

LDS Report

for NRC Executive Meeting 21st September 2020

The team met via Zoom on 1st September to discuss issues related to the organisation of the 2020 series. Also invited were members of other Northern Region head race Organising Committees to share/discuss Covid-19 related matters.

The situation regarding the running of the 2020 series is still fluid and we now need to make firm decisions as to whether we are proceeding with organising of the series. Whilst we cannot predict any developing situations regarding infections and/or extended lockdowns we do have to move forward.

Key points:

- The Tees (3/Oct) and Berwick (31/Oct) competitions will not go ahead. British Rowing have been informed. Richard still has to mark them as cancelled in BROE.
- At our meeting the other host venues have indicated that they are willing to move forward with preparations.
- Representatives of each host venue and where applicable associated SBH competitions have been invited to the NRC meeting to agree the way forward. Also invited are representatives of Tyne Single Scullers Head who have first hand experience of what is required to prepare a competition.
- At the team meeting we discussed the best way to organise the series. General consensus was that it would be best to combine each LDS/SBH competition into a single draw as follows:
 - Each competitor can only enter once within the day (potentially we would need to allow coxes to double enter assuming bubbles allow that);
 - SBH would be sweep boats only. LDS sculling boats only;
 - The divisions would contain a mix of LDS and SBH crews to give a mix of boat types and to allow clubs that need to share boats some options (clubs would be responsible for sanitising shared equipment between divisions);
 - Some courses would be shortened and some with extra divisions included to allow reduced crews in each division but to give a good chance of getting sufficient entries;
 - We would split revenue and costs 50-50 between LDS & SBH to simplify this.
- Each competition/day needs to appoint a Covid-19 officer to oversee preparations. This is a key requirement and not something that can be skipped.
- We need to extend risk assessments to cover Covid related issues. The core risk assessment can be based off of the TSSH one (all teams have been in discussion for over a month so all are aware of contents and likely requirements). Many of the risks will be common but each day does need its own and the controls/mitigations are likely to differ between each venue.
- Toilets provisions are likely to be a large factor in viability of running each competition. In particular we have to balance entry numbers against likely needs etc.
- Similarly volunteers are key too. We will need additional roles to normal. e.g. trailer parking will need to be more spaced out and regimented; we will need toilet marshals and people to monitor for any issues that need resolving on the day.
- Entry fees need some consideration. We have suggested that we do a blanket raising of prices by 1 pound but this may need revisiting once we finalise entry limits. At a minimum we have to set prices with a view to breaking even at a minimum.
- Based off of TSSH it seems that we will get a good number of entries. Each club will make its own assessment based on its own situation – and that is to be encouraged/supported.
- The biggest risk is the threat of a wider lockdown that may affect everything not just our competitions. If anything it seems like the school half term might be a target for that so we have to be aware of it.
- Should we geographically limit entries? One option would be to limit to those affiliated to the Northern Region.

- We need to think both about numbers of crews and numbers of competitors. Lots of fours/quads are harder to handle than the same number of singles.

Observations/notes from TSSH not covered elsewhere.

- Covid boxes were included in launches (masks etc.). This seems like a good thing to include as standard.
- One lesson learned from TSSH is the value of local council dialogue. It is likely that TSSH would not have gone ahead if NUBC had not been in prior contact with both Gateshead and Newcastle Councils. Both were aware of the measures put in place and were happy to agree to things when the local lockdown was announced.
- Richard needs to find the weather writers before the next race. They are hidden in a box somewhere.

Richard, Charly et al.