



**Balmain Rowing Club**  
A community rowing club in the heart of Balmain

## BALMAIN ROWING CLUB REGATTA GUIDE

Racing at all levels is encouraged at Balmain. We actively participate in the JB Sharp Winter Series, the Rowing NSW Association Regatta Program (Grade and Masters) as well as Sprint, State and National Championships.

You must be a member of both BRC and Rowing NSW to compete in any regattas. You need to wear a Balmain zootie (black & yellow stripes) which you can order it from the BRC Clothing Shop accessed via our website, or email [shop@balmainrowingclub.com](mailto:shop@balmainrowingclub.com).

### ROWING NSW REGATTAS – GRADE AND MASTERS

This is a series of regattas, run across NSW with a range of sculling and sweep oar events for all boat classes - from single sculls to eights. Many of these regattas are run on Iron Cove and several are run at SIRC. The full regatta program is available on the Rowing NSW website - <http://www.rowingnsw.asn.au/competition>. It's worth having a look at the program to decide which events you want to contest at the regattas.

#### Grade Regattas – what is my grade score and how does it work?

Each rower is allocated a grade score, based on their previous rowing performance when they become a member of Rowing NSW. New rowers automatically start with a grade score of 4.0. The grades, distances raced and grade scores are :-

A GRADE	2,000m	0.00 > 1.2499
B GRADE	2,000m	1.25 > 2.2499
C GRADE	1,000m	2.25 > 3.2499
D GRADE	1,000m	3.25 > 4.0

For each race you win, 0.15 is subtracted from your grade score. For each race you lose, 0.03 is added to your grade score. For crew events, the average score of all rowers determines the grade of the crew. Further details about grade score calculations are available at Rowing NSW website – <http://www.rowingnsw.asn.au/competition>.

The grade regattas offer a race for each class of boat for most grades – so there’s a men’s double scull for A grade, B grade, C grade and D grade (subject to the number of entries).

#### Masters Regattas – which class can I enter?

These are open to all rowers aged 27 years or more. Your age for the year is calculated by the age you will be by the end of that year (31 Dec). All Masters races are rowed over 1000m. The masters groups by ages are :-

A grade : 27 yrs +	D grade : 50 yrs +	G grade : 65 yrs +	J grade : 80 yrs +
B grade : 36 yrs +	E grade : 55 yrs +	H grade : 70 yrs +	K grade : 85 yrs +
C grade : 43 yrs +	F grade : 60 yrs +	I grade : 75 yrs +	

For crew events, the average age of all participants determines the age group of the crew. Masters regattas use a handicapping system where rowers of different ages compete against each other in the same race. Basically, the older crews go on “GO” and the younger crews are handicapped.

#### Championship Events

Rowers wishing to compete at State, Nationals of Championship events should discuss their plans with their coach and advise the Captain/Vice that they wish to take part. The Vice Captain will submit entries in the same fashion as for other regattas. Seat fees for these regattas will be paid by the Club only at the discretion of the Committee.

#### Composite Crews

Composite crews are those comprised of member from 2 or more clubs (eg. Balmain / Leichhardt rowers in a quad). Many masters regattas allow you to enter composite crews, although grade regattas do not. Rowers wishing to compete in composite crews should advise the Captain/Vice to facilitate discussion of which Club will submit the entries, provide the boat and will pay the seat fees. If a BRC boat is used for a composite crew and it travels away for that purpose, the BRC members competing in that crew are responsible for re-rigging and washing it, upon return to the club.

## **JB SHARP Winter Series**

The JB Sharp was traditionally a competition between the Bay clubs – Balmain, Leichhardt, Drummoyne, UTS and Glebe. Now, it's a less formal regatta series held every second Sunday from June to August that attracts both local and school clubs. Some of the races are sprints – 500m or 750m, others are 1000m. There are prizes for individual events and for the club with the most points overall. Balmain usually does pretty well!

JB Sharp rowing grades are different from the NSW Rowing Association grade system.

**Novice** : all rowers who have NOT won three D grade races in the NSWRA regattas.

Once you win a novice race at JB Sharp, you become an intermediate for the remainder of that season.

**Intermediate** : any rower who has NOT won a Senior A or B race at state or national level or higher.

**Open** : open to all rowers.

Entries for crew boats (doubles, quads, fours and eights) are not submitted ahead of time, so simply discuss with your squad and coach which crew want to compete and email the details to the Vice Captain. They will prepare a boat plan to make sure everyone has access to the equipment they need.

There are five single sculling events at the JB Sharp and you must be registered for these events before the regatta. You will be allocated a bow number for the season when you register. Entrants in the Novice 1x must never have raced before - they're never faced the starter.

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## **REGATTA ENTRIES**

The Vice Captain will send a "call for entries" email well before prior to the closing date advertised on the Rowing NSW website. Rowers should consult with their coaches and squads to determine their entries. The coach (or coordinator) of each squad then should then email the entries to the Vice Captain well prior to the cut-off date / time for entries. **The Vice Captain submits all entries to Rowing NSW.**

Seat fees are approx \$13-\$18 per race for grade regattas and these are covered by your BRC Membership fee, however late entries must be paid directly to the treasurer. Requests for specific boats can be made at this time.

**If you withdraw from an event, once entries have closed, you will be required to reimburse the club for the seat fees for that event.**

## **Boat Plans**

Just prior to the regatta, the Vice Captain will issue a boat plan, so everyone knows who's racing in what boat and what special arrangements are necessary to ensure all competitors are able to make their races. The better racing boats will be allocated to the most competitive crews.

It is the responsibility of every rower to organise themselves and their crew to be at the regatta venue with sufficient time to prepare your equipment and yourselves for the race.

## **Boat Loading and Unloading**

BRC has a trailer to travel boats from our Club to away regattas at SIRC, Taree etc. This process includes de-rigging and re-rigging boats (as required) and washing them after each regatta. Remember to bring your tools - 10mm and 11mm spanner, Phillips and flathead screwdriver and adjustable wrench.

**If you are competing at the regatta, you should be at boat loading** – at a minimum, half of your crew must be at each session. It is YOUR responsibility to make sure all the equipment YOU need for your race, is loaded onto the trailer.

Things to remember :-

- remove the seats (or tie them into Sykes boats) before loading
- load top shelf boats first (bigger boats – eights & quads), then smaller / lower trailer boats.
- pack riggers, trestles, bow numbers, cox box, alternate riggers and oars for pairs & fours, tool box, buckets
- pack the seats (either in a car or the trailer)
- double check that sure everything is actually **tied onto** the trailer.

BRC is always looking for trailer drivers, so please speak up if you, or your spouse or partner can help!

## **What is lightweight and heavyweight rowing?**

At elite level, rowers can compete in both lightweight and heavyweight competition. Each season, Rowing NSW publishes the guidelines for weight limits, as allowances are made, leading up to the Nationals. The maximum weight for lightweight men is 72.5kg with an average crew weight of 70kg. For women, the maximum individual weight is 59 kg, with a crew average of 57kg. Coxswains must weigh at least 55kg for men and 50kg for women.

## GENERAL RACING PROTOCOLS

The Laws of Boat Racing tell you everything you need to know about racing at a Rowing NSW Regatta. You can download all the details at <http://www.rowingnsw.asn.au/files/13-14/LBR%20-%20January%202014.pdf>.

Rowing courses are generally numbered in the same way – as the coxswain faces down the course the lanes number left to right. So lane 1 is the far left and lane 6 or lane 9 is the far right.

The various courses on Iron Cove are not buoyed, so there are no lanes marked. Boats simply line up in the correct lane order and make their best (most direct and hopefully straight) line to the finish.

SIRC is a buoyed course, so it's much easier to see where you're supposed to be.

There are a few things you **MUST** do when you race – and a few more that are a good idea.

### You **MUST** :-

- row a boat that is safe to row (refer to boat maintenance for these details)
- wear your club zootie (black and gold hoops)
- use oars painted in club coloured (black and gold for Balmain)
- display your lane number on the bow (see below) – usually this is the bow-person's job
- be at the start 15 minutes prior to the scheduled start time of the race

### You **should** :-

- familiarise yourself with the course – particularly which side of the channel is the access to the start
- You must stay off the course, until you move into the marshalling area. If you're racing a 1000m event, be careful that the race before you is not a 2000m event.
- You must not row past the starter (on your way to the start) as he is starting a race. Just stop & wait if needs be.
- If you have a serious problem at the start (or during the race), raise your hand.

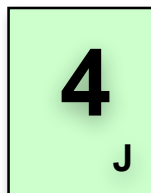
### Lane numbers

BRC owns several sets of lane numbers which are used for all Iron Cove regattas and other regattas where you **BYO** lane number.

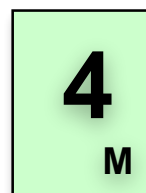
Regattas at SIRC require you to display an alphanumeric bow number, rather than a simple lane number. These are available at the venue – there's sometimes a \$10 deposit which is returned to you when you return the number. The alphanumeric numbers can tell you which race other crews are in, in relation to your race – in the example here, the J race is 3 races before the M race. All crews are in lane 4 of their respective races.



Ordinary lane number



Alphanumeric lane number



### Scratching and Substitution

If you are entered into a racing crew and are unable to compete, you should advise your squad coordinator or coach as soon as possible. They may be able to arrange for another rower to replace you, or they may decide to scratch the entry. For grade events, the rower joining the crew must maintain the crew's overall grade score. For Masters events, the rower joining the crew may adjust the crew's overall Master's Division, provided they remain within the same heat.

You **MUST** advise the Vice Captain or your coach that substitution or scratching needs to be made at least 1hr prior to the race.

If you can't find the VC or your coach, you need to :-

- go to the Finish Tower (at SIRC) or the host Club's boatshed (if it is Drummoyne's regatta, you have to go to Drummoyne Rowing Club)
- complete & submit a "scratching" or "substitution form"
- You must do this at least 30 mins prior to the scheduled start of the race.
- If you don't fill in the form, and don't start the race, the Club can be fined by Rowing NSW. This fine will be passed onto you directly.

**If you withdraw from an event, you will be required to reimburse the club for your seat fees for that event.**

## RACING AT BRC

### Get yourself ready

1. For races from BRC, arrive at least 1 hour prior to your race.
2. Warm up – don't race without doing at least 10-15mins of cardio warm up (jog, bike, ergo) and some dynamic stretching.
3. Get dressed – Balmain zootie on, water bottle filled, sunscreen, hat, BOW NUMBER etc
4. Familiarise yourself with the course. Maps are available in this document and at the club. If in doubt, ask a more experienced rower.
5. Aim to be on the water approx. 45 mins prior to your race.
6. Do your normal crew warm up and whatever race prep you choose – racing starts, roll ups, etc
7. Be at the start 10 mins before your schedule start time. Remember lanes number from the left (1 to 6) as you look down the course from the start.

**BRC endeavours to provide a safety tinny to escort novice scullers from BRC to the start and back.**

### The Race

- As each race starts, you'll row slowly (usually bow, or bow pair only) closer and closer to the start.
- Move up to the start with the other boats – don't try to get there first, because if it's windy you just blow around!
- In calm conditions, the starter may call up each event, by name and will give you specific directions to form a straight line. S/he will check off the crews, he'll say ("Lane X – Balmain"). The bow should raise their hand.
- In breezy conditions, the starter may opt for a "quick start" without the roll call as soon as the boats are lined up. He may say "quick start" to warn you so be ready!
- Once everyone is lined up he will usually say something to indicate he's ready to start the race, like "We have a line." COME TO THE CATCH with your blades square and buried in the water, ready to take the first stroke.
- The Starter will say "Attention" (big breath in!), then he'll say "GO", or you'll hear the horn... and you're off!

*If you have a serious problem at the start and need help – boat malfunction, injury or illness – raise your hand.*

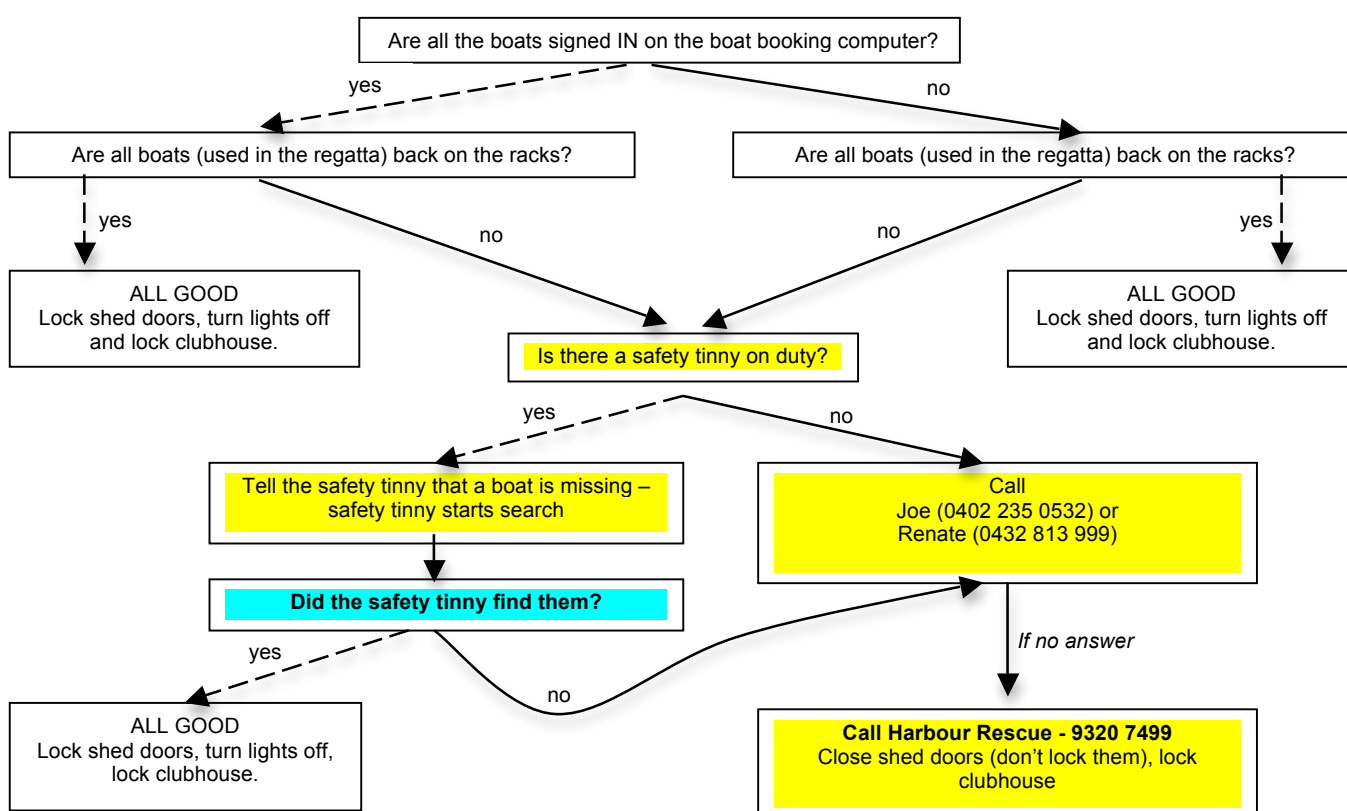
### After the race

- Make sure you stay off the course as you row back to BRC
- If you're winners, you can usually collect your medals from the host club straight after the race.
- Make sure you sign IN when you get back to BRC.
- If you are the last crew back, follow the REGATTA SAFETY CHART to make sure all Tigers are accounted for.

## REGATTA SAFETY CHART

BRC have implemented some specific protocols for local regattas. Please ensure you are familiar with them.

1. You absolutely **MUST** sign your boat OUT and IN on race days.
2. If you are the last crew racing on the day, you need to follow the chart below BEFORE you leave the club.



## REGATTA COURSES – IRON COVE

These may vary slightly according to distance, but these are the basic courses. Always check the details before you race. For this diagram, solid lines represent the actual racing course, dashed lines represent the transit lane. Where 1000m and 2000m starts are common, the 1000m start is marked with an **X**.

### BALMAIN (yellow lines east of Iron Cove bridge)

Start : off Birkenhead Point Marina (1000m), beyond the bridge, near the red buoy (2000m).

Finish : to just off the point at Elkington Park.

Transit Lane : via the normal side of the channel

### DRUMMOYNE (green lines)

Start : at or beyond the island, off the Leichhardt foreshore (depending on distance).

Finish : right in front of Drummoyne Pool (and it's a quick stop before you hit the rocks)

Transit Lane : Row up towards the bridge as normal, then cross over and row on the opposite side of the channel (past the red buoy) to the start. Be careful - racing crews have right of way.

### LEICHHARDT (blue lines)

Start : at the red buoy (1000m - **X**), off Birkenhead Point Marina (2000m)

Finish : the point past Leichhardt Rowing Club.

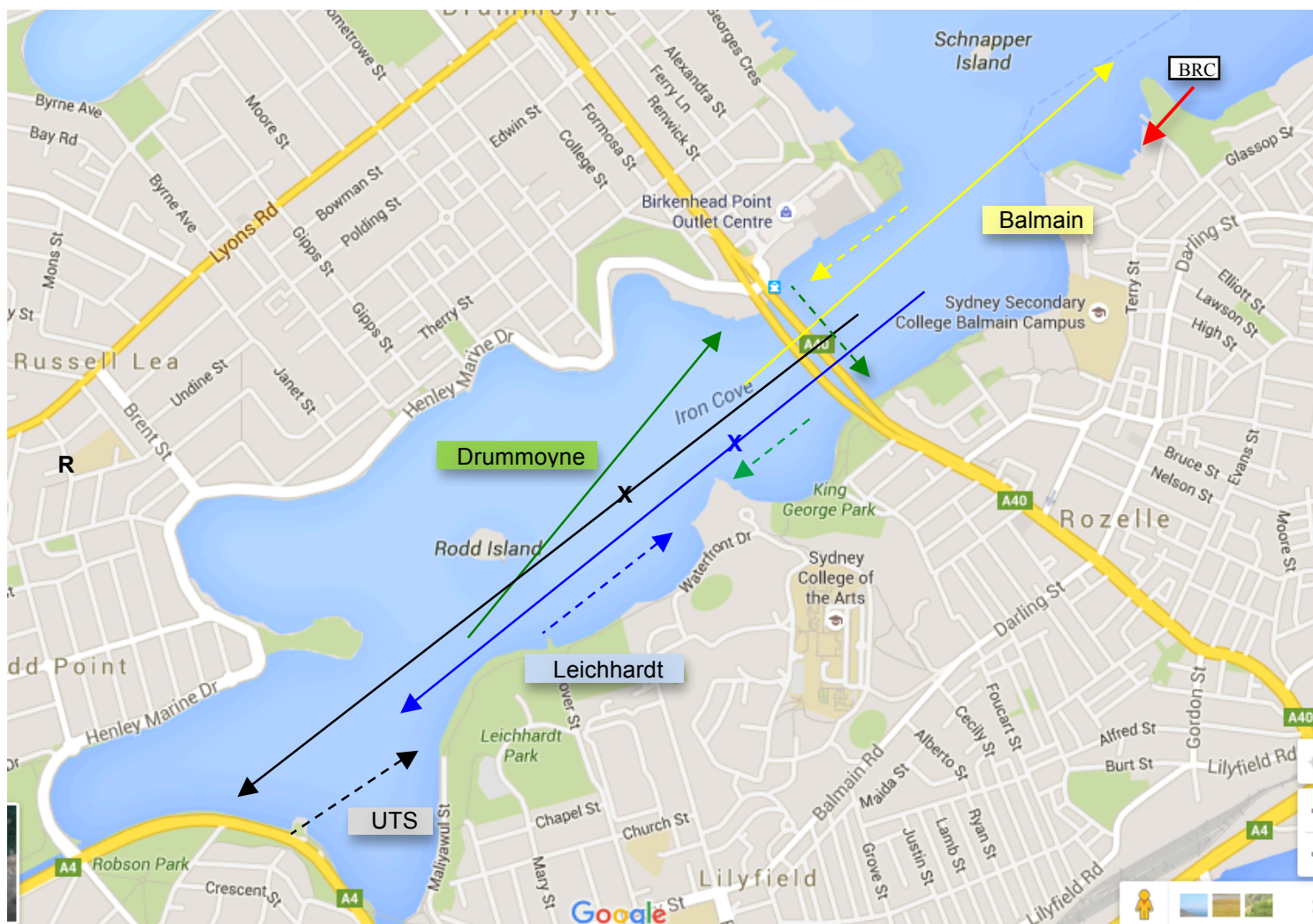
Transit Lane : via the normal side of the channel

### UTS (black lines)

Start : beyond Leichhardt Rowing Club (1000m - **X**), off Birkenhead Point Marina (2000m)

Finish : just past UTS Rowing Club – it's an angled finish across the bay.

Transit Lane : via the normal side of the channel.





## **RACING at the Sydney International Regatta Centre (SIRC)**

SIRC is the Sydney International Rowing Centre, located at 85-151 Old Castlereagh Road, Penrith. Take the M4, then the Mulgoa Road exit. Turn right onto Mulgoa Road and follow for ages, then left onto Old Castlereagh Road. It will cost you approx \$10 to park. Walk over the bridge and find the Balmain trailer.

### **Arrival (approx 1.5hrs prior to race time)**

- **CHECK YOUR RACE** – event, division & lane number – some bow people write it on their hand. Collect your lane number (alpha-numeric) from the finish tower & return it after your race.
- Scope out the venue. Check out the launching pontoons, the main grandstand (with toilets & café) and the club sheds (with toilets, showers and warm up ergs).  
**First aid and RNSW officials are located in the finish tower.**
- Rig the boat – get it off the trailer & attach the riggers – ask for help from others if the boat is high, or heavy.
- Put the seats in, adjust your feet & slides as required
- Check / tighten your slides and riggers (sometimes things get loose from the shaky-shaky trailer trip)
- Attach your alpha-numeric number to the bow
- **SAFETY CHECK** – you MUST have heel ties & a bow ball – if not, tell your coach or Captain ASAP.

### **Get yourself ready**

- Warm up – don't race without doing at least 10-15mins of cardio warm up (jog, bike, ergo) and some dynamic stretching. There are ergs in the sheds near the bathrooms.
- Get dressed – Balmain zootie on, water bottle filled, sunscreen, hat etc

### **Getting on the water (45 mins prior to race time)**

- Take your blades & water bottles to the pontoon that you plan to boat from. Line them up in the middle of the pontoon.
- Carry the boat (usually upside down because it's a bit of a walk) down to the pontoon and if there's space, put it straight onto the water. Make sure the BOW is pointing away from the land and be aware that you might be getting into the boat from the opposite side that you normally launch from. Make sure you put your land-side blades in first!
- Put your blades in, and get in (as you normally would), push off and head to the start. Let the bow do the calls.

*If at any stage you need help, don't be afraid to ask. Other rowers, clubs, coaches and officials will all help you!*

### **Navigating to the Start**

- Traffic at SIRC travels clockwise, so on the warm up lake, you head away from the bridge to the start.
- Do your normal crew warm up exercises on the way to the start and keep a good lookout for traffic.
- The channel narrows under the bridge so row slowly here – in a quad, ask stern pair only to row.
- Once you clear the bridge, head away from the finish line and row up and land-side of the course.
- **Make sure there is not a 2km race in progress.**

*If you have time and it's not too busy, you can practice some race starts in the area behind the start line. Go further up the course that where other crews are lining up, if you want to do this and be careful and considerate of other boats. Make sure you are in your lane, roughly lined up with your competition about 10 mins before your race.*

- Head for your lane – Lane 1 is closest to the carpark, lane 9 is closest to the grandstand (refer map)
- Your alpha-numeric lane number tells you who's in the race before and after you (A before B, C, D etc), so try to get into your lane, in about the right sequence with the other boats around you. It's handy to know which events are before after you (maybe men's singles are before and women's quads are after – then you can tell where you fit in)

### **The Race**

- As each race starts, you'll row slowly (usually bow, or bow pair only) closer and closer to the start.
- The starter will call up each event, by name and will give you specific directions to line you up in a straight line.
- Move up to the start with the other boats – don't try to get there first, because if it's windy you just blow around!
- The Starter will check off the crews, he'll say ("Lane X – Balmain"). The bow should raise their hand.
- Once everyone is lined up he will usually say something to indicate he's ready to start the race, like "We have a line." COME TO THE CATCH with your blades square and buried in the water, ready to take the first stroke.
- The Starter will say "Attention" (big breath in!), then he'll say "GO", or you'll hear the horn... and you're off!

*If you have a serious problem at the start and need help – boat malfunction, injury or illness – raise your hand.*

*NOTE - The buoys on the course are different colours for the first and last 250m, so you know how far you've travelled.*

### After the race

Once you catch your breath and as soon as you can, continue rowing towards the bridge and back to the pontoon that you departed from. Beware that the channel narrows under the bridge and there's often a bit of traffic, so take care.

Make sure you take the boat OFF the pontoon and back to the trailer as efficiently as you can and then go back for your blades, water bottles etc. Try to keep your gear organised on the pontoon so other rowers don't stand on it!

If no one else is rowing your boat on the day, it is your responsibility to de-rig it and tie it onto the trailer. Don't leave all the work for those poor few rowers who are in the last race of the day.

Find out what time the trailer will be back at BRC before you leave SIRC, so you can be ready to help with boat unloading.

The Laws of Boat Racing tell you everything you need to know about racing at a Rowing NSW Regatta. You can download all the details at <http://www.rowingnsw.asn.au/files/13-14/LBR%20-%20January%202014.pdf>.

### Regatta course map

