

WOMENS EIGHTS HEAD OF THE RIVER

2026 Competitors' Instructions

River closure: 11:15am Race Start: 12:15pm

You must understand the navigation rules on the Tideway and the extra rules in force during the race. If you are in any doubt, ask your host club for advice.

Safety

Safety cover will be provided from 11:15am until approx. 2:45pm. Visiting crews out for practice outings outside these times are advised to carry a mobile phone, with the number of their host club. When there is no dedicated safety cover, dial 999 and ask for Coastguard.

Anyone in need of assistance should notify a marshal or safety boat. If a crew member falls out of the boat you must stop and help. Following crews must take avoiding action and alert rescue craft.

In the event of an incident: if practical, stay with the boat and wait for the safety launch. At the landing site the crew must stay together and go to the designated boathouse for head count and medical checks. Designated boathouses along the course are: MAA; Civil Service; AK; Vesta.

Hypothermia

Layers of clothing are more effective than one warm garment. The outer layer should be wind and waterproof.

Dehydration

Regardless of weather conditions and temperature, carry water with you.

BE SAFE - BE AWARE

Marshalling

The marshalling area map is overleaf. You may not cross the river above Barnes Bridge after 12:00pm. Race pace or firm pressure is not permitted in the marshalling area at any time.

You are on a fast-moving river – keep pairs rowing to stay in position and row on with six or eight when your division moves up. Keep bows pointing towards the bank. **Take care near fixed objects** (e.g. piers, bridges). Stern pair should watch that you do not drift back.

When asked to spin to the start, aim to turn into the middle of the river: do not spin on the spot. Rowers on the side closer to the bank should row on; the others should hold water.

Stopping the race

If the race has to be stopped or suspended once crews are afloat/underway: marshals will stop crews by waving RED flags & sounding sirens. Crews must STOP, HOLD POSITION AND WAIT for further instructions. Do not put yourself & others at risk by not obeying.

Finishing the race

At the finish, paddle through both bridges before spinning. Keep moving at all times. Use rolling sixes rather than stopping altogether for kit etc. If the Combined Sewer Outfall shows a red or amber light, you must **not** use the arch of Putney Bridge nearest the shore nor row behind Putney Pier.

