

MERCER ROWING CLUB INC.

Established 1909

“Perseverance Overcomes Difficulties”

Trader Lane, Mercer ~ PO Box 690 Pukekohe

www.mercerrowingclub.org.nz

Mercer Regatta: For Coxes, Coaches and Rowers in Coxless Boats

This information is to help coxes and other rowers prepare for a regatta at Mercer, which can have conditions a bit different to most other regattas.

The first thing to remember is that the Waikato River has quite a strong current, all the more so when it has been raining before the event. The direction of racing is upstream, and if your crew is not actively rowing, then you will be moving downstream possibly faster than you would expect. The course will be marked with buoys but they sometimes move over the course of the day so keep your eye out for where you are on the river.

Launching from the Mercer side

Follow the instructions of the beach marshalls who will tell you where and when to put your boat in the water. There are often queues of boats waiting to launch so stay alert.

CHANGE! Crews who are based in the Mercer carpark will be directed round behind the boatshed and onto the beach rather than taking boats over the grass to the upstream end of the beach as in previous years.

Put the boat in the water with the bow end pointing DOWNSTREAM.

Make sure that you have oar carriers right with you to ensure you get on the water as quickly as possible.

Tell your crews not to dither – just put oars in and get into the boat and deal with socks and feet once on the water.

Proceeding to the start

Be aware of other crews, especially those racing toward you, and stay to the left (right for those coming from the Counties side) outside the buoys marking the race course.

Look out for umpire boats and obey their instructions.

Once downstream of the start, don't let your crew sit around without rowing for too long otherwise you will be rowing longer than you want to get back to the start line. Turn around to face upstream and keep a few rowers tapping the boat along gently while waiting.

After the race

Once over the finish line, KEEP ROWING!

Proceed under the bridge and keep going until you are above the marker buoy or the umpire boat tells you to stop. Remember you need to get your boat turned around safely without hitting others and with enough time to complete the turn before drifting back near the bridge support piers so if you have the time, give yourself lots of space and go further upstream.

Once turned around, get to the left (if you are docking on the Mercer side) or to the right (if going back to Counties) before rowing back downstream to avoid having to cross over the river near the race course finish line, potentially causing a blockage.

Use hand signals to communicate with the marshall boats and other crews to indicate which direction you intend to go.

Returning to the shore (Mercer side)

Keep to the left, stop upstream of the shore and wait for marshall instructions. Do not drift onto the course or block the finish line.

Tell all rowers they MUST stay awake and alert as they will be given instructions directly from the shore.

Make sure your rowers all know their bow/stroke side AND their seat numbers!

You will be directed where to dock; point your bow directly into the shore where the marshall is pointing. A marshall will grab your bow and then hold it while the current lets the stern of your boat swing around downstream until you are parallel to the bank pointing upstream.

Get the rowers and oars out of the boat as quickly as possible.

Coaches and fellow club/school mates should be ready on the bank to pick up your oars.

If you have a quick turnaround and need to relaunch the boat with another crew, make sure somebody on the bank has pre-warned the marshalls and has the next crew ready to go when you dock.

Counties
Side

Mercer
Side

