

Annapolis Rowing Club, Inc. – 2014 Wye Island Race Safety Plan

Welcome to the Wye Island Regatta!
Saturday, September 13, 2014

We hope you have a safe and enjoyable race.

This safety plan has been produced to incorporate the key features of the Wye Island safety guidelines. We ask that each race participant and volunteer take a few minutes to read it. If you have any comments that may help us improve this plan for next year please let us know.

Key Information

Registration	Registration tent on Wye Landing
Pre-Race Meeting	8:40 a.m. Coxswains and Boat Captains meet with race officials near the registration tent.
Start	9:30 a.m. marked by orange buoys and start boat. Dock masters will direct participants to the start.
Finish	Marked by buoys and finish boat. Officials will close course at approximately 2:15 p.m.
Course	A map of the course will be provided to each boat in the registration packet. A course map will also be available at the Annapolis Rowing Club web site: www.annapolisrowingclub.com .
Marshals	A head marshal and his team will supervise. All participants must obey instructions from the marshals.
Race Directors	Steve Hall
First Aid & Safety Coordinator	EMS Talbot County
Hospital	Memorial Hospital at Easton, MD. 219 S Washington St., (410) 822-1000. Memorial Expresscare: same address as above: (410)820-7777
Park Ranger	Wye Landing: Talbot County Department of Parks & Recreation
Race Timers	Annapolis Rowing Club, Volunteers
Emergency	911 or Md. State Police; 410-822-3101 Easton Police: 410-763-6767

Competitors' Responsibilities

Wye Island race personnel will endeavor at all times to ensure a safe event. All competitors must follow marshals' instructions. All competitors must take extreme care to ensure the SAFETY of themselves, other race participants and volunteers, other boaters and possible swimmers or water-skiers, and all equipment and property both yours and others.

Equipment

It is the responsibility of all race participants to ensure that the equipment that they are using is safe and seaworthy. All participants are expected to comply with boating rules and regulations governing their type of craft. Sweep and sculling boats will be checked for the presence of bow balls, heel quick-release mechanisms, and life jackets for coxes. It is recommended that each boat have a sounding device or signaling device (whistle, horns, etc...) or a cell phone in a water-tight bag is recommended, but not required.

Swimming Ability

Every competitor is expected to be in good health, must be able to swim a minimum of 100 yards as dressed, and be able to tread water for 5 minutes. While there is good access to the shore along the majority of the course we strongly recommend all racers stay with their boats and obtain assistance as needed from other racers or the safety boats.

Know the Rules

The US Rowing and US Canoe and Kayak Rules of Racing will apply as closely as possible, though we don't have separate lanes for each boat. Boats may launch only after race officials call their category. Warm ups can be conducted on the way to and in the vicinity of the start. The numbers for each boat should be clearly displayed - pinned to the front of the first person in any boat rowing forward and on the back of the bow person in rowing and sculling shells. Participants should know their race numbers. If an observation boat on course or the finish boat cannot read it, participants may be asked to call it out.

The Race Course

The racecourse will begin just north of Wye Landing and will continue counter-clockwise around the island. This is a 13.1 mile race; therefore racers may encounter different wind and water conditions on various parts of the course. Participants are asked to study the course map carefully before starting the race.

Race officials will close the course at approximately 2:15 p.m. At that time a sweep boat will pick up those competitors remaining on the course. Any boats choosing to stay in the waters after the course is closed will do so at their own risk.

All winners may collect their medals at the registration table soon after the last racer in their category completes the race.

Accidents

If a racer, safety boat person or race marshal sees an accident they are to give assistance. Time spent by racers giving assistance will be deducted from their race time at the end of the race; a race marshal will recommend the time deduction, which then must be approved by the race officials. Race marshals and safety boats will be on the course, and will be separated by about a mile. If necessary, alert the rescue services by radio or phone as necessary. If you are carrying a radio, you will be able to have access to race control via Channel **71** for all communication between ship-to-ship, and ship-to-shore.

Competitor Safety

While the whole course is generally visible to safety boat personnel and race marshals, it might take a few minutes for them to reach the site of an accident. In the event of capsizing, racers are to stay with their boat, check for the safety of all members of their crew (if any) and either await assistance from safety boat personnel or from other racers.

Competitor Safety, continued

Signal that you need assistance by one of the following methods:

Waving your hand or your paddle over your head. Note, do not wave in such a manner to say “hi” to the safety boats!
Three (3) blasts in succession on your whistle or horn.

Of course, if raising your voice is adequate to get the attention of the safety boat, then that method is acceptable, too.

Each safety boat will have a throw rope on board. At the discretion of the safety boat captain, racers will be either assisted back onto their vessel to continue the race or return to the launch area, or be taken on board the safety boat for return to the launch area. The captain of the safety boat will determine whether to tow the boat to the launch area or beach it so that it may be picked up later by the racer or someone designated by him/ her. In all situations the health and safety of the participants will be of paramount consideration.

Exiting the Course

Should any participants decide they are unable to complete the course they should notify a safety boat immediately by one of the means described above. The safety boat will either pick up the racers or assist them return to the launch area.

***** The Wye Island Regatta Personnel, The Annapolis Rowing Club, volunteers, officials, and all others directed by the Board of Directors are not responsible for participants who exit the course without the consent of race officials. *****

Insurance

All competitors and volunteers must have filled out and signed the Wye Island Race waivers in order to participate in the regatta. Emergency contact information must be provided.

Safety Boat Plan

The objectives of all safety boat drivers are to:

To provide rescue facilities to competitors in the race.

To recover capsized racers without worsening their condition.

To quickly and safely get any injured racers to medical attention (or vice versa).

Not become a victim him/herself.

There will be at least 7 safety boats on the course.

Before going afloat check:

Personal and boat buoyancy

Alternative means of propulsion

Anchor, chain and line

Bucket, bailer and bilge pump

Fuel, including reserve tank

First Aid kit

Engine emergency spares

Fire extinguisher

50 foot throw rope

Two way radio

Cell phone (fully charged)

Car and trailer are properly parked

4 PFD's for rescue

Each boat should also have some sort of binoculars

When on the Course

The driver, and all crewmembers, must have an equal number of life jackets available while afloat. If the launch is used for ferry purposes then all passenger must wear lifejackets or buoyancy aids. Keep a good lookout at all times.

Don't overload your boat

Obey speed limits

Keep to the right in narrow channels or close proximity

When crossing the course, cross quickly at right angles

Keep clear of swimmers, fishermen, canoeists, dinghy sailors and windsurfers

Think how your wash will affect others

Look out for deteriorating weather conditions.

Due to wind and engine noises, trying to shout from a moving powerboat to another vessel is not very successful. Get in close, stop and speak clearly. Choose the right clothing for the prevailing weather conditions and bear in mind the length of time afloat, the possible need for one crew member to enter the water to assist in a rescue, inactivity for long periods in hot weather and the need for agility when moving about the boat. Cold drinks on hot days (non-alcoholic) will maintain the efficiency of the crew. Boat handling skills should be second nature so that you can concentrate on the task of rescue without having to think about how you are going to get the boat into the right position. When a driver is maneuvering outboard powered boats in close quarters, make sure that the correct helm is applied before engaging forward or reverse gear. Look in the direction of travel and check the way is clear.

Recovering from the Water

Competitors will signal that they need assistance by one of the following methods:

Waving their hand or their paddle over their head. Note, they should not be waving in such a manner to say "hi" to you!

3 blasts in succession on a whistle or horn.

Of course, if raising their voice is adequate to get your attention, then that method is acceptable

When a rower needs to be recovered from the water the following precautions must be observed:

The only time high-speed maneuvers should be used is when making the approach to the scene of trouble or when taking injured competitors back to the boat ramp.

Any high-speed approach to the scene must make allowance for the safety of other water users. Use the klaxon or audible warning device to alert other craft. Yield if necessary.

The final approach to the racer in the water must be made carefully and at low speed, in order to weigh the situation and to avoid alarming the person in the water.

On approach provide life jacket (life-ring or similar) to person in the water.

Talk to the person in the water. Make sure they understand what you intend to do and what you want them to do.

Approach from downstream/downwind, as appropriate, in order to maintain control over speed and steering.

When bringing the racer aboard, the engine must be turned off so that no injury can be inflicted by the propeller blades. Leaving the gear lever in neutral is not enough as it is easy to knock it while attempting to get the racer on board. If the speed of the current or other hazards make this precaution dangerous, then use an anchor to hold the launch in position.

Should the racer require urgent First Aid treatment this should be applied before moving off.

Where there are several racers in the water, priority should be given to any injured or younger racers.

Recovering from the Water, continued

At the discretion of the safety boat captain, racers will be either assisted back onto their vessel to continue on in the race or return to the launch area, or be taken on board the safety boat for return to the launch area. The racer's boat will either be beached (where it can later be picked up by the participant or someone designated by him/her) or towed back to the launch area. Operators of the regatta will always place the participant's health and safety paramount to the return of the boat.

Safety Boat Deployment

Safety boats will slowly circle the course in a clockwise direction. In addition to providing assistance in case of emergency, the safety boats will serve as mobile course markers.

If a racer needs to be brought in by a safety boat, then the remaining safety boats will need to coordinate so that the last racer(s) will be identified and followed in.

Remember to keep your wake as minimal as possible in the vicinity of the racers!

Boat Circulation Plan

To ensure the safety of river traffic, a strict circulation pattern is enforced, which is the usual competition pattern. This is illustrated on the Circulation Pattern map, attached as Appendix A to this plan. A copy will also be provided in your race packet and online at <http://www.annapolisrowingclub.org>.

Other River Traffic

During the Wye Island Regatta, there is little other river traffic, but occasionally other craft may appear on the river.

Water Conditions

In the event that the Chesapeake is affected by weather or tide conditions, all crews must follow and comply with the safety marshal's instructions on the water.

Lightning

All marshals and race officials will be responsible for watching out for lightning and if it is seen it will be reported to the race official. The race desk will then approximate the distance of the storm by using the "30 – 30" rule (comparing the time difference between lightning and thunder). If the storm is felt to be within approximately 6 miles (30 seconds between lightning and thunder) then crews will be taken off the water as soon as possible and advised to seek proper shelter in their cars.

Poor Visibility

If in the event of poor visibility such as rain, haze, or fog, race officials will make a determination in the postponement or cancellation of the race.

THE RACE DIRECTOR AND SAFETY ADVISORS RESERVE THE RIGHT TO AMEND THIS PLAN ON THE DAY IF WEATHER OR CONDITIONS ON THE DAY MAKE THIS NECESSARY.