

Long Distance Sculling Series 2020

Preparatory meeting 15th & 20th July 2020

Online via Zoom

Present

Weds 15th – Ian Black (Berwick), Sarah Hodge (Sunderland), Richard Mortimer (NRC), Charly Curtis (NRC).

Mon 20th – Colin Percy (NRC/Tyne ARC), Julia McCumiskey (Lakeland), Steven Leigh (Tees), Beth Holmes (Durham ARC), Stephen Heath (Tees), Helen Carr (Cambois), Paul McCarron (LDS timing/results), Alex Leigh (NUBC), Richard Mortimer (NRC), Charly Curtis (NRC).

Apologies

Catherine Bowman (NRC), John Mulholland (RRWSA), Alex Shiel (Tyne United).

Meeting Summary

At present it is still not clear whether we will be able to go ahead and race the series in 2020. This is primarily contingent on the government relaxing Covid regulations enough and reaching agreement with the sport National Governing Body, British Rowing that allows racing. In addition we need host clubs, relevant local authorities, river authorities and key providers to be in a position to support the running of individual competitions.

The meeting was primarily focussed on Covid related issues as these are the biggest barrier to running the competitions in 2020. Organising committee members were invited from other Northern Region head races to allow all to discuss issues, share concerns and where appropriate develop common procedures. The “LDS/SBH in a Covid-19/socially distanced world” discussion document was examined and issues were discussed as appropriate.

Specific Action Items

- The team will collectively pull together a Covid specific risk assessment template for use/customisation at specific competitions. This is expected to complement the existing risk assessments and any information provided by British Rowing when agreement is reached with the government over the way in which racing can resume.
- Nixon Hire at Berwick no longer exists. Need to identify an alternative source of toilets/cabins. Action Ian Black.

- Charly Curtis to contact Mark Birdsey, Red Seal, to investigate what rescue cover they are able to provide. *Post meeting update – Red Seal are currently not able to operate pending relaxation of RYA Covid rules.*
- All host club co-ordinators to contact first aid and rescue providers (except Red Seal) to see if they are likely to be able to operate this year.

Key Items

- The British Rowing 6 week back to racing timescale may be too short for some of our venues. In particular Tees may need 12 weeks for Canal and Rivers Trust approval processes.
- Consider the economics of running each competition. General feeling is that we should be aiming to at least break even with the additional entry limits/constraints placed on things.

Overall Organisation

Events Offered

- This very much depends on the back to rowing regulations to be published by British Rowing.
- However it seems likely that we will be racing in smaller boats and we will perform initial planning along those lines.
- We would ask individual clubs, especially Schools and Universities, what their racing plans are likely to be. They may have additional restrictions in addition to British Rowing guidance.
- The longer races may not be suitable for younger juniors in single sculls/doubles. We may have to consider targeting some races (Durham, Wansbeck) for the younger competitors. Berwick is definitely NOT suitable for younger juniors.
- The LDS/SBH organising committees may need to consider co-ordinating entries to minimise doubling across morning and afternoon races thus allowing the maximum number of individual competitors to race.
- We may need to consider shorter course and a greater number of divisions to allow more socially distanced boating procedures.
- Victor Ludorum is an unnecessary complication this year. Suggest we do not run it this year.

Entries/Draw

- No significant changes to processes expected although we may need to close entries slightly earlier to cope with longer lead times on items.

- We may need to check competitors competency for the specific competition. Then again the entering club should be making that assessment as part of the normal entries process.

Number Packs

- Need to check crew number lead times from Stacy.
- Consider how to distribute numbers on race day and how to clean the plastic slot numbers between races.

Control Commission/Weigh-in

- General agreement that a reduced regime will be appropriate. Need to agree exact details with the Northern Regional Umpiring Committee.

Landing Stages/Marshalling/Racing

- Scullers/crews should turn up self-sufficient. It will not be practical for the competition to staff/assist with boating/de-boating in all but emergency circumstances.
- Once on the water crews should be mostly “distant” but we may need to consider congestion in the start queues and this may suggest we run smaller divisions.

Umpires/Marshals/Timekeeping/Results

- We will need a cleaning regime for radios/megaphones/other equipment. May need to over-order to minimise the amount of equipment reuse between divisions.
- We are happy that we can do timekeeping/results preparation in a socially distanced manner. But we will not be producing paper results to maximise location flexibility.

Prizes

- Likely will not distribute prizes on the day. Likely make available in subsequent weeks.

Clubhouse

- We cannot run a competition without toilets being available. But social distancing measures will need to be in place. May need to consider additional toilets for Sunderland.
- Crews will be expected to travel “ready to race” and no changing facilities/showers will be provided except for emergency cases. We may need to consider cancellation if the weather is likely to be too wet/inclement due to this.
- Catering at the discretion of the host club. But we need to know in advance to ensure that competitors are aware of arrangements.

- Prioritise on-site space for boating purposes. May need to consider alternate car parking arrangements.