

To be posted on College Boat Club Boards and Websites

All captains, coaches and all coxes should know and abide by these rules, which make the Isis safe for all of us.

*These rules are a digest and clarification of the OURCs river rules and restrictions.
These are not printed in full, and are to be used as basic guidelines. For more information, see
<http://www.ourcs.org/>*

OURCs COXING AND STEERING RULES, HINTS & TIPS

For coxes of Oxford college/university boats on the Isis.

- A) At the Head of the River, you should get the whole of your boat upstream of (above) the second wooden post before spinning. HINT: Call “Easy” as your bows cross the post. If the post is hidden, go past the stern of the first big moored boat.
- B) At Long Bridges, stay in by the towpath bank, and easy as your bows cross the upstream end of the Long Bridges raft, then spin. **LOOK AHEAD AND BEHIND BEFORE SETTING OFF TOWARDS THE GREEN BANK.** Only cross the river when you are fully turned, and be aware of boats coming from both sides, which have priority. Never block the Gut mouth.
- C) At Haystacks, you must spin below the red-and-white post, but *before* getting fully round the corner, since **the stretch right by the pub and the lock is not to be used by us** (winter danger, summer cruisers). HINT: Call “Easy” as your boat is just passing the post, and then take the run off the boat. Once stopped, your next action should be to turn, then move out of the area quickly.
- D) If the flag is amber or blue, you must **turn early**. Spin anywhere between the ‘Turn Early’ post (red-and-white, just below Donnington Bridge), and the Haystacks post. Make sure you check behind you before stopping suddenly. Where you turn depends on your judgement of the conditions and your crew.
- E) Only TWO college boats may spin at a time. If you have to wait to turn, stay on the bow-side bank, well tucked in, and give the turning crews plenty of space. At the Head, keep position while waiting – do not drift back down. Do not turn before someone already at the turning area, unless they allow you to. Once turned, row away to keep traffic moving. Use common sense.
- F) No crew may go out with members missing (eg seven or six in an eight) unless transporting from City of Oxford RC to the boathouse (NOT vice-versa).
- G) Don’t go through the Gut at hand paddling only, or without all crew members rowing (unless you can maintain normal full-crew light paddling speed eg by increasing pressure). Novice coxes will be told when they can first go through the Gut (usually 2-3 weeks after registration). No stopping in the Gut, which does not end until the wider stretch opposite Falcon Boat Club. Overtaking only with permission from the crew ahead and if absolutely safe.
- H) OURCs committee members are putting the emphasis on courtesy to other river users. Aim NEVER to do anything which would cause another boat minding its own business to have to take avoiding action. This is as important for first VIIIs as for novices. Detour round novices if you have to, but do not by doing so cause another accident. If necessary, stop and wait, and then give the obstacle some hassle. You can ‘undertake’ (overtake on bowside/the inside) but be careful, and make sure you warn the crew you’re undertaking, before you do it.

- I) **Lights:** WHITE both stern and bow, clearly visible for a total of 360 degrees and from several hundred metres away. 'Pencil' beam torches are unsuitable. Do not use flashing, red, or green lights. Lights should be used whenever conditions are at all dark, overcast or misty, subject to the rules under which the river is out of bounds. Lighting-up times are the same as for cars.
- J) Stick to the right-hand side of the river. Don't cross into the middle to overtake unless the river is clear in both directions. Don't hog the middle space.
- K) All coxes must wear lifejackets at all times on the river. OUTSIDE all their other clothing.
- L) All boats on the river except tub pairs must have a securely fixed bow-ball and heel restraints fitted to fixed-in flexible shoes. Heel restraints should not allow movement of the heel above the horizontal.
- M) No rowing before 1 hour earlier than sunrise or 1 hour later than sunset.
- N) **Status:** Novice coxes MUST have a coach with them at all times on the river, and are not allowed out under blue flag. Their coach is responsible for ensuring that they know and stick to all the OURCs rules. Experienced and senior coxes do not need a coach with them.
- O) Only one boat per college on Sundays or before 8am on weekdays. No boats on the river after 7pm on Wednesday evenings, or between 8am-1pm on Sundays (Isis) and 2-6pm on Sundays (Godstow). Extra rules apply in Trinity term.
- P) Boathouse side crews must land and boat with the bowball pointing upstream. Univ raft crews must boat with the bowball pointing downstream and may land in either direction, but give way to other traffic while crossing the river at the Cherwell Cut if landing upstream. Crews at Long Bridges may boat and land in either direction only if the area is clear – causing an obstruction will be a major transgression. Falcon and CORC raft boats must boat and land upstream.
- Q) Coxless boats are responsible for safety and convenience to others, and should consider having a bank steersmen with them.
- R) If going downstream towards the Gut aiming to go through to the bottom region of the river, DO NOT MOVE OUT TOO EARLY... Many near-misses are caused by crews moving too far to stroke side across the centre of the river.
- S) **Novice coxes** are given experience status after three terms coxing experience if their captain (or captain of coxes) vouches for them being safe out under blue flag without a coach. **Senior status** for coxes is only given at the discretion of the OURCs Captain of Coxes upon application with full coxing details. Senior status is not likely to be given to coxes with fewer than 2 full years of coxing experience, or to those with only Isis experience.
- T) **Flags:** Red flag means the river is closed to college crews. Under amber flag only senior status crews with senior coxes may go out (see OURCs rules). Under blue flag the river is closed to novice coxes (but not to novice rowers). If you think the river is too dangerous for your crew despite the flag, do not go out. If conditions change while you are on the river, you may need to abandon your outing.
- U) Visibility should be at least 100m. If you can't see the opposite bank of the river, you should not go for an outing. Delay it or postpone it to another day.