

Written By:	Sara Cinamon, Head of Schools Programme	Activity:	Learn 2 Row (L2R) Course for schools
Approved By:	Richard Ellis, Captain; Paul Dixon, Club Welfare Officer		



## **RISK ASSESSMENT – Learn to Row Course – Lea Rowing Club (Novice Straight) Introduction**

The stretch of the River Lea that the Learn to Row course will be conducted on is what is termed as ‘the Novice Straight’. It is approximately 650 metres long and the view along the straight is clear and unobstructed. For the majority of the time the River Lea has little flow and compared to other rivers that are rowed on in the London area, it is fairly narrow. There is also a tow path that runs the complete length of the rowable stretch of river. All of these factors make it an ideal place for people to learn to row and to progress quickly. However these traits of the river also create unique hazards and along with the generic hazards of rowing being a water sport it is important that a risk assessment is created and it continues to be updated and revised regularly.

This course teaches participants how they should row on the River Lea but also concentrates on how to keep the rower and other water users safe while participating in the sport.

All participants who have not yet passed their Capsize Drill will be required to wear a buoyancy aid (provided by the club). They will need to be shown how to put it on and which size is best for them. Lea Rowing Club may be able to organise a Capsize Drill at a swimming pool that would include a swim test. All participants are given a thorough safety tour of Lea Rowing Club where they are shown all notice boards, river maps and local hazards, fire assembly points, first aid posts, emergency telephone numbers and locations and safety equipment storage. The participants will be made aware of whom on site is first aid trained and who the Child Welfare Officer is.

For a school session to go ahead at the Lea RC there must be a coach on site with the minimum of either a UKCC Level 2 in Rowing or the IA award.

Rowing Club and Location:	Lea Rowing Club On Novice Straight			Date:	6 week course - Year Round
Group at Risk:	Junior Beginner Athletes up to 16 in number				
Hazard	Probability of Accident occurring	Severity of harm if accident occurs	Risk prior to control measures	Risk Control Actions needed	Level of risk once actions have been carried out
3.1 Environment					
Getting stuck against boats moored on banks	Likely	Slight harm	Medium risk	Each boat will have a line attached with a person on the other end to pull them away from such a danger. No line shall be removed until they demonstrate confidence in their manoeuvrability.	Very low risk
Being hit by other craft on river	Unlikely	Extremely Harm	Medium risk	All participants will be instructed on the navigational rules of the river and coaches will instruct athletes to stay on the correct side of the river. Coaches will maintain vigilance for, and warn of, approaching craft. Emergency stop taught as a priority in first water session. Participants taught how warn other boats and project voice.	Low risk
Rowing into flotsam	Likely	Moderate Harm	Medium risk	The river that the participants will be using will be visually inspected before each outing and large objects either removed from the river or pointed out to participants	Low risk
Damage to feet while transporting boats across towpath	Very unlikely	Moderate Harm	Low risk	Each participant will be asked to wear footwear whilst transporting boats	Very low risk

Hitting head on a rigger of another boat	Likely	Moderate Harm	Medium risk	Participants will be taught how to carry boats on the first session and will be reminded constantly. They will also be shown the dangers.	Low risk
Slipping over on towpath or landing stage on ice or wet mud	Unlikely	Moderate Harm	Medium risk	Participants will wear footwear while walking around the boathouse. Large amounts of ice or mud will be swept away.	Low risk
Tripping over trestles while moving around boathouse	Unlikely	Moderate Harm	Medium risk	Participants will be shown the dangers and be taught how to carrying out boats. They will be shown where trestles should be stored.	Low risk
Getting hit by a passing cyclist while moving boat across road	Very Unlikely	Moderate Harm	Low risk	Each participant will be made aware of this danger. Staff and volunteers will position themselves to keep an eye out for when participants are crossing the towpath.	Very low risk
<b>3.2 Capsizing</b>					
Drowning	Unlikely	Extreme Harm	Medium risk	It is compulsory for all participants to wear a buoyancy aid until such time that they have passed a capsized drill (CD) and swim test (ST).	Low risk
Capsizing	Likely	Slight harm	Medium risk	Conduct a capsized drill in the safe environment of a swimming pool to let the participants be aware of what to do in the eventuality that they capsize. Ensure participants know safe position in boat and what could make a boat capsize.	Low risk
Feet getting stuck	Unlikely	Extreme harm	Medium risk	Heel restraints set at the appropriate height and checked every 6 weeks for suitability	Low risk
Hitting head	Very unlikely	Extreme Harm	Low risk	Every participant will be taught to grab a rigger with their hand(s) as they capsize	Very low risk
Panicking once capsized	Unlikely	Moderate harm	Medium risk	All participants will participate in a capsized drill.	Low risk

Getting ill from swallowing water	Unlikely	Moderate Harm	Medium risk	Communicate with the environmental agency on the possible issues with the water. Inform participants of any issues and what to do if an incident occurs	Low risk
Multiple Capsizes at the same time	Unlikely	Slight harm	Low risk	All participants will be aware that they must assume the safety position unless directed otherwise by a coach or volunteer.	Low risk
3.4 Water					
Fog	Very Unlikely	Slight Harm	Very low risk	If visibility does not extend to the end of the Novice Straight (600m) then the participants will not be permitted to boat.	Very low risk
Fast stream	Unlikely	Slight harm	Low risk	The speed of flow on the Lea Navigation is very low and regular. In the event that flow becomes excessive and dangerous for beginners, participants will not be permitted to boat.	Very low risk
Extreme Temperature	Unlikely	Extreme Harm	Medium risk	Each first aid kit will include a thermal blanket. Each staff member and volunteer will be aware of the signs of Hypothermia. If below -2° no one will go on the water. At least one coach will carry a mobile phone with them and have the numbers of the local hospital and other emergency numbers. Participants will be encouraged to wear hats, gloves and brightly-coloured, multiple and thin layers of clothing. In the event of a capsize, participants will be taught how to get on the boat and out of the water as a priority.	Very low risk
3.5 Equipment					
Equipment falling on participants	Unlikely	Extreme Harm	Medium risk	All participants will be instructed on how to remove equipment from racks and how to re rack all equipment safely	Low risk

Damaging boats while removing them from boat house	Unlikely	Slight harm	Low risk	All participants will be instructed on the correct way to carry a boat. They will carry boats in and out of the boathouse in no fewer than pairs.	Very low risk
Damaging boats while getting in and out of the water	Unlikely	Slight harm	Low risk	All participants will be instructed on the correct way to carry a boat.	Very low risk
Inadequate clothing	Unlikely	Slight harm	Low risk	All participants will be informed about the need for a change of clothes/adequate clothing. We will do spot checks and have a back up set in case.	Very low risk
Inappropriate clothing	Likely	Moderate Harm	Medium risk	If participant has inappropriate clothing for the water session they will be restricted to land training if sufficient staff available or they will watch.	Very low risk
<b>3.6 Access</b>					
Arriving late for a session	Very unlikely	Slight harm	Very low risk	The importance of punctuality will be emphasised. Participants may feel rushed and more open to making errors.	Very low risk

This risk assessment has been carried out in compliance to British Rowing guidance on Risk Assessment for rowing, section 1.2 in Row Safe: A Guide to Good Practice in Rowing, 2008.

## **Schools' Programme Lea Rowing Club Qualified Coaches have at least UKCC L2 in Rowing (Lead Coaches)**

Sara Cinamon  
Mark Cushway  
Sally Lawrence  
Dick Millard  
Gillian Parker  
Richard Peckham

## **Schools' Programme Lea Rowing Club Instructor's Award (Assistant Coach)**

Mary Finlay

## **Schools' Programme Lea Rowing Club experienced coaches (Assistant Coaches)**

Guy Arnold  
Elaine Hare  
Tom Johnson  
Gabor Marton  
Bridget Snaith

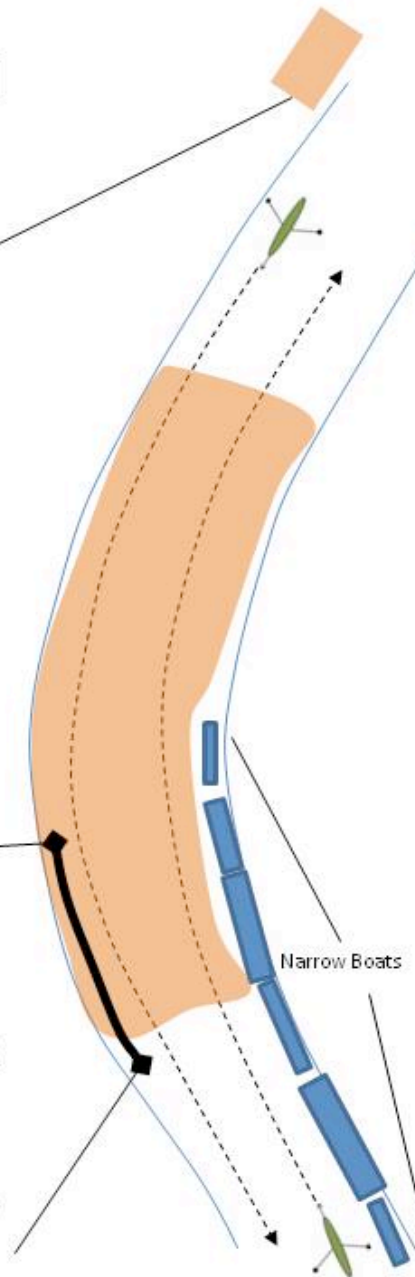
## **Trainee Coaches**

Ayfer Karakus

## B Novice Bend

Note to Coaches on push bikes: The area of the towpath marked in orange has a rumble system in operation and therefore must be travelled over slowly to not damage push bikes or risk personal injury

In summer there can be a build up of weed in this area and therefore crews going downstream should push out into the middle of the river to avoid this hazard but only when it is safe and clear to do so.



Crews either cut the corner coming downstream or do not tuck in after passing the narrow boats going upstream. This leads to increased chances of a collision occurring. Therefore crews must stay on their side of river and continue to check that their path is clear while taking the corner.

# C



Direction Of Flow

Cyclists beware of boats coming out of sheds and blades on slip way

When boating from Lea RC the bows of the boats should point downstream and crews should, after boating, row downstream to the marina therefore being able to see more river up and down stream before turning and going upstream

The narrow boats run all the way down the western bank between the club and the start of Kayak bend

When waiting to land crews should wait upstream of the club and tucked into the bank allowing other crews to travel downstream without obstructing the traffic going upstream

The narrow boats run all the way up the eastern bank between Novice Corner and Kayak bend.

In case of heavy stream or at times when complete novices are boating (when rowing traffic is light) it has been known to boat them with the bows facing upstream. This is so that they can row against the stream and not have to turn straight away.

No crew should enter Springhill Marina

