

Portland Fall Classic Course Information

The River

The Willamette River is navigated just like a road. You stay to the right side at all times, except when allowing a boat to pass. Also, you stay out of the middle, as that's the most dangerous place. 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 boat 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

Quick launching is very important so that all crews get enough time to row to the start. You should arrange to have teammates carry your oars to the dock as you launch. Launch bow first down the dock and follow the instructions of the dockmasters at the top and bottom of the ramp, taking care when crossing the pedestrian/bike trail. We plan to launch a boat every 30-40 seconds to keep the regatta on time. ALL adjustments must be done on the water.

Warm Up

After launching, move off the dock and row quickly across the river to the west side. You may stop and make all adjustments after completing the river crossing. Row upstream to warm up, following the route on the map, keeping to the west shore along your starboard side. Do not waste time on the warm up, as we need all crews to arrive on time for their race.

Check in Launch

At the south end of Ross Island, there will be two round up launches and a check in launch. This is at least a 30-minute row from the boathouse. Be sure to check in with a launch as soon as you arrive. If early, warm up counterclockwise upstream of the check in launch. Do not warm up upstream of the Sellwood Bridge. Beware of shallow water near the boat ramp on the west side. The round up launches will assist you in getting in bow number order. Approximately 10 minutes before your start time, the check in launch will send complete events of boats to the east side of Ross Island 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. Once you pass the houseboats, you'll be sent directly to the start line, so be sure all extra clothing and gear is stowed.

Start

A launch will be located about 200 meters before the start, and will direct each crew 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.

Novice Course Start [2800 meters]:

All junior novices will start at the Ross Island bridge [see Image #7]. After launching, row upstream in the regular warm up pattern until you pass under the Ross Island bridge. You should continue to warm up for a couple of hundred meters upstream of the bridge, so that the current doesn't send you back down toward the bridge. Warm up in a counterclockwise pattern well upstream of the bridge. Two launches will assist you in getting in number order. Once you are told to row to the start, be at full power at the bridge, where the start timers will be located.

Buoys and Penalties:

Stay to the right of all single course buoys [large orange beach balls]. Missing a buoy will result in a one minute penalty. Shallow water on the right side of the course will be marked with green buoys.

Bridges:

There are six bridges on the course. (Ross Island, Tilikum, Marquam, Hawthorne, Morrison and Burnside). TWO large multi-color buoys will mark the correct route under each bridge. Go BETWEEN the buoys. If you do not, a 1 minute penalty applies. See the course map for proper bridge passage.

Passing

If a boat is moving to pass you, you must give the better line to the passing boat. In most cases, you'll need to move to your port side. If you fail to give way, a one minute penalty applies. If you cause a collision, you will be excluded. 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 large 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 to clear the finish area.

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 as quickly as possible. Once you cross under the Hawthorne Bridge [green], wait for directions from a safety launch and dockmaster. They will instruct you when it is safe to cross the course and land on the dock. The last boats in flight #1 and #2 should return to the dock ASAP so that the next flight can begin launching.

Safety Launches:

We will have many launches on the water monitoring the warm up area and course for safety and fair racing. Please follow all directions given from the launches.

Penalties:

A one minute penalty will result from any of the following actions:

- If you row through the wrong bridge span
- If you miss a buoy
- If you impede another crew

You will be excluded if:

- If you cause a collision by failing to give way to a passing crew

Bad Weather Plan:

In case of bad weather, Head Referee John Wylder and Race Operations managers Nick Haley and Peter Edwards will decide the options for safely completing the regatta. Options at their disposal include: a. cancelling 2x races b. cancelling novice races c. shortening the course All crews will be informed of any changes to the regatta program due to weather.