



## **Rules of the River Don (Please retain for future reference)**

### **SPECIAL NOTES:**

The River Don is used by large Commercial Barges who must have unimpeded right of way due to their length, beam and draught, which makes them very difficult to manoeuvre. They must be given maximum clearance, especially by sculling boats to avoid being sucked under their sterns.

### **ANGLERS.**

Please have a respect for others using the river. Many anglers now fish with carbon pole rods projecting well out into the river. These are difficult to see. Try and give them room **BUT DO NOT PUT YOURSELF OR CREW INTO THE PATH OF BOATS TRAVELLING IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION.** Study the map and note the stretches of river most frequently used for fishing. The river in the cut above the lock at Sprotbrough is **OUT OF BOUNDS** to all Doncaster R.C. members.

### **GENERAL**

The rules set out represent the essential rules that will ensure river safety and a respect for others users of the River Don.

Coaches, coxes, and crews must make themselves familiar with the rules and the river. All need to know the marks, the various standard distances and main areas of danger as well as respect the effect of stream. One of the major problems is crews stopping on the river. A crew sitting on the water is a hazard. The hazard becomes very dangerous when the boat is not pulled right into the bank, when on a stretch of the river where crews may well be doing a timed piece of work moving at full speed. Crews training at maximum speed may not see a boat parked in the fast lane and that may well lead to a lethal situation. You must not stop for a lecture on rowing in the narrower reaches of river defined on the map on the safety board due to high risk of collision with a crew doing a timed piece. It is good practice to inform other crews on the water of any work schedules that may be important to safety and not just do a piece with expectations that others will have to get out of the way - inform others.

**REMEMBER:** Coxless boats and scullers only have the opportunity to glance behind them. Do not sit immediately in front of them as you will not be seen and may cause a serious accident.



## Rules of the River

- 1) All boats **MUST** keep to the **RIGHT HAND** side of the river. The bowside of the boat is close to the bank. This means that boats going upstream to Sprotbrough keep to the Sprotbrough (or northern bank) side of the river, keeping close to the bank as you pass under the railway and footbridge. Boats going downstream to Doncaster Lock must keep to the Club house or south bank side of the river.
- 2) The **OVERTAKING** boat **MUST** move to the centre of the river. The **OVERTAKING** boat has right of way over the boat being overtaken. The boat being overtaken **MUST** keep as close as possible to the bank,
- 3) An **OVERTAKING CREW rowing downstream** has right of way over an overtaking crew rowing upstream.
- 4) Crews that are stationary because they are being coached or rested must do so on a part of the river where they pose no major hazard. Crews must not be stationary on the parts of the river that are used for timed pieces. Any crew stationary **MUST** be as close to the bank as possible.
- 5) As far as possible boats should only be turned at the following points:
  - a) At either end of the full reach i.e. Sprotbrough Lock, Doncaster Lock
  - b) The start and finish of a 500m marked reach provided that the crew is rowing off immediately.
  - c) On the wider stretches of the river beyond the first bend upstream from the club, and on the wider stretch **BELOW** the regatta finish, clear of the narrow bend immediately after the regatta finish.
  - d) Where it is necessary to turn a boat at any other point, coaches and crews must do so with great care and circumspection.
- 6) Crews should **NOT** turn:
  - a) On the bend close to, and between the railway and footbridges upstream of the rowing club.
  - b) At the end of the straight by the regatta finish.
  - c) Between the 500m marker below Newton Farm and the river cut. **THIS IS A RED ZONE (NO GO) WHEN THE RIVER IS IN SPATE.**
- 7) **CREWS LEAVING A LANDING AND CROSSING THE RIVER MUST DO SO AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE** and **ONLY** if the river is clear of crews approaching the clubhouse area. Crews returning upstream to their landing must not crossover until almost opposite the landing.
- 8) **NO CREWS ARE TO BOAT IN DARKNESS OR TO BE AFLOAT IN DARKNESS.**
- 9) **CREWS ARE NOT TO BOAT IN HIGH FLOOD.** For a crew to boat in strong stream conditions, depends upon the ability of the crew and the judgment of the coach. Senior crews must not go afloat if the water is covering the retaining wall of the landing and no juniors are to boat if the water is covering the down stream landing stage. No crews should boat when there are rising flood conditions; this is when the river is high and rising, with excessive rainfall and a high chance of large amounts of driftwood.

**The final decision to boat or not rests with the coach in charge.**



### **NOTES: COACHING ON THE RIVER DON.**

Coaches have the responsibility to educate all athletes not only the technical aspects of our sport but also the importance of safety and the rules of the river. All athletes have the responsibility to be aware of and abide by the ARA Water Safety Code and the local rules as adopted by the club.

NOTE: The River Don is a commercial waterway and commercial barges will have right of way due to their size and timetable of operation.

- 1) Make sure that your crew is on the correct side of the river.
  - 2) If you want to stop the crew in order to talk to them, make sure that you do so in a safe place and that the boat is as close to the bank as possible. No crews should be inconvenienced or in danger as a result of your action.
  - 3) Avoid giving a rowing exercise when it will impede the progress of other crews, this is especially important when approaching the bend by the railway bridge or the end of the regatta course ...
  - 4) Keep slow moving boats as near to the bank as possible.
  - 5) Give way to crews that are obviously "Rowing a Course" and coming past.
  - 6) Turn crews at the most suitable places on the river
  - 7) Be aware of other river users and try to anticipate their movements, especially boats that do not have coxes like scullers and pairs.
  - 8) Be aware of the possibility of crews approaching landing stages on the wrong side of the river.
  - 9) Always warn crews, your own as well as others, of approaching danger.
  - 10) Make sure that your crew is capable of stopping the boat in the case of an emergency.
  - 11) Try to avoid pleasure boats by getting your crew out of their- way. They can do more damage to you than you to them. Assume they do not know the rules of the river.
  - 12) Try, when possible, to go behind pleasure boats as they can not stop as easily as you.
  - 13) Do not take inexperienced crews out in bad conditions. It is better to be safe than sorry.
  - 14) Novice crews with novice cox should only be on the water with very experienced coaches.
  - 15) All crews and cox should be 50m swimmers, with a lifejacket for cox.
  - 16) Show tolerance to novice crews and coxes, we all have to learn.
  - 17) Be aware of "THE WYRE LADY". This pleasure steamer is large and requires middle stream for passage.
- Have safe and enjoyable rowing.



## NOTES: COXING ON THE RIVER DON

A cox is in charge of the boat and the first responsibility that any cox has is the safety of the crew of the boat and that the boat does not endanger any other river users. The second responsibility is to follow the direction of the coach and to steer the boat along the most suitable course. The skills of a cox are greatly respected and can be developed by sculling, studying books and gaining knowledge and understanding from the experienced. The cox has the responsibility to be aware of the safety code of the ARA and the locally adopted rules as well as river knowledge as shown on the map of the River Don. Below are some notes on important safe coxing practice.

1) It is good practice to boat with the BOW pointing UPSTREAM. This enables the cox to have control over the boat. This is most important when there is a stream on the river. At the Landing it also prevents crews leaving the landing and causing problems with traffic coming downstream. Boats must not leave the landing stage unless the river is clear. After leaving the landing stage the crew must make its way across to the other side of the river. Any adjustments by crew members must be carried out before leaving the landing stage or while the boat is held close to the bank on the other side of the river. Adjustments **MUST NOT** take place in mid stream.

2) Turning the boat:

a) Make sure that you are in a safe position to turn. There are places that other users expect boats to be turning.

b) Check to make sure that you are not going to impede other crews. This check will involve a look over the shoulder to determine if there are going to be following crews that will be up to you before the turn is complete.

c) Turn as quickly as possible, trying to leave room for any passing crews.

d) If possible use the stream to help the boat round. This is done by, if turning to go downstream, bowside taking a few strokes so that the fast water in the middle of the river pushes the bow. If turning to go upstream then part crossing the stream by bowside rowing then leaving the stem in the stream as the turn is completed; this not only speeds up the turn but leaves the boat in a correct position.

e) When completing a turn move off or right into the bank. **DO NOT JUST SIT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE RIVER.**

3) You are not to turn close to the railway bridge or close above the cut footbridge. If turning above this bridge consider the stream and how much room you will need. The faster the stream the more room is needed. If you feel that you are too close then go past the cut and turn below or back a down until you have a safe distance. The current will push the boat towards the low barrier. Be decisive, if you hesitate the stream will take charge.

4) The cox is in charge of the boat even if a coach is present. Responsive action needs to be taken at all times. When asked to easy by the coach:

a) Do your check to make sure that you do not impede others.

b) Move to the bowside bank and easy.

c) Don't hesitate to interrupt if the boat is drifting out into the river. Quietly give instructions to keep the boat in close to the bank.

d) Be on the lookout for other boats. Warn coxless boats. Be ready to ask your crew to shorten their oars IF IT IS SAFE so to do.



5) On a river the boat usually drifts in the direction that the upstream end is pointing.

This means that if you are parked up then the upstream end needs to be pointing into the bank. You will be pushed and held close to the bank. The stronger the stream the greater the effect.

6) Overtaking is a manoeuvre that needs considerations.

a) Is it clear ahead and check over your shoulder for following boats?

b) Is the boat that you want to pass close to the bank? If not shout that you want to pass.

c) Move out when about 1 length from overlapping (going upstream if you move out too soon you will probably never catch them).

d) As soon as you have clear water move back to your side.

7) The rudder works by creating drag on the side of the boat towards which you want to turn; this means that it also acts as a break and slows the boat down. On a straight stretch of the river keep the boat on course by small rudder movements. Pick a distant steering mark, and correct as soon as the boat wanders off. Remember that there is always a response lag both before and after. Once the boat has changed direction it will continue to do so even after the rudder has been put to centre. Permanent zigzags can be avoided by squeezing a little opposite rudder as the boat comes back onto course.

Compliments, Comments or Complaints to Safety Advisor