

DW2020, Senior Doubles Race – option: earlier start time, for slower crews only.

In light of the decision to remove the second tide option from the Senior Doubles race, the DW team have looked again at the Devizes start time window.

Traditionally, the earliest possible start time from Devizes has been 07:00 on Easter Saturday morning. Earlier start times have not been allowed due to possible disturbance of local residents, and the extended hours required of volunteers.

Many of our slower crews have previously started at a time of their choosing from Devizes and timed their Teddington arrival to coincide with the 2-hour time window available on Sunday evening. Since this tide window is no longer available, it has been decided to allow slower SD boats to start at 05:00 on Saturday.

There will be certain restrictions on how this will operate and the process is described below.

Tide times and race timing 2020.

Note: the Teddington tide window will open at 05:57 and close at 09:57.

SD crews starting at 07:00 therefore have just under 27 hours to reach Teddington before they are timed out of the race. Allowing (say) 4 hours for the tideway would give a potential DW completion time of 31 hours.

By allowing crews to start at 05:00 the maximum potential completion time is therefore extended to 33 hours.

However, our recommendation is that crews expecting to complete in more than 31 hours should consider the Endeavour event.

Process and operation of 05:00 “block start” from Devizes.

The principle is that slower boats will start at 30 second intervals from 05:00. The start window will then close awaiting the ‘normal’ start at 07:00. Assuming that (say) 20 crews decide to take this option, the Start will be open for just 10 minutes at 05:00. The start window will then close and re-open at 07:00.

1. Crews who decide that they wish to start from 05:00 should make this clear by email to the Chief Umpire, by midnight on the Wednesday before the race.
2. The full check-in process for these boats will need to take place on Friday evening and in their email the crews will need to confirm what time they will be available for check-in. A GPS tracker will be allocated to each crew at check-in. A yellow car sticker will also be issued which will allow early access to the car park from 04:30.
3. On Saturday morning crews should arrive ‘ready to go’ at Devizes at 04:30 (not earlier please).
4. Lighting – it will be dark, so lights must be fixed to boats, with activated light sticks on paddlers.
5. Crews will be checked in against the list of boats confirmed as starting at 05:00. Note: there will be few facilities at Devizes at 04:30, no Marsport, no Merchandise, no food...
6. Boats will paddle slowly to the start line and will start at 30 second intervals.

We must try and minimise the disturbance to local residents, so:

- A maximum of one vehicle and two supporters for each boat,
- No slamming of car doors, conversation minimised, no flash photography.
- The race will start quietly, i.e. no megaphone etc...

In order to minimise the traffic through the Vale of Pewsey, we would also request that these early crews are not followed or supported before they arrive at Honey Street. Our recommendation to support crews is: see your crew off at the start, have some breakfast, follow their progress on the tracker, catch up with them at Honey Street for about 07:00, Pewsey from about 07:30.

This earlier start time will be offered this year on a trial basis. We are optimistic that it can be made to work provided all crews and support teams cooperate and the disruption to local residents is minimised.