



## Rules of the River

### TRAFFIC

1. **KNOW THESE WATERWAY TRAFFIC PATTERNS:** All launches and shells must keep well to the west bank going up the river, and all launches and shells must keep to the east bank coming down the river and at all times within the line of division. The line of division between opposite traffic lanes is defined as follows:
  - The west abutment of the Girard Avenue Bridge.
  - The central abutment of the Pennsylvania Railroad Bridge above Girard Avenue Bridge, allowing one main arch for each direction.
  - The central abutment of the Columbia Bridge, allowing three arches for each direction.
  - The west side of Peter's Island is for upriver traffic. The east side of Peters Island is for downriver traffic.
  - The first abutment from the west bank at Strawberry Mansion Bridge is for upriver traffic.
  - Down river traffic is allowed to use lanes 1 through 5.
  - At all other points, an imaginary line connecting the above points and following the natural curve of the river is the river divisor.
2. Rowing above Twin Bridges is at your own risk but note that the same traffic pattern applies.
3. Absolutely no racing or high stroking is permitted thru Twin Bridges.
4. Slower launches and shells shall move to port and yell "Look Ahead" to launches and shells coming upon them. Overtaking launches and shells shall stay to starboard.
5. All launches and shells going upriver must steer clear of the down river course, lanes 0 - 6, at all times.
6. All launches and shells going downriver on the race course must use lanes 1 thru 5, leaving lane 6 as a neutral zone and lane 0 for crews launching and returning at the Canoe Club and St. Joseph's boathouse
7. All launches and shells leaving Boathouse Row shall proceed to the west bank of the river as soon as safety allows. Point towards the green Girard Avenue sign by the Schuylkill Expressway on the west bank.
8. Launches and shells returning to slips shall stay towards the east bank and proceed at an extremely low rate in a single file below the Viking statue to ensure the safety of those launches and shells leaving slips.
9. Returning launches and shells waiting to land shall yield to departing launches and shells and shall stay towards the east bank.
10. Absolutely no racing or high stroking is permitted below the Viking statue or along Boathouse Row.

11. Above the Girard Avenue Bridge, any launch or shell departing or arriving must do so in accordance with the rules of the river as detailed in paragraph 1 above, i.e., from the west bank, upriver and from the east bank, downriver.
12. During regattas, non-competing launches or shells are not allowed above Columbia Bridge.
13. During Head Races, non-competing launches or shells are not permitted on the river.
14. No turning or stopping 100 meters above or below a bridge except for Twin Stones.
15. Turning is not permitted between Columbia Bridge and the bottom of Peters Island.
16. No motorboat wake is permitted above Columbia Bridge on wakeless days. Effective January 1, 2008, every day is a wakeless day. Pontoon type wakeless motorboats are permitted above the bridge.
17. The non-racing day before the Dad Vail, Stotesbury Cup, Independence Day and Head of the Schuylkill Regattas are wakeless days for the entire length of the river. Pontoon type wakeless motorboats are permitted on the river.

## **EQUIPMENT**

1. All shells must be equipped with a bow ball.
2. All shells that row in darkness shall have fixed, flashing lights bow and stern.
3. Each coaching launch shall be equipped with a cell phone.
4. Each launch shall be clearly marked in 3" high letters with the name of the club, school, college, or university to which it belongs.
5. Launches must be equipped with 9 approved life jackets and one for each person in the launch.
6. Launches must be equipped with all equipment required by the United States Coast Guard and the Pennsylvania Fish & Game Commission, including red and green lights fore and a white light aft. The Coast Guard requires the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania registration sticker, the state issued number in 3" high letters affixed to each side of the forward part of the boat, life jackets, a sound producing device for emergencies (horn, whistle, siren), navigation lights and three hand held red flares. In addition, each launch should carry an anchor with line affixed to the boat, a paddle and a safety throw line preferably with a hook for easy attachment to a shell.
7. Each organization shall assure motor launches are operated by persons familiar with the equipment and the rules and courtesies of the river.
8. All launches shall be maintained and operated in accordance with local safety laws and regulations.
9. All motor boats must have 360 degree of visibility.
10. All motor boat drivers shall keep their wash to a minimum when passing other boats and shall proceed past Boathouse Row slips at idling speeds with no wash.
11. Any launch, new or used, brought to the river must be wakeless, whether purchased by, donated to or found by a club or its tenant.

12. No motors brought to the river shall be in excess of 25 HP.
13. Each organization shall ensure the safety of its equipment.
14. Each rower should be aware of basic shell safety and check equipment before leaving the dock.

## **SAFETY**

1. Rowing is prohibited when flow on the USGS web site exceeds 18,000 cubic feet per second. Novices are cautioned not to row when flow exceeds 8,000 cubic feet per second.
2. Each club should set its own local markers for its members, a higher level for "rowing is prohibited" and a lower level for "novices are cautioned".
3. Major regattas are exempt from flow prohibition rules. Regatta directors and chief referees are responsible for determining safe racing conditions.
4. All rowers must know how to swim.
5. No rower under the age of 14 shall be permitted to row unescorted.
6. Novice rowers and crews must be accompanied by a launch at all times.
7. No rower or coxswain should ever leave a flotation device to swim to shore.
8. Scullers and crews should sign in and out in accordance with their boathouse procedures.
9. Be aware of weather forecasts and do not row in dangerous conditions.
10. Coaches should know the swimming abilities of all rowers.
11. Swimming is not permitted off the docks.
12. Coaches should be first aid trained.
13. All organizations shall have a signed consent form for all rowing members.
14. Rowers of high school age are prohibited from rowing from Thanksgiving Day to the 3rd Saturday of the following February.

*Revised April 2, 2008*

*The Schuylkill Navy*