

# **MILWAUKEE RIVER CHALLENGE RULES FOR COMPETITORS**

## **1. Liability Waiver**

Every competitor must have completed and signed a US Rowing waiver. Each organization must pick up its competitors' packet at the registration table at the Schlitz Park boat site. The packet will contain separate envelopes for each crew entry with the identifying bow number for each. Packets will only be released to organizations whose members are all verified to have signed waiver forms. Under absolutely no circumstances will entries with missing waivers be issued their race packet or be allowed to launch to practice or race. Liability waivers will be accepted at the registration table. No organization or crew will be allowed to launch – even to practice - unless all waivers have been submitted.

## **2. Boat Site – 215 East Pleasant Street, Milwaukee, WI 53212**

Use the West entrance turning south off of Pleasant Street. It is the entrance farthest away from the river. Park trailers perpendicular to the river. There is lots of room so leave space. Busses, cars, vans, etc. with competitors and friends should be parked in the parking lot, west of the trailer parking lot - farthest from the river. There is a separate entrance off Pleasant Street for this lot. Trailers will be assigned space based on the order of arrival. A Boat Site Marshal will direct each trailer when it arrives. No vehicles, other than those needed to haul the trailer will be allowed in the Boat Site.

## **3. Pre Race Practice**

The river is open for practice until Friday at 7: 15 p.m. and on Saturday from 6:15 am to 7:30 a.m. All boats must be off of the water by 7:15 p.m. Friday and 7:30 a.m. Saturday. The river will not be closed to other traffic during those times and crews must be exceedingly careful. The traffic pattern is to keep to the starboard side of the river. The bridges are narrow. You must watch for other traffic and be prepared to stop. No crew will be allowed to launch for practice without displaying its bow number. This means crews must register and provide waivers before practicing.

#### **4. Safety Zone**

Safety will be under the direction of regatta personnel under the direct supervision of elements of U.S. Coast Guard Station - Milwaukee and the Milwaukee Police Department. A Safety Zone will be enforced by the Coast Guard and Milwaukee Police during the regatta. The regatta must be completed in the time period of the Safety Zone.

#### **5. Race Launching**

The time schedule is tight. There will be dock space to permit up to six (6) fours or four (4) eights to be launched in each wave. Crews will launch in reverse order of bow numbers, and should line up that way before reaching the dock. This means, for example, that during the first launch, bow numbers 6-1 will be the last to launch. Each crew is allotted 2 minutes from the time it walks onto the float until the time it leaves. Experience has shown this more than ample.

The launch point for all races will be at the Schlitz Park boat area. The Dock Master has absolute authority over the dock area. From the dock, the Clerk of Course will call each event and call for crews to launch. Crews are responsible for reaching the dock on time whether or not a call has been announced. No one will attempt to locate crews in the boat area who have not reported to the dock. Each crew is required to report to the Clerk of Course before boarding the launching dock. If the Dockmaster determines that a crew late to the launching dock cannot reach the starting line on time, the Dockmaster has the right to prevent that crew from leaving the dock. Be ready.

#### **6. Proceeding to the Start Line (Menomonee River) (see maps on website)**

As soon as a crew launches, it must proceed directly to the start and get in line in reverse order of its bow number. It is extremely important to the timetable that fours row by all four and eights row by all eight immediately after leaving the dock. Crews rowing by pairs in fours or rowing by fours in eights may be assessed a time penalty or disqualified for delaying the regatta. Eights may row by sixes. With the reverse order of launching, the first crew launching and going downriver will row up the Menomonee River to the farthest point west past the start point indicated by the marshal's boats and spin. The next boat (in descending bow number) will spin in front of the first boat, etc. Crews will be lined up on both sides of the river. Marshal's boats will assist. Follow their directions.

## **7. Turning Into the Menomonee River On the Way to the Start – Stop First**

The angle of the turn to starboard (west) is much more acute than it looks. Do not attempt to steer through this turn when proceeding to the start. Row to a point opposite the opening of the Menomonee River, stop the boat, and turn it 90° before proceeding into the Menomonee River.

## **8. Equipment Adjustments**

All equipment adjustments must be made in the boat area prior to launching. Absolutely no adjustments will be permitted at or on the dock. Violators will be asked to depart from the dock immediately and may be assessed a 60-second penalty at the discretion of the Dock Master.

## **9. Safety Equipment**

Every competing boat must be properly equipped with a bow ball and quick-release shoes with heels properly tied down.

## **10. Boat Numbers**

The assigned number for each crew entry boat will be in the envelopes provided as part of the competitors' packet. Attachment of the boat number at all four corners on the backs of the coxswain and bow rower is absolutely critical for the crew's time to be recorded correctly. Boat numbers must be also placed on the bow of each boat entered. Boats without numbers on the bow, bow rower and coxswain will not be allowed to launch to practice or race.

## **11. Schedule of Events**

There will be four launches of boats in the following order: Women's 4+, Men's 8+, Women's 8+, Men's 4+. In each launch there are two events: open and juniors. These are separate events with separate awards, but they will be timed during the same launch and recovery sequence.

The coaches and coxswain's meeting is at 7:30 a.m.

The women's fours will begin launching at 8:00 a.m. and the first race will start promptly at 8:30 a.m. The men's eights will launch as soon as the last women's four races pass the launch dock and before the women's fours are recovered. Any boats (equipment and/or athletes) in the women's fours needed in the men's eights should notify the dockmaster before launching the women's fours and notify the marshal's boats after racing so they can come to the dock before any other women's fours. Women's eights will be the third launch. All women's' eights will launch before any men's eights are recovered. The men's' eights will be recovered before the women's eights race begins.

Each launch follows the preceding launch without any time gap. Accordingly, launch and race times after the first launch of the regatta are only estimates. It is expected that each succeeding launch will proceed quickly. The regatta reserves the right to delay or advance the starting times for any launch to accommodate non-regatta vessels transiting the safety area.

If any boat is being scratched, call (608) 658-6175 or, on race day, notify the Clerk of Course at the Schlitz Park boat area as soon as possible.

## **12. Procedure at the Start Line**

There will be a hold point at the west end of the Menomonee River (see map). The lowest bow number crew in each race will hold here until called by the starter (who will be in a launch) to accelerate to the start line. A horn will sound for each boat indicating the start time for that boat.

## **13. Rowing the Course - Watch the video on the website [www.milwaukeechallenge.com](http://www.milwaukeechallenge.com)**

The race is 5,000 meters long. The Menomonee River reach is 2,600 meters so when you get to the port turn up the Milwaukee River you are more than half way. You must use starboard oars to make this turn. You must also use the starboard oars to make the turn through the Wisconsin Avenue bridge. Watch the video. Look at the course map on the website.

## **14. Racing Rules**

- a. Row through the center opening of each bridge only – there is not enough room to get through any of the sides. If you try, you will break your oars or your boat.
- b. No passing between St. Paul Avenue and Wells Street.
- c. Use careful judgment when passing North of Wells Street.
- d. No one should try to pass a boat if doing so would endanger the overtaking boat or the boat being overtaken.
- e. A boat being overtaken must give way to the outside of any curve or to the side requested by the overtaking boat (when requested to do so by the overtaking boat) when the overtaking boat advances to within one (1) length of open water of the boat being overtaken. An overtaking boat that has moved this close has earned the right to unimpeded passage on the fastest line of the course.

f. A boat being passed does not have to give way if, in the coxswains' judgment, doing so would risk a collision with another boat, bridge or other obstacles.

g. Any unsafe steering, intentional contact by oars or boat with another boat, any displays of temper, any verbal abuse, or any other unsporting conduct will be sanctioned severely. Coxswains are expressly warned that all language used at any time must reflect the best traditions of the sport of rowing. Language referring to sexual, scatological, theistic or familial matters is prohibited and will be sanctioned severely.

h. While a crew is racing on the course, no crew member may speak to any member of another crew except when necessary in an emergency or when a coxswain in a boat requests that the boat being overtaken give way. Violations will be sanctioned severely.

#### **15. Crossing the Finish Line – Continue beyond Holton Street (High Bridge)**

A horn will sound as each boat crosses the finish line. After crossing each boat should continue paddling through the Pleasant Street bridge and for approximately 1000 meters before turning. Marshall's boats will assist crews to turn and get ready to return to the docks. Do not proceed above the warning buoy below Humboldt Avenue bridge under any circumstances. There are reefs above the bridge that will tear the bottom out of a shell.

#### **16. Hotseating - returning to the Launch Area**

Hotseating is strongly discouraged, given the logistics of the race course. If a crew hotseats, you **MUST NOTIFY the CLERK OF COURSE** prior to launching the equipment that will be hotseated. For example, if a coxswain from the women's 4+ event is needed in the men's 8 event, you must notify the Clerk of Course prior to launching the boat for the women's 4+ event. We will not guarantee the hotseat if the Clerk of Course is not notified ahead of time.

Be ready to return to the Schlitz Park bridge boat area promptly after the last crew of your race has finished. The Finish Line Marshall will be notified by the Clerk of Course of all hotseats and will call you forward accordingly. If you do not notify the Clerk of Course ahead of time, the Finish Line Marshall will not be aware of your need to hotseat and may not be able to accommodate the request.