

Harefield Canoe Slalom Race

General Risk Assessment

Division 4 and Open slalom, Sunday 09 October 2022

The Sharks will run the slalom race in the weir pool just below Coppermill Lock on the Grand Union Canal, near Harefield. This is a site that is used regularly by The Sharks for training and has been used on many occasions for hosting ranking competitions by The Sharks. The event will be a short-course slalom, with expectation of around 25 competitors, mostly from local canoe clubs.

Parking, Control and Camping will be on land owned by Clancy Group, with a water tap and portaloo toilet provided by Clancy Group. There is ample space, the site is adjacent to the Coy Carp Inn. The canal is accessed via a short public footpath adjacent to the Coy Carp Inn and across a road (traffic light controlled) to the canal tow path.

Canoeing is regarded as an “at risk” sport and individuals participating recognise this either when signing for bibs and/or when entering the event. Compliance with this document cannot remove all associated risk, but will reduce it to an acceptable minimum.

Category	Hazard	Description and Impact	Mitigations
General	Minor injuries	Cuts, scrapes, splinters, bruises	Qualified first aider on site. First aid kit in Control.
General	Major injuries / health issues		Major injury will require a 999 call. Phone reception on site is good for most networks and The Sharks will maintain charge on several phones accessing different networks. Access for emergency services is good.
Traffic	Route from parking to bankside requires crossing a road with traffic streams controlled by traffic lights	Risk of road traffic accident	Paddlers will be warned to be careful crossing the road, particularly when carrying boats and kit. The risk is the same as crossing any other traffic light-controlled road and is therefore an everyday risk. Parents/coaches should supervise children as on any other road.

Paddler safety	Sluices white-water	The whitewater is small with no retentive features; capsized paddlers are pushed towards safety at the tow path.	Safety boat during organised practice and racing. Throw bags will be positioned in appropriate locations on the bank for quick access.
Paddler safety	Capsizing / swimming	There is a likelihood of the occasional swimmer. However, Harefield is a comparatively safe slalom course as there are no rocks and swimmers are washed to the tow path side, where it is easier to effect a rescue.	During the race and official practice, the requirement for paddlers to remain on the water as safety for the following two paddlers will be enforced. Pre-start and finish will be asked to monitor this. In addition, we will provide additional on-water safety. During free practice, paddlers are required to provide their own safety by looking out for each other, 3 boats minimum. All paddlers required to wear helmets and buoyancy aids as per slalom regulations, this will be checked by the starter during official practice and by pre-start during the race
Paddler safety	Hypothermia	Likeliest if paddler taking repeated swims, eg during practice.	Survival bags in the first aid kit. Re-warm casualty indoors at Coy Carp Inn in emergency.
Paddler safety	Getting in and out	Well-made concrete bank with towpath makes for easy access.	Paddler entering a slalom should be able to get in and out of a boat safely from such an easy access point. However, there will be people on the tow path who can help.
Paddler safety	Paddler incompetence	Div 4 paddlers may need some coaching and assistance	Coaching and safety boater on hand during organised practice
Paddler safety	Lack of Recognition of risk	Paddlers are required to be members of the BC/SCA/WCA/CANI and to sign the "risk" statement to obtain a bib. Div 4 paddlers can join for the event, or will be members of an affiliated club, with appropriate coaches on site.	All paddlers must have a bib to do a run. Where a paddler needs to borrow a bib, he/she must: - Prove membership of appropriate organisation and or pay for membership on the day - Sign the "risk" statement

Bank side safety	Trip hazards	Normal canal-side hazards	Boats, paddles and kit will not be permitted to be left on the tow path as this both blocks the right of way and creates a trip hazard. No additional trip hazards from cables as event will run without wired comms. No course wires/lines tie off in public-accessible areas.
Schedule	Automated control of sluice gates	Sometimes the weir shuts down to preserve water supplies, causing the racing to be suspended until it returns. It may happen after a narrow boat has passed through the lock, but usually lasts only a few minutes.	Not a risk to safety but may cause the event to run late.
Weather	Impact on judging	Disgruntled, rather than endangered, personnel.	Umbrellas will be available for gate judges. Low competitor numbers ensure gate judging stints will be kept to a reasonable length (around an hour). Covered clip-boards for recording penalties will be used if the weather is wet.
Weather	Impact on course	Rainfall, or lack of, before or during the event has little impact on flows normally. However, if rain is heavy for a prolonged period of time it can flood on v rare occasion.	If water is too high then it could be necessary to cancel or postpone the div 4. In this event club committee, slalom committee and chair of the jury, will all be consulted, with the final decision taken by the organiser. In the event of cancellation a notice will be published on www.canoeslalomentries.co.uk , www.canoeslalom.co.uk and the procedures from the rule book will be followed.
Resources	Lack of volunteer officials	Risk of feasibly running the event.	Event plan requires minimal officials.
Resources	Financial risk of event cancellation	Exposure to costs of prizes. No large financial obligations.	We will try to take any decisions on cancellation as early as possible to minimise costs to others.

			We recognise we could make a loss on prizes, but these could be used at other Shark events. The club is sufficiently financially secure to risk a small loss.
Hygiene	Transmission of respiratory viruses eg Covid19, seasonal flu	Transmission of virus by breath (droplets, aerosol), touch/surfaces (fomite), close proximity (population/crowding)	No restrictions imposed by authorities. Attendee briefing note will request participants not to travel if unwell, to respect good hygiene practices (hand washing, avoid unnecessary crowding, respect others' personal space), be aware that others may be vulnerable, and to consider wearing a mask to protect others.
Hygiene	Portaloo, cleanliness of surfaces	Transmission of bacteria by touch of soiled surfaces	Provide paper wipes and cleaning spray for users to clean surfaces. Regular checking of facility and cleaning as needed.

Updated 1st October 2022