MINERVA BATH ROWING CLUB – SAFETY PLAN

The Minerva Bath Rowing Club aims to comply with the British Rowing "RowSafe" Safety Code. Breaches must be reported to the Club Chair or the Safety Adviser.

Can you swim 100 metres?

- All rowers and beginners at Minerva Bath Rowing Club must be in good health and able to swim a minimum of 100 metres in light clothing.
- All members of the Club and all newcomers to the Club must sign a declaration that they can swim and return it to the Treasurer.
- Any member of the Committee or any coach will have the authority to prevent anyone from going afloat who they believe cannot swim.
- All members shall complete a swim test and capsize drill at the first opportunity after joining the club.
- Junior members and coaches must also comply with the terms of the Minerva Junior Rowing Framework.

Breaches of the British Rowing RowSafe Safety Code

- Notify the Safety Adviser or Club Chair if you believe that the British Rowing RowSafe Safety Code has been breached. If appropriate the offender will be advised in writing and given a period for corrections.

New Members

- New members must study the map of the river on the Club Safety Notice Board located in the Clubhouse to familiarize themselves with the various river hazards.

Safety Equipment

- Lifejackets and Buoyancy Aids
    - No coxswain or safety/coaching boat occupant will be allowed on the water without a lifejacket or approved buoyancy aid.
    - If coxing a "bow-loader" boat the coxswain MUST use a manually inflated buoyancy aid. i.e. NOT a buoyancy aid with foam buoyancy OR an automatically inflated buoyancy aid.

- First Aid / Emergency equipment
    - First aid box is stored in the "ergo platform" area.
    - Thermal blankets are stored with the first aid box.
    - Life-belts are located in the boat shed.
    - Throw-lines are located in the boat shed.
    - Emergency numbers are displayed on the Safety Notice Board on the "ergo platform"

Accident Reporting

- For any water-based incident fill in a British Rowing Online Incident Report at https://incidentreporting.britishrowing.org/ All incidents including near misses and simple capsizes should be reported.
- Land based accidents and near misses should be reported to the Chair and the Accident Book updated.

Equipment Damage

- The Safety Adviser will check club equipment regularly. Particular attention will be paid to the following safety equipment:
    - Safety of the Boathouse
    - First aid box
    - Throw lines and buoyancy aids
- You must inform the boatman or Safety Adviser as soon as possible if you spot any damage to Club equipment or any safety hazard on the site.
- Attach a notice to any unsafe equipment to warn other Club members, and notify the Club Chair or the Safety Adviser as soon as possible.

Boating Basics

- Before boating it is the responsibility of the individual rower to check that the equipment is in a safe condition. In particular, you must check:
    - Heal restraints – are they present, undamaged and short enough (i.e. no longer then 7 cm)
    - Bow ball – is it present and undamaged
    - Boat buoyancy – are all hatches present and secure.
    - IF IN DOUBT – DO NOT GO ON THE WATER
- All crews must boat and come in to the landing stage facing upstream.
- Check if the river conditions are acceptable for boating. If in doubt, ask an experienced member of the club.
- The absolute limits for rowing are specified by the yellow and red markers that are fixed to the upstream end of the landing stage steps. If the river level is at or above the yellow marker then inexperienced crews must not boat. If the river level is at or above the red marker then no crew or individual is allowed to row. There are no exceptions to these rules. *Note: if you cannot see a marker you should assume that it is under water!*
- Beginners are only allowed out under the direct control of a suitable coach..
- Coxes / Steer people are responsible for their crew. If an inexperienced cox is steering a boat, the bow rower in the boat *must* take charge of the boat, and *must* look around at frequent intervals to check that the river is clear, in the same manner as the steers-person in a coxless boat.
- All club Members must sign a declaration that they are have read the Club rules of the water and understand them.
- All scullers who have not passed a competency test may ionly scull under the direct supervision of a suitable coach. Scullers who have passed the competency test at the intermediate level may go on the water with another sculler who has passed at the intermediate or fully competent level. Only scullers who have passed at the fully competent level may scull alone.
- All crews must sign out on the outing log book in the boat shed.
- If you suspect that a crew has not returned by their expected time:
    - Check whether the boat is back in the boat shed.
    - If it is not, and you suspect that there is cause for concern, contact the emergency services.

MINERVA BATH RULES OF THE RIVER

- Safety / coaching boats must not exceed 4 miles per hour other than for safety reasons or when actively coaching a crew
- All crews shall keep to the right-hand side of the river when facing in the direction of travel (i.e. keep to the coxes right, which is the crews left).
- If a crew is on a collision course with you or another boat, SHOUT "AHEAD SCULL/FOUR/EIGHT etc!" *Note: if the boat is some distance away and you simply want them to be aware of you, shout "TAKE A LOOK SCULL/FOUR/EIGHT etc!"*
- At all times, be aware of other crews, *especially crews doing timed pieces*, and do your best not to cause annoyance to anyone.
- Look out for fishermen – if possible do not stop opposite them, especially during a fishing match.
- If you stop your boat in an inappropriate location it is likely that other crews will have to take action to avoid you, so only stop where crews can easily pass you.
- If you are moving slowly (doing starts, single strokes, etc.) keep in to the side of the river and be prepared to move quickly out of the way of oncoming boats.

Dangers

- You must read the “River Hazards” document and abide by the information it contains.
- Scullers and coxless boats - look around regularly - if in doubt, go easy and take a proper look.

What to do if you fall in

- Don't panic
- Stay with the boat – it is large, easily visible and (unless severely damaged) very buoyant.
- If in a crew boat, check that other crew members and the cox are OK.
- If the water is cold, climb onto the boat and lie along it (this mainly relates to singles, doubles and pairs, and is MUCH easier when the boat is upside down). See also the “Winter Rowing Guidelines” document for more information about rowing when the water is cold.
- If the boat is upside-down, consider righting it. This can be quite difficult. The advantage of righting the boat is that it is easier to swim with
- Swim with the boat to the bank. The easiest way to do this is to move to the bows, hold on the the bow of the boat with both hands (whilst facing it) and kick with your legs. Look for a low spot on the bank where you can get out – or maybe a low tree branch that you can stand on. In many places, the river banks are very steep and you may not be able to stand up even when close to the bank.
- If you can get back into the boat, do so and paddle back to the club.
- If you cannot get back into the boat, and there is no other boats on the water who can assist you, leave it (jam it in the bank if possible) and walk back to the club. It is probably best to walk along the far bank, and cross the river at the bridge.
- Note that getting back into the boat is difficult, especially a single scull.

Boating outside of normal club sessions

- If you are boating without supervision (either of a coach or of other crews):
    - Check the river level and also the speed of the river. If in doubt, do not boat.
    - Sculling or rowing in small boats without other boats on the river is not encouraged.

Rowing after dark and in poor visibility

- Rowing or sculling in small boats after nightfall or in poor visibility entails increased risk
- Inexperienced crews are not allowed to row after dark or in poor visibility.
- All outing in the dark *must* be approved by the club Chair or Safety Adviser.
- You *must* display a white light front and rear that is visible from all directions.
- You *must* navigate on the correct side of the river.
- You *should* wear light coloured clothing so that if you go overboard you can be seen easily and recovered.
- The use of lights when boating in gloomy conditions is recommended.

Emergency Information

For emergency use, the nearest land-line telephone is situated in The Boat House Public House.

Normally someone at the club will have a mobile phone that can be used. There is good coverage at the clubhouse.

If you need to direct the emergency services to the rowing club site, the location is:

Minerva Bath Rowing Club
Newbridge Park & Ride (Car Park A)
Newbridge Road Bath
BATH
BA1 3NB

You should send someone to the Park and Ride access road to direct the emergency services to the site.

Note that ambulances and fire engines will NOT be able to get into the Park and Ride car park via the normal entrance. They will need to use the gate next to the bus stop *which is kept locked*. The club chair, site manager and safety adviser have keys to the gate, as do the Park and Ride staff.

If the gate cannot be unlocked the closest road access to the site is at the Boat House pub.

last updated: 29th November 2016