

Devizes to Westminster Race – A Checklist

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Are you ready?

The last few days to prepare are coming up, have you got everything ready that you need and are all your preparations for the days of the race done?

Some questions to help you decide if everything has been done and you are ready for the big event.

Have you got your race entry in? Are you sure it has been done if you left it for your partner to do?

Have you registered a start time if you are starting outside of the normal hours?

Have you done enough training and preparation before the race and is the target time you have set yourselves realistically based on your training times? Remember it is essential you catch the tide right if you are going non-stop.

Does everyone (crew and supporters) have sufficient familiarity with the course, obstacles likely to be encountered on the course, the conditions and an awareness of the portage routes and restrictions? There are portages where the support crews are not allowed, is this understood and will the crew be able to cope until the next support point?



Do you have all the equipment you need for the race? This equipment has to serve 2 purposes: It ensures your well being during the race and it means you conform to the rules regarding what you must carry in your boat during the race. This includes spare clothing, survival equipment and torches.

Is there enough clothing that is dry provided for kit changes in **all the vehicles?** There may be a need to change in a hurry, so every vehicle needs to have equipment ready



Has the feeding routine been rehearsed?

The method of feeding must have been practised, and each type of food or drink must have been tried under race or training conditions. No room for new things to be tried at this stage of the proceedings.

Has there been a rehearsal of the pre-race food and drink that is going to be consumed the night before the start?

Are there sufficient spares for the boats available? Rudders, pumps or other fittings may malfunction or get damaged, a set of spares and tools is essential for bank repairs.

Are there enough vehicles and personnel supporting? Ideally a junior crew should have a crew with two vehicles and a non-stop crew have a crew with 3 vehicles. This way there is cover at more frequent opportunities and a chance for support crews to get their own refreshment and rest, particularly during the night.

Is everyone familiar with the route? The paddlers need to be familiar with the whole course, they can carry a map with portage diagrams taped to the deck of the boat. The supporters need OS maps of the route, Have they read the Support Crew information on the DW Web site www.dwrace.org.uk . Don't assume that it is the same from year to year, read up on it and be familiar with this year's information. Remember also that a lot of support is late at night and much of it is close to people's houses. **Keep noise and disruption down to an absolute minimum**

Can the support crews communicate between each other easily? Mobile phones are great, but coverage is not 100% along the whole of the race, there are areas where no signal is present! Radios are an option that could be used. If the supporters are 'leapfrogging ' down the course and arriving at alternate points, then a regular update on the crew's progress is essential, so everyone knows if they are up/down or on schedule.

Has the overnight accommodation before race in Devizes and during race for the 4 day crews been organised?



Probably the best dressed crew in 2008, only their faces exposed. Guess what?They won!

See you at Easter in Devizes and good luck!