



Maidenhead Junior Regatta

Maidenhead Rowing Club, River Road, Taplow, Maidenhead, Berkshire, SL6 0AT

A Competitor's Guide to Maidenhead Junior Regatta

Your coach is responsible for telling you when and where you need to be, what to bring with you, and going through the Safety Briefing with you. Here are a few reminders.

Before the Day

1. Check with your coach for **travel arrangements**, be sure you know when and where to be.
2. Make sure your coach has gone through **the safety briefing** with you
3. Study the **Boating and Circulation** plan
4. Check your **equipment** over. Do it again.....we've got lots of safety boats, medics, marshals and risk assessment documents, but your boat and blades are your responsibility.
5. Pack your **bag with clothes**. Bring your BR **membership card** with you. The weather in May can be changeable - be prepared for sunshine and showers. You'll be racing at least twice & you need to be able to keep warm on and off the water. (Waterproof, jumper/fleece, sun hat & lotion and a full change of clothing)
6. Coxes remember to check your **life jacket** and charge your **cox box**.
7. You can buy snacks, cakes and sandwiches or bring your own. Don't forget your water/**drinks bottle**.
8. Keep your fingers crossed for good weather - ours will be.

On the Day

1. Your coach will register you and collect your **crew number**. Make sure you know **when you are racing**, and what your crew number is.
2. Double check your **equipment** is rigged and ready, foot stretchers in the right places, heel restraints and bow balls. You need your blades close to where you are boating from. Coxes need a life jacket, boat number and circulation plan. You may want to take a look at the course from the bank (walk the course) so that you know what to expect.
3. If you are racing first in the morning or just after lunch **wait** until the raft Marshals tell you that the safety boats and Marshals are in place before going afloat.
4. **Be ready** to boat 20-30 minutes before your race time BUT many crews will be boat sharing, so pair up with your opposition to boat together and decrease unnecessary waiting time on the water. **If you think you will be late boating please let Registration (upstairs in the clubhouse) know ASAP.**
5. **Boat as neatly and efficiently as possible.** You'll be launched from the two upstream rafts, **keep a lookout** for leisure craft coming in both directions (they may not see you) row upstream to about 10m before the road bridge and turn when it is safe to do so.
6. **Take extra care** in the narrow stretch between the clubhouse and just after the railway bridge. As well as leisure craft travelling in both directions, you will also be meeting crews who have just finished racing. Listen out for Marshals' instructions from bank Marshals and safety boat Marshals.
7. Below the railway bridge, keep in the navigation channel, on the bank side - don't stray onto the course which will be buoyed off. Be considerate of other craft. **NO practice starts** until you are past the start line. **DO NOT GO ROUND THE BEND** out of safety cover: keep to the right side of the channel.
8. **Stay within earshot of the Start Marshals** in the moored launch, who will tell you when to line up at the start. There are no stake boats, and the start may be staggered depending on how fast the stream in the centre of the river is flowing. This makes the racing fairer. The Race Umpire will tell you when to start and will then follow the race in a launch.
9. **Be polite and smile** at the marshals and umpires (in boats and on the bank), you **MUST** try to do as they tell you! They are volunteers who want to see everyone enjoy safe and fair racing. If in doubt - ask.
10. **Please respect other competitors**

11. **Race well.** If it goes wrong, get your crew back together as quickly as possible - things could go wrong for the other crew too (and often do). **It's not over until the air horn/bell sounds at the finish line** (unless the Umpire stops the race). You might be tired now but there are lots of other boats around so stay alert. There should be people ready to help get your boat out when you get back to the rafts.
12. **If the finish judge declares a 'dead heat' you'll be told to turn and go back to the start in the navigation channel to the start to race again!**
13. **In the unlikely event of a capsize - stay with your boat, use it to keep you afloat.** Safety boats and marshals will be there quickly to help, try to listen for instructions.
14. If the racing doesn't go according to your plans don't despair. Even at top level competitions experienced rowers catch crabs, suffer equipment failure or even fail to do up their gates properly. Put it down to experience and enjoy the rest of the day.

Instructions from the Umpires – Race Procedure

At the start

The marshals will hand you over to a British rowing licensed umpire; his/her job is to apply the rules during the race, as follows:

Start Procedure

The Umpire will call you to the start by calling the race number, the competitors and their stations, for example "Race 29, Maidenhead on Berks and Guildford on Bucks". You should then move to the start.

A second Umpire will align you to ensure the boats start level, for example he/she may ask bow to take a stroke or a light tap. Depending on the conditions on the day there may be a stagger on the start meaning one boat would be slightly ahead of the other. Please listen to the Umpire and follow the instructions.

Once you are at the start and aligned the Umpire will re-announce the race by calling the race number, the event, and if time allows the outcome, for example "Race 29 a heat of the J14 beginner quads, the winner goes through to the semi-final and the other crew to the repechage".. There will then be a pause.

Because we have a 'free start' the exact details may vary slightly from the above.

The Start (Roll Call)

The umpire will name the crews in the race, in turn. When you hear this, you should be ready to race. He/she will then say "ATTENTION" and raise a red flag. After a brief pause, he/she will say "GO" simultaneously dropping the red flag. That is your signal to start racing.'

False Start

If any crew jumps the start, the umpire will stop the race by waving the red flag and ringing a bell. You should immediately stop racing: if you continue to race you may be penalised. The umpire will tell the crews to return to the start and give an "official warning" to the offending crew. If a crew gets a second official warning in a race, they are automatically disqualified.

Keeping on station

If a crew wanders off their proper course during the race, they will be instructed to return by the umpire. The umpire will raise a white flag above his head, call out the name of the crew, and then point it in the direction in which they must move. If both crews are merging together, he will raise a white flag vertically above his head and instruct them to "move apart". This may be repeated and if you fail to respond if you fail to follow these instructions, you may be disqualified. Remember that the cox won't be able to see the Umpire so a member of the crew, usually stroke, should relay the message.

Clashing

If two crews in a race actually make contact - for example, their blades clash - the umpire may stop the race by waving a red flag and ringing a bell, or if the clash is minor he/she may let the race continue. If the race is stopped you may be told to go back to the start try again, or the crew at fault might be disqualified, or the Umpire can decide the winner.

The finish

If the race is in order the Umpire will show a white flag to the competitors and the finish judges. If he/she shows a red flag, there is some problem with the outcome, and you should await instructions from the umpire.'

Disputes

If you wish to protest about the outcome of a race, you should raise a hand and call to the umpire, you must raise your hands and call to the umpire immediately AFTER the race has finished, he will come and talk to you about it.

If you are still not happy with the decision or revised decision, you may make an appeal to the Chairman of the Race Committee in the finish tent, but to do so you must be supported by your club captain or senior coach.

After the race

1. **Discuss** with your coach how you can do even better in your next race.
2. Get **clothes** on, **eat, drink** and **find out when your next race is**, and **when and where your coach wants you** to meet to prepare. There are boards outside Registration & Results area which will be regularly updated with results and next races.
3. Please bring your own water bottles which can be refilled from the taps on the garden edge of the towpath alongside the boating area.
4. Changing and toilet facilities are on the first floor of the boathouse - use the front stairs or the back stairs. We have state-of-the art Chubb security systems but DON'T leave valuables around - there'll be masses of people in and out all day.
5. Also on the first floor is a big meeting room where you'll find sandwiches (rolls), cakes and drinks for sale until 11am. If the weather is too hot or cold this is a good place to rest.
6. Go down to the spectators' area on the grassy bank by the finish to support the other crews from your club.
7. When all the races have finished **the prizes** -nice pots (tankards) will be presented in the Club House after the end of racing.

Looking after your supporters

It can seem a very long day for your friends and family if they haven't been to a race before. Encourage them to bring sensible clothes, and something to sit on if it's warm enough.

They will enjoy the day more if they know what is going on. Make sure they know which race you're in and what time it is at. Warn them it may run a bit early or late according to circumstances.

Get them to have a look at the Spectator's guide beforehand and the program on the day.

Impress them with your knowledge of rowing terms like 'backing down' and 'cox box', and the different boat types.

See if they can spot what makes a boat move faster - what makes 'good technique'.

They may wish to buy food and drink for themselves and you at the clubhouse (until 11am) or on the Regatta Lawn at the Finish.

If really restless they can walk along the towpath towards Bray lock and admire the houses or even spot a celebrity.

Next day or so

1. Find out the full results on the Maidenhead RC website