

Competition Organisers' Manual

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Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide an outline guide to running a Regatta. From start to finish we will provide details of authorities you need to inform, publicity for your regatta and the bones of how to plan it with the correct documentation.

It's not as hard as you might think.

Rules, safety & Child Protection

All affiliated Regattas must be run under the British Rowing Rules of Racing. Details of these rules can be found on the British Rowing website at <http://www.britishrowing.org/competing/rules>

The Rules of Racing are divided into different sections dealing with different aspects of racing such as:

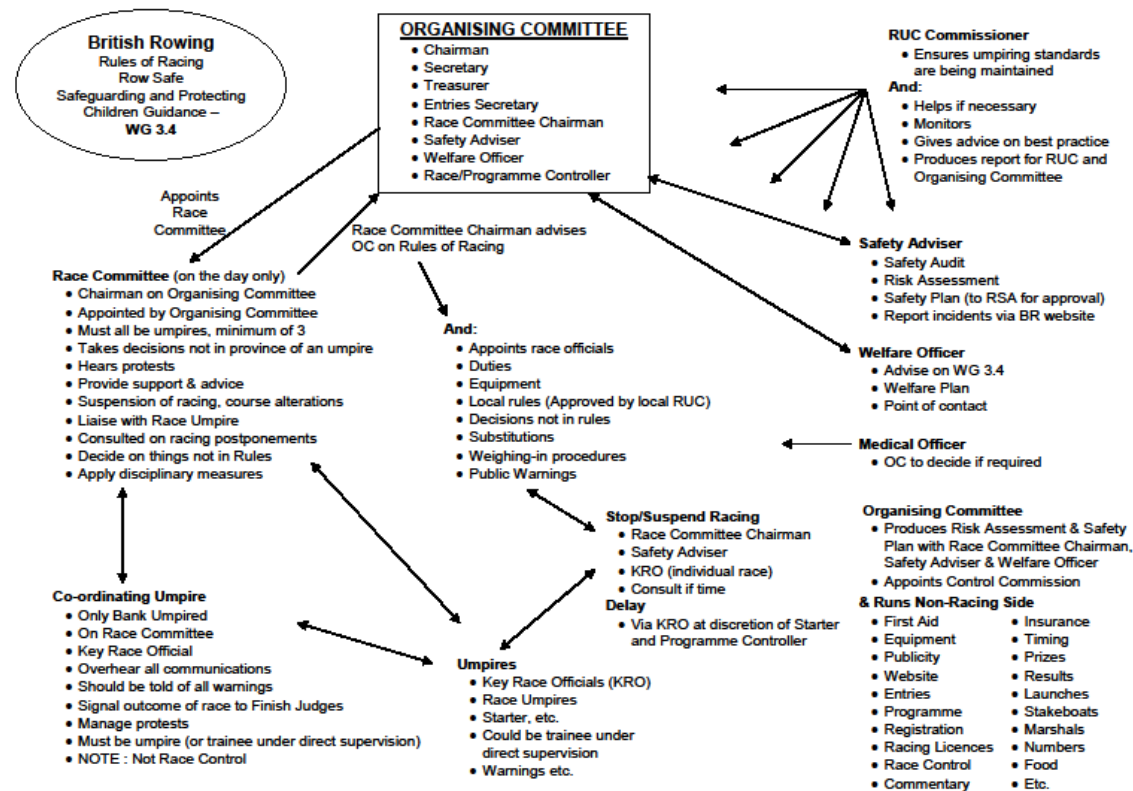
- Regatta Organisation
- Classification of Events
- Competitors
- Conduct of the Race

In addition all affiliated Regattas must comply with:

- RowSafe, British Rowing's Safety guidance,- details of which can be found at: <http://www.britishrowing.org/taking-part/staying-safe/rowsafe>
- British Rowing's Safeguarding and Protecting Children Guidance - WG 3.4 : <http://www.britishrowing.org/upload/files/Association/Welfare/BritishRowingWG3.4.pdf>

Organising Committee

The essential starting point in organising a Regatta is the formation of an Organising Committee. This committee does not usually take on all tasks and its interaction with other people and organisations is outlined in the diagram.



Forming an Organising Committee

The following roles will be necessary for the smooth running of your competition:

Role	Responsibility
Chairman	Oversees the whole operation
Secretary	Takes notes at each meeting and keeps the process on track, produces a Volunteer's rota for the day and gets the Regatta Programme printed
Treasurer	Produces simple accounts of income and expenditure and has a good supply of change for floats on the day
Entries Secretary	Collates the entries via British Rowing's Online Entry (BROE) and puts them into a spreadsheet to produce a draw.
Race Committee Chairman	A qualified umpire who forms the Race Committee and runs the racing on the day
Safety Advisor	Reviews the Competition Safety Plan and submits it to British Rowing before the event and takes decisions on Safety throughout the process
Welfare Officer	Competitions have a duty of care for children. British Rowing's WG 3.4 provides guidance. Your club will have a Welfare Officer who could be on duty on the day of the Regatta to deal with any welfare matters that may arise
Race / Programme Controller	Organises voluntary marshalls for Regatta day to ensure the safe running of the event.
In addition you probably need:	
Catering Head	Coordinates volunteers to organise and run the catering for Regatta Day. This may be just cakes and sandwiches, or could include a barbeque, the choice is yours. But remember this, if run well, could be a valuable form of income for the event. Do not forget you need to feed the officials!
Publicity / Marketing	Oversees publicising and marketing the event.

Making a plan

The following sections cover in more detail what you need to do. But you also need to decide when things need to be done. For example:

- How long do prizes take to deliver from ordering?
- When do you need to book First Aid by?

As you decide what you need to do, try to come up with a schedule of when each of these jobs needs to be completed – working back from the date of the competition.

Then at your regular Organising Committee Meetings you can check progress against the schedule and make sure nothing gets overlooked. See Appendix I.

Notifying authorities

This will vary depending on where you are and what you are doing but think about who you have to notify and who would appreciate being notified.

Organisations you need to inform or request permissions from:

Who	Why
British Rowing	Submit a request for permission to hold your competition on a certain day. The event calendar is organised on a yearly basis, some 18 months in advance. Ask your Regional Rowing Council Chairman for details of how this is co-ordinated in your region.
Navigation Authority	This may be the Environment Agency, the Canal & River Trust or another local body. You may need their permission but you certainly need to contact them.
Local Council	If use of public land is needed for spectators, umpires, etc.
River Users Association (or local user's body)	Fishing clubs, boat users, people who generally share the water with us.
Police	So that they know that there will be a large amount of people gathering for an event
Lock Keepers	So that they can warn / control river traffic on the day
Resident's Association	Notifying them of an event is likely to ease any complaints afterwards
Rowing information websites	Of course you need to have your event listed for ease of information for entrants

Booking services

The following services will need to be booked to ensure the smooth running of the event:

- **Safety Boats** - Safety requirement
- **First Aid** - Safety Requirement
- **Sound System, radios (dual band base station) and megaphones**
- **Portable Toilets** - Something the local Council usually require you to have
- **Race numbers** - Paper race numbers are available from multiple suppliers, usually by the hundred, but you need to order before the entries are in.
- **Changing facilities** - What if people fall into the water or the weather is poor?
- **Umpires** - Usually recruited by the Chairman of the Race Committee
- **Local Paper** - Articles/photos highlighting the success of the event can boost publicity of your club.
- **Parking** - Where is everybody going to park? Do you need to arrange extra parking?
- **Security** - Will you need overnight security for boats, tents, equipment, etc.?
- **Commentary** - Someone good at commentating can lift the whole competition.
- **Photographer** - e.g. Big Blade, Rowing Photography. They usually have photographs on sale for competitors to purchase.
- **Prizes** - These should be ordered before the entries come in so estimate how many you will need - Don't have a date on them in case you don't need them all or you have to cancel; this way they can be reused.
- **Prize Giver** - This can be an opportunity depending on your aims - a well-known rower to inspire competitors, a well-known local personality to attract local publicity and raise the profile or the local councillor or Mayor if you are looking to build a local relationship!
- **Programme Printer** - A printer who can deliver the programs within 2/3 days of receiving the artwork
- **Change of Navigation signs** - Talk to the local Navigation Authority or lock keeper to see what is appropriate / available.

Other things to plan

On the day the Race committee & Umpires will take care of the racing but the other things surrounding this are the responsibility of the Organising Committee. Use this checklist:

Registration - Somewhere to book in, collect numbers, make substitutions, scratches etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Racing Licences - These will need to be checked for winning crews.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race Control - The central hub of organisation for the racing.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Timing - Will you be timing races? This is not usually essential in regattas but people like it.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Results - How are you going to produce the results quickly, accurately and disseminate them? They can never be produced fast enough!	<input type="checkbox"/>
Getting crews on and off the water - You will need to provide people to make sure the right crews are on and off the water in a timely fashion if you want to stick to schedule. If you leave people to get on with it you are likely to overrun.	<input type="checkbox"/>
“Jobs to do” list - Produce a list of jobs that need to be done before the day with a deadline for each so you can monitor progress and spot problems.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rota - Essential for making sure all of the jobs requiring volunteers are covered and knowing who needs to be where, when. Include all tasks e.g. car parking, prize giving, producing results, catering for officials, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Safety, safeguarding & running the racing

Competition Safety Plan - The competition Safety Advisor needs to facilitate the production of a Competitions Safety Plan (see [Example 1 Risk Assessment for a Junior Regatta](#)). The Organising Committee needs to ensure an effective plan is produced and then make sure it is distributed to competitors and other relevant parties. This plan must have been submitted to the Regional Rowing Council for approval via the Regional Safety Advisor who will advise on its effectiveness. Make sure you check with the region on what timescales for submission are required. See Rowsafe 1.4 and [Example 2 Safety Plan](#).

Marshalls Instructions – The Organising Committee, in conjunction with the Safety Advisor, needs to produce a guide for all marshalls so that they know what is required of them and the procedures to follow in the event of an emergency. See [Example 3 Marshall's Instructions](#).

Marshalls Meeting – It is good practise to hold a meeting a few days prior to the event to brief all marshalls on their roles.

Also consider how you will marshal the water; do you have enough launches?

Make sure these boats have all been serviced prior to the event to avoid any last minute breakdowns.

Life jackets have to be worn by all Umpires and Marshalls on the water. It is your obligation to provide them.

Safeguarding Requirements – You are required to produce a Welfare Statement and Policy to protect the juniors coming to, and taking part in your event. Your Club Welfare Officer must be on duty throughout the day to deal with any issues that may arise. The officer should be suitably qualified to undertake this role. An example can be found in [Example 4 Welfare Statement and Policy](#).

Umpires & the Race committee – The Chairman of the Race Committee will normally recruit enough Umpires to ensure the event can run efficiently and invite two or more of them to join him on the Race Committee. All events need a Race Committee of at least 3 licenced Umpires in order to comply with the Rules of Racing.

Umpires Instructions – The Chairman of the Race Committee, in conjunction with the Organising Committee, will normally write the Umpire instructions in order that they know what is required of them and the procedures to follow in the event of an emergency.

Umpire's Briefing – It is good practise to hold a meeting at the start of the day to brief all Umpires on their roles.

Entries

1. What/who is your target market?

- A specific boat size as in 4s and 8s or small boats?
- A specific age group - Juniors or Masters?
- A specific quality of competitor - Beginners, Intermediate, performance competitors or Adaptive?
- Local event offering all events for nearby clubs?

Do not try to be all things to all people.

2. Is your location suitable for your target market?

3. Agree the course and whether it will be a free start (where boats are aligned by eye) or with stake boats (when the stern of competitors boats are held by someone in an anchored boat to ensure alignment).

4. Decide whether to make your competition open to all entrants or limit it to fewer invited clubs. This is called a “Private Match” and is limited to four clubs in total.

5. Decide the events to be offered

The more options you offer the lower the entry is likely to be in each event and the more prizes you will give away.

6. Decide on the Entry Fees

Look at the budget. Is your aim to balance the books and provide a racing opportunity or are you trying to generate a profit to support other aims?

7. Use BROE for taking entries

Provided by British Rowing this is an easy to use online entry system. British Rowing take the entries, entry fees and supplies details in a spreadsheet for a minimal fee. For details see <http://www.britishrowing.org/competing/online-entry>

8. Do the Draw

All the entries then have to be turned into a schedule of racing. There are many different ways of doing this from drawing names out of a hat to complicated Excel programs. Its best to seek the advice of someone experienced in compiling the draw for established events.

Publicity and involvement

Publicity is one of the most vital and growing areas of event organisation. Just organising an event is not in itself enough to ensure people will attend. You need to raise the profile of the competition with your target audience.

<p>Notice of Regatta—Rule 5-5-1 When you organise an affiliated regatta you need to produce a Notice of the event as per this rule. This is not the same thing as an event poster!</p>	<p>Design an Event Poster This can be as eye catching as you like. See Example 5 Event Poster.</p>	<p>Website Vital in today's world. Even if you see a poster most people will look to, and expect a website with all of the relevant up to date information.</p>	<p>Involve the Membership Get as many juniors, parents and members involved as possible to make life easier on the day.</p>	<p>Contact local companies See if they will sponsor the event in return for advertising in the program and media</p>
<p>Send out email notices of the competition to club members</p>	<p>Send Competition Posters to Rowing Club Secretaries to advertise the competition / invite their club to take part</p>	<p>Allocate someone to write an article for the local paper</p>	<p>Draw up a Volunteer Plan See Example 6 Volunteer Plan</p>	<p>Consider writing an Information sheet for the Competitor and the Spectators These should outline the basics of how the day will run and what the rules are to encourage their understanding and enjoyment of the day. See Example 7a Information sheet for competitors/Example 7b Information sheet for spectators.</p>

Programme

Consider what information you would like to include in the Competition Programme apart from the draw.

Typically the following should be included:

- Brief history of the club / competition and the ethos behind running the competition with criteria for entries.
- The names of Committee members and their roles
- The names of the Umpires
- Acknowledgements and thanks to sponsors (if any!)
- A brief summary of Safety and Welfare and where further details can be found
- How to check in as a crew and collect numbers
- Course map
- General housekeeping—e.g. car parking, boating areas, etc.
- Prize Giver background – many events now give prizes as each final finishes to enable people to travel. However, a traditional prize giving with a successful prize giver makes it more memorable. Plus it's a photo opportunity for all concerned.

See [Example 8 Programme](#)

Catering

This can be a very lucrative aspect of your regatta and can range from just cakes and sandwiches to barbeques. Parents can prove very useful here and it gives them the chance to contribute to an important day in their child's rowing experience.

Consider the need to feed the officials who have given up their day to help run your event.

Also consider a supply of water and food for those who are marshalling all day or in stake boats.

Remember! Catering requires volunteers; you could come to an agreement with a burger van etc. if volunteers are in short supply.

Miscellaneous items

Things you may need:

- Tent for Finish
- Repair Kit for the Boating Area – it is always useful to have a few spares on hand to ensure the smooth running of the regatta, such as spare laces for the shoes, bow balls, nuts and bolts etc.
- Signs
 - Start and Finish
 - Registration where crew check-in and collect their numbers
 - Race Control
 - Boating Area
- Buoys to mark the course
- Tables and chairs for the Registration area and Finish Tent
- Umpires' bells, flags & megaphones.
- Stationery box
 - Highlighter pens
 - Safety pins
 - Sellotape
 - Blutack
 - A4 paper in different colours so that Umpires can colour code the updates to the draw as crews get knocked out throughout the day
 - Two cork boards for result sheets
 - Large board at Registration for the draw to be displayed and updated throughout the day
- Instructions on appropriate use of radios
- Announcement list for commentators – to advertise food and drink, thank sponsors etc.
- Float for caterers and programme sellers
- Contact list for all key volunteers
- Boat License fees—make sure competitors are aware of the relevant navigation authority's boat licencing requirements.

Regatta weekend

On the day of the regatta all that's needed are the final checks and finishing touches – the planning is now ready to be put into action.

What should you do?

- Assess the river / weather conditions
- Erect the Finish Tent, (four tables and 10 chairs, bell box, life jackets and flags)
- Clear trailer and car park areas and reserve space for the ambulance
- Put up signs
- Put buoys into water for race course

All systems go!

Post regatta

Once the event is over, ensure that you follow up on the list of items below and don't forget to thank everyone for their time and effort.

- Publish results on the competition/club website
- British Rowing Returns rule 5-5-6 - Make sure you supply the required details of the competition to British Rowing within 5 days. This must be done via BROE.
- Wash-up Meeting – It is always a good idea to have a meeting within a few days of the competition while everything is fresh in your mind. Consider the things that went well and those that went not quite so well and how you might improve them for next year
- Discuss feedback from attendees and officials
- Sit back and relax..... until next time!

Heads and other processional races

In most aspects these races are organised using exactly the same systems as regattas. Specific differences are listed below:

- **The Course** – Head Races run over longer courses in the winter. This makes the logistics of providing monitoring, safety cover and First Aid more challenging. Generally you need less Umpires but more Race Monitors & safety boats than for Regattas.
- **Rules of Racing** – Head races are still affiliated and run under the same Rules of Racing as Regattas.
<http://www.britishrowing.org/competing/rules> Specific rules relating to head races include 5-4-2 and 7-4.
- **Race Committee** – Head races need to appoint a Race Committee of at least 3 licenced Umpires.
- **Officials Qualifications** – Only the specific roles of Chairman of the Race Committee and Chief Umpire have to be licenced Umpires so you usually need less.
- **Race Monitors** – The entire course of the race has to be in the sight of and monitored by Race Monitors – see Rule 6-1-5e. This can end up being quite a few people on a 5km bendy river.
- **Timing** – With regattas it's the finish order that determines who wins. With head races it's the time the crew takes to cover the length of the course so Timing Teams at the start and finish along with suitable back-up systems are essential.

Appendix

Appendix 1 - Example Organisation Schedule

JOB	DEADLINE	WHO ORGANIZES	DONE?
Prepare poster	Four Months before		
Updating website	Four Months before		
Set up BROE	Three months before		
Send Letters for permissions etc	Three months before		
Book first Aid	Three months before		
Book PA	Three months before		
Order Prizes	Three months before		
Email Poster	Eight Weeks before		
Review and submit Risk Assessment,	Eight Weeks before		
Review and set Race Instructions, safety information, maps etc,	Eight Weeks before		
Decide on a T-shirt supplier	Eight Weeks before		
Updating website	Eight Weeks before		
Decide on the T-shirt slogan	Six weeks before		
Numbers - sort & count	Three weeks before		
Numbers - order if required	Three weeks before		
Numbers - make up new ones	Three weeks before		
Recruit Umpires	Three weeks before		
Recruit Volunteers for the day	Three weeks before		
Updating website	Three weeks before		
Remove reeds	Two weeks before		
Remove weeds / obstructions from the course	Two weeks before		
Knowledge of race marshals with contact details & position.	One week before		
Briefing for ALL marshalls & helpers	One week before		
Check the course for obstructions	One week before		
Prepare the Draw	Monday before		
Send out the Draw with all other info	Tuesday before		
Updating website	Tuesday before		
Prepare event information for helpers & competitors	Friday before		
Print & prepare the program	Friday before		
Prepare & print t-shirt order forms	Friday before		
Prizes - collect, get to boathouse & put somewhere sensible!	Friday before		
Tidy & clean Boathouse	Day before		

Tidy & clean Toilets & changing rooms	Day before		
Set up the boathouse & grounds for the day	Day before		
Prepare info & equipment for volunteers	Day before		
Print out and handle entry forms for registration,	Day before		
Get toilet & car park signs up in Lincoln	Day before		
Sort numbers for registration	Day before		
Brief, equip & sign in volunteers	On the day		
Put finish sign up	On the day		
Buoys in the river	On the day		
Results on website	Day after		
Course records to update	Day after		
Course records on website	Day after		
Tidy & put equipment back in storage at boathouse	Day after		
Enter results on online entry system	within 4 days		
Post out pots	within 2 weeks		
post out any refunds	within 2 weeks		
Write thankyou letters to umpires & others	within 2 weeks		