

Portland Fall Classic

5000 meter course

Rules and Tips

The River

The Willamette River is navigated just like a road. You stay to the right side at all times, except to pass. Also, you stay out of the middle, as that's the most dangerous place. Keep this in mind at all times. The current flows to the north, and you will be racing with the current. Take care around all bridge abutments. Be advised that your boat might not turn as quickly as it would on a lake.

The river will not be closed to traffic during the race. The Coast Guard will work to ensure that any traffic moves at no-wake speed, but you should be aware of all non-regatta traffic.

Launching

The race schedule includes a launch time. You must report to the Control Commission at or before your launch time, ready to go. Penalties may be assessed for late crews. On-time launching is essential so all crews get enough time to row to the start.

Your oars must be pre-positioned on the dock prior to walking your boat down. Volunteers will help you stow your oars. Launch bow first down the dock and follow the instructions of the dockmasters at the top of the ramp, taking care when crossing the pedestrian/bike trail. You have two minutes to walk down the dock, put oars in and shove off. ALL adjustments must be done on the water.

Warm Up

After launching, make an immediate 180 degree turn to face upstream and row quickly across the river to the west side. You may stop and make all your adjustments after completing the river crossing. Row upstream to warm up, following the route on the map, keeping to the shore near your starboard side.

Check in Boat

At the south end of Ross Island, there will be a check in boat flying a flag. Be sure to check with the boat as soon as you arrive. This will be a 20-25 minute row from the boathouse. The check in boat will tell you when it is your turn to row to the east side of Ross Island to prepare for the start. You must row CLOSE to the houseboats when moving to the east side of Ross Island, as the water near the island is less than 1 foot deep. Stay far to the right of all white buoys.

Start

The round up boat will be located about 300 meters before the start, and will give each crew the order when to row to the start. You should be at full power by the time you row between the large buoys that mark the start. Yell your number when you pass the start line.

Buoys:

Stay to the right of all single course buoys [large beach balls]. Cutting a corner will result in disqualification.

Hazards:

Shallow water and snags will be marked with colored tape whenever possible.

Bridges:

There are five bridges on the course. [Ross Island, Marquam, Hawthorne, Morrison and Burnside]. The correct passage under each bridge will be marked by TWO buoys. Go BETWEEN them.

Passing

If a boat is moving to pass you, you must move to the right. If you fail to give way and cause a collision, you could be disqualified. Passing is allowed on all parts of the course.

Finish Line

Announce your number when you cross the finish line, which is marked by two beach ball buoys. You do not have to go through the buoys, but it's the most direct route. Once through the finish, row for another 15-20 strokes.

Warm down, Return to dock

After rowing clear of the finish, you must cross to the west side of the river. Take care, and watch for river traffic. A safety launch will assist you. Return up the river along the seawall. Once you cross under the Hawthorne Bridge [green], wait for directions from the safety launch and dockmaster. They will instruct you when it is safe to cross the course and land on the dock,

Safety Launches:

We will also have 11 launches on the water monitoring the warm up area and course for safety, buoys and bridges.. Please follow all directions given from the launches.

Penalties:

Disqualification will result from any of the following actions:

- If you row through the wrong bridge span
- If you miss a buoy
- If you hit another crew
- If you cause a collision by failing to give way to a passing crew