

Tees Regatta 2016:

Report to Tees RC AGM 12th February 2017

Summary

This was my second year as Regatta Chairman, and I would like to thank all club members, family members, friends and other volunteers who made the event successful. The feedback from our visitors – athletes, coaches, umpires and supporters – was uniformly positive.

The competition took place on Saturday May 21st on the River Tees. The course was the same as for recent years: upstream with the start 200 m from the Barrage to the finish by the River Tees Watersports Centre. The 4 lane 850 m buoyed course was laid out and provided a majority of multilane races.

The day was showery, with one spell of heavy rain in the early afternoon which caused a temporary suspension of racing. There was a moderate cross wind through the day, and it was decided to abandon the stakeboats early in the racing.

The Official Opening of the extension to the River Tees Watersports Centre took place at 5:30, by The Mayor of Stockton on Tees, Ken Dixon, and the Chairman of Tees River Users Trust, Ralph Pickles. The Mayor presented the prizes after racing was completed. We had media coverage, including a couple of interviews with BBC Tees and a TV report on the extension opening.

One rower from St Peter's School cut their hand but deferred going to Accident and Emergency for stitches until they returned to York. There were a couple of simple capsizes but no other serious incidents. Equipment checks were carried out: several boats failed because of the heel restraints, which now need to be tighter to comply with the Rules of Racing; and a couple of flotation devices were unsatisfactory.

Racing

We received 389 entries by the closing date, and were able to accommodate nearly all, with some changes of status and boat type. With the agreement of the other clubs in the events, we accepted two late entries and conjured up some opposition for an octuple and higher status events. Of the 391 entries in the draw, 365 raced.

The final draw was again strong in Junior events, with 175 entries (2015: 179; 2014: 181). Senior entries were significantly increased to 138 (94; 73), as were Masters at 72 (48; 21). Mixed masters events were again popular, but there was only one two boat senior mixed event.

We were pleased to welcome 16 visiting clubs, schools, colleges and universities from the region (15 in 2015). We had 15 clubs (11) from outside the region, including an increased Scottish contingent.

We did not receive any para-rowing entries from other clubs so ran an invitational time-adjusted 4 boat race for the single scullers from Tees. An invitational race was also added for junior scullers from Westland School, but safety intervention was necessary. The scheduling of boating and safety cover around these races did not work very well (although there were other causes of lateness during the day), and this has been reviewed.

To accommodate the increased number of races, we started earlier at 8:30, and ran 3 divisions finishing at 19:00. Results are on the Tees RC website.

The following boats competed:

	8x+	8+	4+	4-	4x-	4x+	2-	2x	1x	Total
2016	2	18	34	2	29	45	6	123	106	365
2015	0	14	24	0	29	43	7	101	75	293
2014	1	9	22	0	15	50	0	89	81	267

Financial

Income from entry fees covered the expenses with a small surplus, and catering provided the major source of income. Further details are in the Regatta Accounts.

We (unwisely) changed the due date for entry fees and as a result had some problems collected fees from crews that scratched after the draw was published. We will revert to the previous deadlines this year, and may exclude unpaid entries from the draw.

The club Juniors and parents again ran a tombola and raffle, raising money to support the junior section. Thanks to all those who generously donated prizes.

Specific points

We are grateful to the Canals and Rivers Trust, Stockton Borough Council and our own members for clearing driftwood from the river and the banks. Volunteers from Cummins Ltd, Darlington again helped with the preparations on 20th: a letter of thanks was written. We are also grateful to NFreight Darlington for stakeboat transport, and LWC for support of the RTWC bar.

We must also thank 8 multilane umpires from outside the Northern region and 2 from Yorkshire and Humberside who officiated and helped with launch driving. They have made useful suggestions and enjoyed the day.

I managed to write some Excel macros to automate some of the draw process, which sped things up considerably and reduced the chance of transcription errors. However, the process still needs some manual editing and considerable checking, which are unlikely to be automated. The software may need updating with the new version of BROE, either this year or next.

A review was held on 14th June and improvement points noted, including:

We did not limit entries, but this meant running races at 3 minute intervals. A stakeboat start would have been difficult to run to the schedule. Umpire launch wash as they returned to the start was a problem. We will revert to 4 minutes in 2017 and manage the number of races better.

Moving crews to different events because of insufficient entries allowed them to race, but often meant a division change and doubling up. This worked well on the whole, but delays and reinstating crews after they did not make their race start caused complaints. The allocation of events into the divisions will be changed this year to make the transfer of crews between events easier, and transfer between divisions will be made only as a last resort.

Once again we will debate the use of stakeboats, which are impractical in the wind.

We are looking to provide better cover from the wind and rain for the finish team and race control.

The volunteer roles are being reviewed, especially around the safety launch duties and the preparation and clearing up on the day. Training in some key roles and on the use of radios will be organised.

No progress has been made in organising sponsorship.

Selected Feedback from our visitors

From the friendliness of the boating marshalls, to the helpfulness of the start marshalls who had the tricky job of getting everyone lined up in the crosswind, to the people from Tees we were chatting to, made it a superb day for all from us. Since before I started at LUBC, we have travelled to Tees every year, and that is because it is a fantastic multi-lane racing experience in the North which is hard to come by. I do not envy you in any way for having to organise so many crews, competitors and volunteers but you all did a fantastic job. This year has just built on last year's event and shown us why Tees Regatta is such an integral part of our Summer calendar and I have no doubt that we will continue to make the 5am two hour journey for the foreseeable future.- Brad Cleary, LUBC Novice Mens Captain

Our club would like to thank you for holding such a wonderful regatta. The day was brilliantly organised and run. Everyone involved is a credit to your club. We had a great day of racing and will definitely be attending next year! Thanks again, Leah Carman, LUBC Club Captain

Thank you for organising a wonderful event. Please pass on Ancholme Rowing Clubs congratulations to your team for a professionally organised event. It is not just the multilaned course that attracts us so far north! The hospitality, friendliness, bacon butties, cake, chilli (moving on from food), blade helpers, improved landing stage, ability to run on time and many more details.....all add up to make a great event. Well done! - Penny Barker, Ancholme RC

Thank you again for another great weekend at Tees RC! Eddie Bryant, Durham School

Thanks Dilwyn – Everyone enjoyed the day!! – Ian John, Hollingworth Lake RC

Thanks for putting on such a good regatta yesterday. Everybody thoroughly enjoyed themselves. – Mark Buchanan, Nithsdale RC

Thank you very much for holding an excellent regatta and I look forward to attending next year. Many thanks, - Olivia Graham, QEHS

Just a quick note of thanks for a great day. Hopefully we get more Strathclyde Park entries next year. I'd also like to add that the tankards you were giving out for prizes were a nice touch. See you next year! Graham Troy, Strathclyde Park RC.

Thanks again for an excellent regatta I will keep trying to fight your corner to get it move a week or two earlier. - Andy Guest, Yarm School

Thank you for your invitation and letting me Umpire at your regatta today. Lovely day out - relaxed friendly low tension day – brilliant. Lots of events and regions could learn a lot! Can I come back next year? - Andrew Crawford (Umpire, and member of the BR Board and Chair of the Sport Committee).

I just wanted to say thank you so much for making a new umpire like me so welcome at your regatta today. It was a great experience and I had a fabulous, but tiring day. I particularly enjoyed the launch

umpiring, so I'll definitely be keen to return. Particular thanks to the lovely folk I was paired up with...Steve & Laura from Durham and Liz from Tees. You couldn't have been more helpful. Thanks again & I hope to see some of you again soon...maybe in York? - Sue Browne (newly qualified umpire from York)

Really enjoyed the regatta and was made to feel welcome.– Simon Reeves, Umpire

It was an excellent day and I hope to be back again in the future! A touch challenging at times especially for those outside during the rain but it is an outdoor sport after all... Paddy Ibbotson (Umpire, Secretary of the National Umpiring Committee)

This year's regatta - 20th May

Once again, we aim to provide a great racing event for our visitors. The call for volunteers will come out as the date approaches. There are always opportunities to take a role getting things ready before the day – I'd like to hear from anyone interested!

The regatta team has decided to run the event under the existing status points system. You may be aware that the new Ranking Points system is in place, and is being used at some events. However, we decided not to be a guinea pig but adopt it for the 2018 regatta.

We are addressing concerns raised last year, and trying to make improvements. The availability of the Fireworks site for trailers and boat assembly is not yet confirmed: alternative arrangements may be needed and could impose additional costs.

Future Years

The new Ranking Points system will require careful thinking through for choosing and timetabling the events for Seniors. Masters and Juniors will be similar to now, but we are told that Novices will disappear, and Senior entries can be split into Championship, Intermediate etc using the crews' Ranking Points by the event organisers.

Later this month, the region's Event Organisers will meet to hear more about the new Competition Framework, and will also discuss the overall racing offering in the region. Many events, including ourselves, are running very full racing schedules, and some have had to close for entries early. On the other hand, some clubs are not running summer events or struggle for numbers. There is the potential to use more weekends between April and July, as well as Sundays and Bank Holidays. Of course there are national and Yorkshire region events to consider, but I believe we do need to meet the growing demand in the region for side by side racing.

As a result of the regional discussions, Tees Regatta may move to a different slot in 2018 and beyond, and possibly change weekends from year to year. In agreeing any change, we will bear in mind our role for crews preparing to race multi-lane, the availability of local facilities and of the volunteer team, especially for laying and taking up the buoyed course. I am sure the regatta will continue to be well-supported by the region and our regular visitors.

Dilwyn Jones
Tees Regatta Chairman
10th February 2017