



GENERAL RULES

The Devizes to Westminster Race is run by the DW Organisation, a Limited company. The Organisation is referred to variously and interchangeably as the 'Organisation', the 'Organiser', and the 'Company'.

The **Advice to Competitors, Rules for Supporters, Class Rules** and **Portage Diagrams** also form part of these general rules and must be read by all participants and their supporters. Signing the participants' kit check form indicates that participants and their supporters have read the rules and agreed to abide by them.

General disclaimer

All competitors aged 18 or over must sign the Indemnity/Declaration form when booking in. For competitors aged under 18, a Parent or Guardian must sign on their behalf. Entries are only accepted on the basis that competitors and/or their parents/guardians sign the Indemnity/Declaration form and agree to be bound by its contents.

Details of the Indemnity/Declaration are presented here:

- I, the undersigned, declare that I have read and accept the Limitation of Liability (below) on behalf of myself and my supporters and I undertake to read and comply with the Rules and Advice as published from time to time and to ensure that all of my supporters are acquainted with such Rules and Advice.
- I, the undersigned, hereby give my consent for my son/daughter/ward to compete in this event. I also join in the above Indemnity and accept the Limitations of Liability as stated below.
- For the avoidance of doubt, the term 'Competitor' shall include crew member, support crew member and fellow club/unit members and the term 'Organisation' shall mean "The Devizes to Westminster Organisation Ltd."
- Every Competitor is referred to the rules dealing with safety requirements and the accompanying section dealing with advice. (These may be read in advance by browsing the DW web site - www.dwrace.org.uk)
- Every Competitor, by signing the indemnity/declaration form, accepts that Canoeing is an Assumed Risk Sport and that given the nature of the event Competitors must be responsible for their own safety should they get into difficulties.
- Competitors accept that it is their responsibility to know the course and to withdraw from the race if they cannot cope with the conditions. This shall not remove the right of the Organisation to require any Competitor(s) to stop should this be necessary for the safe running of the event.
- Every Competitor, by signing the indemnity/declaration form, agrees to comply with the rules and to take all necessary precautionary measures to minimise his/her own risk and shall be solely responsible for any loss, damage, personal injury or death suffered by him/her, or caused to third parties as a result of any act, default, neglect or omission by him/her.
- Furthermore, every Competitor undertakes to indemnify the Organisation in relation to any loss or damage suffered by the Organisation arising from the Competitor's participation in the event.
- Entry fees will not be refunded under any circumstances.
- The Organisation reserves the right to cancel or vary all or any part of the event before and/or during the event.

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Entry information

Entry forms and fees for all classes must be in the hands of the Competition Secretary not later than Waterside 'D' (which takes place on the Sunday two weeks before Easter) and if posted must be postmarked the preceding Friday to Waterside 'D'. The Organisation reserves the right to refuse any entry.
NO LATE ENTRIES OR ENTRIES ON THE DAY WILL BE ACCEPTED.

At Devizes a number plate will be issued to each crew and must be secured on the boat as directed. Any crew not displaying the number plate will be deemed to have retired from the Race. Should a boat pass the finishing line in such a manner that its number plate cannot be seen by the time-keeper, it will be the responsibility of the crew's support party to inform the time-keeper of the number. This is of particular relevance for canoes as stickers attached to their hulls cannot easily be read from the bridge at Westminster.

Before leaving Devizes crewmembers must have an identity wristlet, which includes the emergency number, attached to their wrist by a Race Official. This must not be removed during the Race and will be used for verification purposes when awarding Finishers' Medals at Westminster.

The Chief Supporter of the Crew entering the Race now forms part of the race entry and their details will be required on the Race Entry Form. In order to track the whereabouts of those entering the race DW officers must in an emergency be able to contact the leader of the support crew at any time. It is advised that a landline should also be provided of a supporter who can relay messages should mobile communication fail. The Chief Supporter must be nominated on the entry form together with the contact numbers. The Chief Supporter is also required to check in at Registration at Devizes with the paddlers entered. Penalties may be imposed on crews where supporters are un-contactable on the numbers provided.

Course information

The course starts at Devizes Wharf, passing along the Kennet and Avon Canal to join the River Thames at Reading. Immediately after the Canal joins the River there is a compulsory portage at Dreadnought Reach. The course continues downstream to Teddington (B108) reaching the Finish 50 metres beyond Westminster Bridge via the tidal section of the Thames (A17). In the course of the 125 miles there are 77 portages. All relevant bylaws must be adhered to.

Only the navigation channels of the Kennet and Avon Canal and the River Thames may be used. All portages must take place on the towing path except where otherwise shown on the official Route Plan, Portage Diagram or as ordered by an official. No other route is permitted. The backwater cut at Windsor passing under the dual carriageway is not regarded as a navigation channel for the purposes of these rules.

General principles

- Race Officials, acting on the instructions of the Chief Umpire, shall have the authority to stop any crew for any reason at any time. Time allowances are at the Chief Umpire's discretion only. They will normally be awarded for kit checks and when crews are stopped on the course to permit larger craft to navigate, such as at the Bruce Tunnel or when the race is stopped for safety reasons. Time Allowances will not normally be given when a crew has been injured or involved in an accident. If allowed to continue, crews may, under some circumstances, claim for time lost. Competitors must be prepared for tests to be conducted to establish that their boat and equipment comply with the Rules.
- All crews and their supporters shall race in a fair and considerate manner and maintain a satisfactory standard of conduct throughout the Race remaining subject to these rules until the end of the Protest Committee Meeting on Easter Monday.
- Conduct, by either paddlers or their supporters, prejudicial to the good order and discipline of the Devizes to Westminster Race will be penalised.
- Supporters shall observe restrictions as may be imposed from time to time by the Organisation on the use of public highways, footpaths, rights of way, lock areas and other areas adjoining the course.
- The decisions of the Organisation on all matters shall be final.

In the event of retirement or emergency, call Race Control on 0207 620 0298

Boats and equipment

- Canoes and kayaks are referred to in these Rules as boats and must be manned by a crew of one or two persons, depending on the class in which they are entered. Propulsion shall be by means of single or double bladed paddle. (In order to qualify for the Canadian Trophy only open canoes propelled by single bladed paddles are permitted. Rudders are not permitted). No other form of craft is considered within the scope of the rules – this includes rafts, paddleboards, surf skis and other sit-on or stand-on boards).
- Substitution of boats or personnel, or transport over land or by water for the purpose of shortening the course, is forbidden. If a crew is not able to paddle the course they may walk it, carrying the boat, paddles and full kit. No short cut or transport in any form is allowed.
- All boats must contain sufficient buoyancy to support their crews in the event of capsize. Sandwich construction boats are not presumed to have sufficient inherent buoyancy and must carry additional foam or other non-porous buoyant material. Closed and water-tight compartments built in by the crafts' original manufacturer may be accepted at the Chief Umpire's discretion but such boats must demonstrate adequate buoyancy at both ends.
- All competitors must wear an Integral Foam Buoyancy aid or lifejacket offering the wearer a minimum 50 Newton of inherent buoyancy and must conform to one of the following European standards: EN 393 or EN 395 or ISO12402-5 or ISO12402-6. Buoyancy aids or lifejackets displaying certification to BA83 are not acceptable under any circumstances. Inflatable lifejackets requiring partial or total inflation by oral inflation or through use of a compressed air or gas cylinder are not acceptable. A buoyancy aid or lifejacket that appears to be more than five years old or which has been subjected to heavy use may not offer the user the protection envisaged when new and is likely to be rejected at inspection. Buoyancy aids or lifejackets that have been tampered with or modified in any way that affects its fundamental integrity, such as being cut, slit or torn will be rejected. Lifejackets and buoyancy aids passed for use must display conformance to the EN standards via a label attached at the time of manufacture by its maker. The buoyancy aid or life jacket presented for and passed at inspection at Devizes is the only one that may be worn throughout the duration of the race. Any competitor found either not wearing it or who has replaced it with an inferior or non-compliant version at any point will be disqualified.
- Buoyancy aids made outside the EU (and therefore not carrying the relevant EN or ISO standard mark) will not be accepted unless they are (a) individually certified by the manufacturer as meeting EU requirements; and (b) presented by a paddler who can prove that he/she is not resident in the EU. By definition this will necessarily exclude anyone competing for a canoe club or organisation within the EU.
- Competitors must carry one survival bag each in their boat. The only permissible bag is the 'classic' survival bag, a heavy duty 500 gauge tear-proof/water-proof/wind-proof polythene bag measuring at least 1800 x 900 mm, in highly visible day-glo orange for easy visibility as a distress signal by rescue or emergency services. Designed to reduce the loss of body heat in an emergency, the Survival Bag serves as a personal emergency shelter. Only bags complying with at least the above specifications will be accepted. No space blankets, silver blankets, thin gauge or other forms of translucent or coloured plastic bags of any sort will be acceptable. Typical examples weigh about 290g each. The actual survival bag presented for inspection and passed at kit-check before the start at Devizes must be carried in the boat throughout the duration of the race and any competitor who is found either not carrying it or who has replaced it with an inferior or non-compliant version at any point during the race will be disqualified.
- Competitors in the Senior Doubles race may not move more than 100 metres from the course of the race at any time, even to camp overnight, as set out in the rules.
- Kayaks must carry spraydecks at all times and all kayak crews below Teddington Lock must use a spraydeck. Race Officials may, in addition, require spraydecks to be worn at any time on any waterway.
- Competitors must be able to swim 100 metres in canoeing dress.
- Number discs from previous DW races must be removed or covered over entirely. Simply putting an X over the old number is not sufficient as the visibility of previous years' discs and logos can cause confusion.

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Competitors are not permitted to:

- Shoot weirs
- Take pace or wash-hang from any vessel not in the race.
- Replace boats
- Remove numbers from boats during the race
- Overtake in Bruce's Tunnel (Savernake Forest). Any boat held by a marshal because of traffic in the tunnel will be given a time allowance.
- Relieve themselves in public places
- Use trolleys or portage devices unless they have carried them in the boat at all times from the start

Crews are permitted to receive:

- Assistance from any source in the event of capsize or other dangerous circumstance.
- Food and drink at any point along the course unless otherwise directed.
- Replacement paddles, boat fittings, clothing, spraydecks and emergency rations if used, lost or damaged.
- Help with the repair of the boat, provided it is not moved away from or along the course by anyone other than the paddlers.
- Medical assistance in the event of illness or injury.

Drugs

The taking of drugs as defined in International Canoe Federation (ICF) Rules is forbidden and all competitors are liable to a drug test. Refusal to submit to such a test shall incur automatic disqualification.

Retirement

If crews are compelled to retire from the race, competitors or support crews must, WITHOUT FAIL, inform Race Control immediately (0207 620 0298). Failure to do so may jeopardise future entries, as much time can be wasted by emergency services searching for missing crews who may simply have gone home to bed.

All crews must have completed the course and vacated the finish site four hours after the Easter Monday Start time.

Disciplinary matters

Inappropriate behaviour by supporters and/or competitors may result in time penalties being imposed on either the paddlers or their teams.

Failure to observe the rules or obey the instructions of any Race Official may render the crew liable to disqualification or other penalty, which may include the individual, crew, club, school, unit etc being barred from entering the race in future.

Any Race Official, crew member or member of a support party wishing to protest a breach of the rules shall lodge a formal complaint by telephoning Race Control (0207 620 0298) with confirmation in writing submitted to the Chief Umpire or a Senior Race Official no later than two hours prior to the umpires' daily meeting. The protest should include as much information and supporting evidence as possible.

The Umpires will meet daily at each stage finish point at (or about) 1900 hours to consider infringements of the Rules. Penalties imposed at these meetings can be appealed to the Race Protest Committee Meeting on the Monday morning.

It is the responsibility of the crews to enquire either in person or by telephoning Race Control (0207 620 0298) to see if any protest or report has been made concerning them. Crews have the opportunity of delivering a written statement and/or being heard at the Race Protest Committee Meeting on Easter Monday.

The Race Protest Committee will meet within 5 days of the end of the race on Easter Monday. At this time crews reported or already penalised will be invited to be heard or their written statements presented. Any penalty, including disqualification, may be imposed. There is NO APPEAL against the decisions of the Race Protest Committee.

In the event of retirement or emergency, call Race Control on 0207 620 0298

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Assaults and/or abusive behaviour

The DW Canoe Race is run entirely by volunteers who have the right to work in a harassment-free environment. The Organisers note with great regret the growing incidence of verbal and physical assault against its volunteers and also against others, such as lock-keepers and landowners, on whom the continued success of the race depends.

Abusive or threatening behaviour of any kind, including verbal or physical assault, will not be tolerated.

Any competitor found to have carried out a verbal or physical assault will be disqualified and may also be banned from taking part in future events.

Any crew or team whose support crew or team leader is found to have carried out a verbal or physical assault will likewise be disqualified and may also be banned from acting as a support crew or team leader in future events.

The Organisers will not hesitate to report incidents of verbal or physical assault to the police. The Organisers also reserve the right to notify any organisations which the paddlers or individuals concerned represent of such incidents if it is necessary to maintain good order and to prevent the good name of the DW Canoe Race being brought into disrepute.

Teams

- A crew may only represent one team.
- Unless otherwise stated, teams competing for trophies will consist of three or four crews, with the times for the fastest three being considered. Teams competing for trophies 47 and 97 will consist of three crews, and one competing for trophy 39 will consist of two or three crews. The criteria for each trophy are listed.
- All teams must be pre-nominated by the team manager who must submit a completed team entry form to the Competition Secretary, prior to any crew in the team starting. Crews will not count as a team in any other circumstances.

Team allegiance

- Paddlers may only race for a club to which they have belonged for at least six months and it must be the only club they have nominated to the BCU Marathon Racing Committee for the current Hasler Racing season. They may not have raced canoe marathons for any other club. The rules apply to all paddlers in a boat. Any boat comprising paddlers from more than one club will not be considered eligible for any team trophies.
- All crew members making up a team:
 - (a) Entered on behalf of a military unit must be on the roll of, or attached to, that unit.
 - (b) Entered on behalf of a club or association of military organisations other than a unit must consist of regular servicemen or women or reservists or must be on attachment to that service
 - (c) Entered on behalf of commercial companies must consist of employees of that company or their families

Paddler eligibility

- Paddlers competing for sub-category prizes on the basis of their studies, employment, military or other status must satisfy the strict requirements of these trophies. Trophies are awarded to encourage entries from bona fide organisations and to recognize their efforts in promoting the sport of canoeing.

Proof of eligibility

- In the case of any uncertainty as to team composition, team leaders will be responsible for providing written evidence of paddlers' eligibility to form a team at the time of entry. A failure to provide such evidence on demand will mean the crew or paddler concerned will be excluded from consideration in the relevant team or sub-category competition. All sub-category and team entries are accepted subject to the Chief Umpire's approval.

Devizes to Westminster Race Trophies

It is against the spirit of the DW race to attempt to subvert the rules or manipulate entry details in any way in order to compete for trophies surreptitiously. Trophies are awarded for bona fide entries only.

TROPHIES FOR WHICH ALL COMPETITORS ARE ELIGIBLE

98. THE PFEIFFER CUP

For the crew which raises the most sponsorship

99. THE SIR LOUIS AND LADY GLUCKSTEIN TROPHY

For the crew or individual displaying the most courage and fortitude. Nominations for this trophy must be submitted to the Competition Secretary, in writing, within seven days of Easter Monday. Medals also awarded.

100. CERTIFICATES

Are awarded to all competitors who complete the course.

TEAM TROPHIES (Senior Race)

6. THE DEVIZES - WESTMINSTER TEAM TROPHY

Donated by the Lancashire Regiment for the team of three crews registering the lowest aggregate time. (Team drawn from maximum of four nominated crews). A team certificate is also awarded.

24. THE ROYAL ENGINEERS TROPHY

Donated by the Corps of Royal Engineers for the Services team of three crews registering the lowest aggregate time. Teams are to be drawn from a maximum of four nominated crews. Open to HM Regular Forces and Reserve Forces teams from RNR: RMFVR: R Aux AF and TAVR.

26 THE GILLINGHAM TROPHY

Donated by Gillingham Canoe Club for the fastest civilian team of three crews

TEAM TROPHIES (Junior Race)

34. THE JUNIOR TEAM TROPHY

Donated by the Lancashire Regiment for the team of three crews registering the lowest aggregate time, teams drawn from a maximum of four nominated crews. A team certificate is also awarded.

39. THE JUNIOR LADIES TEAM TROPHY

Donated by Kimbolton School for the fastest ladies team of two crews (2 of 3). A team certificate is also awarded.

43. THE SCHOOLS TEAM TROPHY

Donated by Geoff Good. To be awarded to the team of three crews all of whom must be pupils at the same school. Team to be drawn from a maximum of four crews.

47 THE HMS ALACRITY McKAIG CUP

Donated by the Second Sea Lord & Commander in Chief Naval Home Command for the fastest team of three Combined Cadet Force crews

56. THE SINGLES TEAM TROPHY

Donated by John Dudderidge for the team of three crews registering the lowest aggregate time. Team drawn from a maximum of four crews. A team certificate is also awarded.

97. THE TRANS CLASS TEAM TROPHY

Awarded to the fastest team consisting of one Senior Double, one Junior Double and one Senior Single from the same club.

Devizes to Westminster Canoe Race

Emergency response plan (ERP)

The Devizes to Westminster Canoe Race Emergency Response Plan is an integral part of the rules and all competitors are deemed to have read it and understood its implications.

1. WHAT IS AN EMERGENCY?

For the purpose of this event an Emergency is defined as any incident

- Resulting in serious injury or the loss of life of a DW Race participant or supporter or official;
- Requiring the rescue of a DW Race participant or supporter from a hazard on land or water;
- Involving a search for a crew member missing and believed to be in danger;
- Or occasion which the DW Duty Officer decides warrants the calling out of the Emergency Services.

2. WHO TO CONTACT

- In the event of an emergency resulting in serious injury or loss of life contact the Emergency Services immediately.

The Emergency Services telephone number is 999.

- In the event of any emergency contact also the D.W. Race Information Duty Officer.

The DW Race Information Duty Officer number is 0207 620 0298.

- Or contact the nearest check point official, whichever is quicker.

3. INFORMATION TO GIVE

In the event of an emergency be prepared to provide the following information.

- State IMMEDIATELY that the message is an Emergency
- Your name and status
- Race number of boat.
- Confirmation of crew name(s)
- Nature/time/location of the incident,
- Are supporters of the crew present at the scene?
- Which emergency services have already been informed?

IF YOU ARE IN ANY DOUBT ABOUT THE SEVERITY OF AN INCIDENT, CALL 999 IMMEDIATELY.