction for you to proceed to Shirehampton slip one at a time. Follow Nibley Road to the downriver junction with Dursley Road. Turn left into Station Road and left again near the river. Remove the boats from your trailer and take them into Shirehampton Sailing Club's compound. Unhook your towing vehicle and park it sensibly in the nearby streets. Manhandle the trailer into the Sea Cadets' compound which is downstream. On no account try to drive your trailer away until all competitors are afloat. This procedure has been agreed with the police and local residents. Failure to comply will bring about the cessation of this event.

Since this event is rowed in one direction, it is advisable to have a non-rowing driver in your squad. Once the crews are afloat, the towing rigs can be driven to Albion Dockside Estate, Bristol, via Station Road, Dursley Road, Hung Road, and the A4. If your driver is rowing in the race, advise race control and arrangements will be made to transport such people back to Shirehampton after the race.

Report to race control in the main deck of Avonmouth Sea Cadets where you will receive your boat numbers, to be worn by bow and cox. Please return these numbers after the race. Because of the acute time limitations imposed by tidal conditions, no other form of documentation can be permitted at this juncture. That is the reason why incomplete entries are not acceptable.

Rule 1

Small boats will go afloat from **1015hrs** onwards, each crew being called in strict numerical order. It is vital that blades and seats accompany the boat simultaneously, and stewards will assist coxwains and coaches with this exercise. Fours then eights will follow in the same manner.

Rule 2

The launch must be immediate on reaching the pontoon, and absolutely no adjustment is permitted alongside, but if necessary in open water several lengths downstream. Remember the incoming tide will drift you back towards the crews launching after you, so paddle on accordingly. Disregarding this rule means disqualification.

Rule 3

Warming up exercises may be performed in a counter clockwise circulatory pattern by paddling downstream for 500m towards the M5 bridge and back upstream towards Pill village. Do please keep to the starboard hand at all times since this river is navigated by sea-going vessels. The launching window will span some 40 minutes.

Rule 4

Start time is scheduled to complete by **1110hrs**, so after warming up, all crews should present themselves in ascending numerical order in the marshalling area off the Somerset bank, downstream of Pill Village, bows pointing upstream. Keep close to the bank in order to minimise wind drift. The start line is the downstream edge of Pill slipway, and the crews will be started by the command "X club-no X-Go!". The small boats will lead off, followed by the larger boats in order to concertina the spread time of the racing crews, because of the time limitations imposed by the tide. The start timing station will be at Shirehampton Sailing Club.

Rule 5

During the race all crews should keep to the starboard hand (bowside). There is plenty of room for overtaking in the fairway, but do not stray across to the port hand. Remember that some sea-going vessels can only navigate in the fairway because of their deep draught, and they cannot take evasive action.

Rule 6

The finish will be signalled by a bell about 300 metres upstream of the Clifton Suspension Bridge. Paddle on to Tongue Head and be alert for the instructions of the Dockmaster. Passage through the entrance lock into Cumberland Basin is strictly under his control. If the field of crews is too great for one locking operation, the Dockmaster will organise an extra locking, which must be performed earlier than the scheduled time. This highlights the importance of Rule 2.

After locking, all crews will paddle through Cumberland Basin into Bristol Harbour, but take great care passing through Junction Lock since this area is used by Bristol Ferry Company who have right of way. Cross to the starboard hand of the harbour and paddle to Bristol Marina, disembarking at the City of Bristol Rowing Club's pontoon.