



SAFETY ON THE HASTINGS RIVER

Rowing is generally a safe sport. Most injuries occur off the water and are related to boat handling or vehicles. The following should help to keep the injury rate low and also minimise risk of damage to boats. Please also see instructions on boat handling.

TRAFFIC FLOW: Always row with your bow side oar closest to the bank (or downstream on the south side of the river and upstream on the north side or far side). This applies to both the river and canals.

Be careful not to drift to the middle of the river as this may result in a collision with other boats. Please reduce speed when approaching or leaving the club bay.

HAZARDS:

Water Conditions: Take time to observe the influence of tide and wind conditions on the river. When the tide is running opposite to the wind, conditions will become quite rough making it dangerous for novice rowers. Calm water will generally be found in the canals for those rowers sufficiently competent to row from the Club to the canals.

Vehicular Ferries: There are ferries at Settlement Point and Hibbard. Both ferries have absolute right of way over all craft. If the ferry is crossing wait for it to pass – **never cross in front of a ferry**. While waiting for the ferry to pass, be watchful that the tide or wind does not push you onto the ferry cables. It is very easy to misjudge the speed of the tide (especially the outgoing tide) and find yourself swept onto the cables. A collision with the cables is likely to cause major boat damage and possible serious injury.

Keep a close eye out. Always check the position of the ferry and allow plenty of time. Beginners should stay between Hibbard ferry and the sailing club.

Navigational Marks: There are a number of channel markers in the river, generally they may be passed on either side due to the shallow draft of our craft, however the markers in the Maria River should be passed on the correct side as there are some very shallow patches of water.

Weather: Under no circumstances should you row when there is lightning or any possibility of an electrical storm. Do not row in fog or very windy conditions. Be guided by your coach or other experienced rowers.

Lights: Navigation lights should be carried if rowing before sunrise or after sunset (i.e. 2 all round white LED continuous or flashing lights visible at least 1 kilometre at either end of the boat – as per NSW Rowing Code of Conduct in consultation with Roads and Maritime).

Other Moving Hazards

Be careful of drifting fishing boats. Invariably they do not see you or warn you. Powerboats underway should give way to rowing boats, but be aware that you may not be terribly visible.

Dealing with boat wakes

Turn boat parallel to the wake.

Sit in the safety position, relax your hands and let the oars rest on the water.

Capsizes

Almost everyone capsizes at some stage in their rowing career, usually in their first few excursions in a single scull.

In the event of a capsize ALWAYS STAY WITH THE BOAT.

If you are strong, you may be able to get back in.

Right the boat, hold the oar handles together and try to straddle the boat.

If you cannot do this reasonably easily after 2 or 3 attempts, give up, try to attract help and swim the boat with the current towards the bank avoiding hazards and oysters.

Once there, turn the boat upside down in the water and drain out the water carefully.

FIRST AID:

There is a First Aid Kit in the Clubhouse.

Feel free to use it but please let your coach or the First Aid Officer (Meredith) know if equipment needs to be replaced.

Non trivial incidents are to be reported to the first aid officer, club captain or president as soon as possible.

We recommend you keep your tetanus immunisation up to date.