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Rowbust Head of the Yarra 2009
Saturday 28 November 2009
www.headoftheyarra.com
Information For Competitors
October 2009

Entries close Sunday, 8 November

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For enquiries or further information, please go to www.headoftheyarra.com or contact:

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1. Race Entries Close Sunday, 8 November

Race entries must be lodged with the ROMS entry system by 7pm on Sunday, 8 November.

The 2009 entry fee is \$29 per oar or \$232 per crew (*these amount include various Rowing Victoria levies and charges*).

Please refer to our Information Sheet For Competitors #1 from August for more details in relation to;

- the timetable for the provisional and final draws
- the meeting at Hawthorn Rowing Club on Wednesday 18 November for race draw submissions
- race categories and start order for race categories
- new race categories for 2009
- a summary of race day events throughout the day

2. Rowbust Australia – Head of the Yarra Principal Sponsor

Rowbust Australia and Hawthorn Rowing Club are pleased to announce that the 2009 race is to be known as the Rowbust Head of the Yarra 2009.

This follows Rowbust joining the Head of the Yarra as Principal Sponsor for 2009.

As a producer and retailer of quality sportswear, Rowbust distinguishes itself through the use of premium fabrics and garment construction techniques, customer service and fast turn-around times.

Rowbust is a family run company with a strong commitment to service and dedication to meeting the requirements of all its customers. They work with a broad range of clients all around the world with a diverse set of needs.

You will see Rowbust's stall on site at the Head of the Yarra where a range of high quality rowing gear will be available, including the Silver Oars range. For more information, please contact Rowbust at +61 3 9397 4855 or at rowbust@rowbust.com

3. Crew Changes

The uniqueness of the HOY as a time trial event presents unique timing logistics for us. We cannot therefore process crew changes as for "normal regattas."

Crew changes that change the category of your crew cannot therefore be accepted after the final grid is determined (Friday 20 November).

We need to insist upon this because moving a crew between race categories after the final draw compromises the integrity of our grid positions and puts our timing processes at risk.

4. Race Rules

Full race rules are listed at <http://www.headoftheyarra.com/racerules.html> .In particular, all competitors are requested to note the overtaking rules:

If a competitor boat is being overtaken by a faster boat, then the slower boat must yield the best racing line to the overtaking crew and warn the faster crew if they should alter their course.

A crew is deemed to be overtaking if a faster crew has its bow ball within half a length of the stern of the slower crew.

For safety reasons, the faster boat must be prudent and delay the act of passing if a pass can not be accomplished without incident.

In all instances, all crews must obey the instructions of race umpires aligning the banks of the river.

5. No Coxswain Weigh In Required

Please note that there are no minimum coxswain weights for the Head of the Yarra. Accordingly, there is no weighing in requirement for coxswains.

6. Boating At Hawthorn / Finish Line Precinct

Boat trailers arriving at Hawthorn should approach the entrance to Yarra Bank Reserve from the east, ie straight on from Denham Street. (Refer Melways Map 2H Ref J6.

This approach must be taken because it is not possible for a boat trailer to complete the sharp left or right turn into Yarra Bank Reserve from Creswick Street.

Boat trailers (and boats on trestles) can stay in the Reserve from Thursday afternoon until Friday afternoon when boat racks for 200 eights will be erected.

Creswick Street (the street at the top of the Reserve) will be closed to traffic and residents from sunrise Saturday morning to accommodate boat trailers throughout race day. Boat trailers should therefore be moved up into Creswick Street preferably on Friday night, but no later than sunrise Saturday morning.

Hawthorn Rowing club is providing professional security in Yarra Bank Reserve on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights to keep a watchful eye on your equipment.

7. Boating At The Princes Bridge / Start Line Precinct

Whilst we provide boat racking at the finish line, we are not able to provide this service at the Princes Bridge start line area. You may care to contact some of the Princes Bridge clubs to seek out assistance in advance if this is going to be an issue for you.

Overnight security is provided at the start line area on Friday and Saturday nights. Boats should be stored in the area between Richmond Rowing Club and Princes Bridge where security will be set up for the protection of your equipment. Any overflow should be contained to the parkland behind the Melbourne University Boat Shed.

8. Race Eve Briefing

We urge all crews and coxswains to attend the race eve briefing at Hawthorn Rowing Club from 6pm Friday 27 November. The briefing will address:

- advice for coxswains negotiating the race course
- race rules and safety
- emergency arrangements and obtaining medical assistance if required
- “need to know” issues for competing on race day

We will also have HOY merchandise and programs available for purchase at this time.

9. Collection of Race Numbers

Please note that collection of race numbers on Friday night at Hawthorn Rowing Club is strongly encouraged. This is in line with arrangements that all other major mass participation sport events now adopt (ie triathlons and fun runs). This will ease the burden on all concerned on the morning of the race when we are all busy with getting ready to race.

To collect your race numbers, we require a refundable deposit of \$20. For this you receive a bow number for your boat, a number for your bow rower and a number for your coxswain.

As a fall back measure, we will continue to have the Race Registrar in front of Mercantile Rowing Club from 8am to 10am on the morning of the race.

Race numbers should be returned to the Number Return Stall set up between the Hawthorn Rowing Club and Xavier College boat sheds from 11.30am.

You should provide any scratchings or crew changes to the Race Registrar. Please remember though that crew changes received after Friday 20 November that change the category of a crew will not be accepted.

10. Announcement of Results

We understand that race day is a very long day for those competing early. It can indeed be a long wait for results. Because of this, we will be announcing the results of the first 8 race categories as the results are determined. These categories are;

Male Masters H+, Women's D (a new race category), Women's C, Female Masters D+, Schoolgirl C (a new race category), Female Masters B/C, Mixed 8 (A-C), Mixed 8 (D+)

The results for these categories will be posted on a notice board at the front of Hawthorn Rowing Club as they are determined.

However, medallions for these race categories will continue to be presented as part of the formal Head of the Yarra presentation ceremony.

11. Finish Line Safety Requirements

The highest risk factor we have is a cluttered finish line with finishing crews smashing into each other or having to stop before the finish line. In this scenario, we will have to stop the race and call all results a "no event." This would be a terrible outcome for all concerned.

A cluttered finish line will occur if crews;

- attempt to take the closest boat rack and therefore hold up crews behind them,
- do not immediately remove their oars from the finish line staging and therefore render the staging unusable by following crews,
- are slow to remove boats from the finish line staging and stop to have a "breather" drink or chat about the race, or
- stop at the finish line and do not keep rowing to the turn around buoys upstream from the finish line.

It is therefore very important for all crews to be mindful of,

1. Crossing The Finish Line

It is important that crews do not stop at the finish line.

All crews must continue rowing lightly having crossed the finish line. We need you to keep rowing beyond the finish line bridge up to the turn around buoy. Officials will direct crews at the finish, and time penalties will be enforced for not adhering to finish line instructions.

2. Getting Your Boat Off The Finish Line Staging

We all understand how wonderful it is to finally get out of the boat after racing 8.6kms in the Head of the Yarra. But it is important for all crews to quickly clear the staging for following crews so they can get off the water. Following crews need to get off the water so that the on-water finish line does not become cluttered.

3. Removing Oars From The Finish Staging

Please remove your crew's oars from the staging asap. This is a high priority because the staging can only hold so many sets of oars – certainly not 180 sets of eight oars! The staging area will quickly become unusable if crews do not cooperate in this regard.

4. Boat Racking

Please follow instructions from boat rack officials who will direct you to the next available boat rack. Crews by necessity cannot take the closest boat rack. Boat racks must be filled from the rear of the reserve – else we will have a traffic jam that will prevent crews getting off the staging and potentially stop the race in a worst case scenario. Please cooperate with us in following the direction of the boat rack officials.

All of the above is based on the highest risk factor we face with the event – a cluttered finish line and logjam. *In this regard, please be mindful at all times of the crews and any logjam following behind you.*

12. Head of the Yarra Housekeeping Matters

We have to ask that you be mindful of some important matters so that the race runs smoothly for all concerned.

Race Uniforms

All crews must race in official club uniforms. For composite crews, each rower must wear the uniform of his / her club. Importantly, attire promoting corporate branding such as a retailer is not permitted. Race officials will be ready to remove such crews from the race in 2009.

Fancy Dress

The HOY is not a novelty event. Fancy dress such as hats and similar is therefore not permitted, as it is not permitted for other official regatta events.

Bringing Alcohol Into Yarra Bank Reserve

Please be aware that Hawthorn Rowing Club has to obtain permits and licences to use the Yarra Bank Reserve on race day. These permits and licences come with strict conditions and obligations on HRC.

In this regard, we are responsible for controlling the responsible consumption of alcohol – especially with thousands of rowers and spectators gathering in the reserve. HRC and our security firm have an obligation to control this alcohol consumption. We are not permitted therefore to allow individuals to bring alcohol into the reserve for private consumption. This responsibility is monitored on the day by frequent police patrols. We ask that you please respect this requirement and not bring alcohol into the reserve.

Private parties, marquees and banners

With thousands of people gathering in Yarra Bank Reserve, we have an obligation to ensure open and free access and movement for all concerned. We understand private BBQs and marquees are common at other regattas. However, the HOY is unique in that we have thousands of people gathering in the reserve. Should we experience many clubs setting up private marquees and banners, free and open access and movement in the reserve will be denied to others.

Please therefore respect the benefit to all of free and open access and movement for all concerned, and refrain from staking claims to parts of the lawn area to the exclusion of others.

13. Amora Hotel Accommodation

This year we have again negotiated a special price for accommodation at the Amora Hotel. The Amora is walking distance from the Head of the Yarra finish line, just across the river from Hawthorn Rowing Club.

The details of the special accommodation package can be viewed on the Head of the Yarra website at;

<http://www.headoftheyarra.com/accommodation.html>

14. Requests for “Row Overs” and “Special Events”

Each year we receive requests for crews to row over the course / compete as a “special category.” Please note we cannot accommodate these requests.

The Head of the Yarra is essentially a normal regatta comprising the “standard” Rowing Victoria race categories. As much as we enjoy the Head of the Yarra, it is not a mass participation “fun” event such as a “fun run”.

Importantly, we have to employ sophisticated recording processes with the start timing, finish timing and calculation timing to ensure integrity of every crew’s start and finish time. Complications with boats on the course that are not competing in the race categories present enormous risks and logistical nightmares for us.

Please understand this when we decline your special requests.

15. HOY Annual Dinner

We will again be conducting the HOY Dinner at the Bridge Hotel. Meals can be ordered in the Lounge. There is no need to book in advance.

The Bridge has a late liquor licence, so the bar will be open well after midnight. A DJ will also operate well after midnight.

The Bridge Hotel is located at 642 Bridge Rd, Richmond (*directly across the road from Amora Hotel and walking distance from HOY finish line*).

Those who prefer to attend the Bridge Hotel merely for drinks are also most welcome.

The Head of the Yarra Organising Committee and Hawthorn Rowing Club wish all our competitors and visitors a successful and enjoyable day on 28 November.