

2021 IRA Fairness and Weather Procedure Document

The Regatta Fairness Committee shall operate during the regatta to make changes to regatta operations should weather create unfair or unrowable conditions. The Fairness Committee shall be comprised of: The Chief Referee, the IRA Commissioner, The IRA Championships Regatta Director, the current IRA Stewards President, and will work in consultation with the designated representative of the Local Organizing Committee (LOC).

Inclement Weather Plan

The IRA Commissioner, the Chief Referee, the IRA Regatta Director, and the President of the Board of Rowing Stewards, in conjunction with the Local Organizing Committee Staff, will be responsible for monitoring the weather during practice and competition. They will work with the aforementioned fairness committee members to make any decisions on evacuations, schedule changes, or any additional items that may be weather-impacted. This plan will operate in conjunction with the policies of the Princeton National Rowing Association (2021 LOC).

Changes in Weather; Notifications of Watches/Warnings

Initial Notification: When thunder or lightning are detected within a 15 mile radius, the Commissioner and President will notify the Fairness Committee and on-site EMT and Security verbally or via telephone that an evacuation may be imminent.

Ending Practice or Competition Activities: When thunder or lightning are detected within 12 miles all competition or practice will end immediately. At this time, evacuation to a safe structure or location is required. Teams on the water need to return to the launching and landing docks. It is impermissible to be on or in the water when lightning is within 10 miles.

In the event that a weather system develops quickly, all crews will be evacuated from the water in the quickest and safest manner available. These emergency evacuation locations include the launch and return docks (priority), the Caspersen Rowing Center (secondary) and the finish line (beach landing – third priority). Crews and regatta personnel shall always be prepared for the possibility of such an event.

Evacuation procedures when on the water:

- On the water safety personnel (EMTs, Officials, Regatta Staff) will immediately begin directing crews to the launch and recovery launch sites.
- Launching of new crews will be prohibited.
- Launch sites will become landing sites.
- Officials and volunteers in the student-athlete area will be on hand to account for all crews.
- Spectators will be instructed to evacuate.

Safe evacuation locations are any sturdy, fully enclosed, substantial, and frequently inhabited building that has plumbing and/or electricity. These are limited at Mercer County Park.

Evacuation locations include:

- Caspersen Rowing Center.
- Finish Tower.
- Lower level of the Boathouse/Marina building.
- West Picnic Area restrooms.
- Fully enclosed vehicles with a hard metal roof, rubber tires, and completely closed windows and doors can provide a safe temporary location.

Wind and Water Quality Changes

Officials on the water during practice or competition will report changes in wind and water conditions to the Chief Referee. Should wind or water conditions require evacuation from the water, the Fairness Committee will determine when it is safe to return to the water. If it is determined by the committee that fair racing or safe practicing can no longer occur, notification will be made verbally or via telephone/text to all coaches.

Restarting Practice or Competition

Following an evacuation, safe return to regularly scheduled events will be a decision of the Fairness Committee. Standard operating procedure states that following an evacuation, 30 minutes must have passed without thunder or lightning present.

Alternatives to Race Procedures in Cases of Unfair Conditions during Competition

It is the duty and responsibility of the Fairness Committee to determine that the weather has created, or is about to create, unfair or unrowable conditions. Should a decision of this nature be required, the committee will convene in a predetermined location to select an appropriate alternative racing format. Options A and B will always be considered first. It should be noted that while these four options will be prioritized, the committee is not restricted to these options.

- a. To delay race programming either to later in the day or to the following day based on when the weather forecast indicates that conditions are likely to improve.
 - This option is not available if finals are the round of racing effected.
- b. To start racing earlier than previously announced, provided that this announcement can be made at the regatta site prior to the end of racing the day before.
 - Racing will not commence prior to 7 AM
 - If racing runs late into the day the day before, the policy will be that notification will occur not less than 12 hours prior to the schedule change going in to effect.
- c. Re-allocate the lanes for each race using placings from the most immediate previous results.
 - If being applied to the heats, reseeding will be based on rankings entering the regatta.
 - When this alternative is implemented, such implementation shall occur immediately, or as soon as it is reasonable to do so.
 - If the weather changes again, or abates, the same procedure listed above will apply.
- d. Modify the race program to eliminate repechages and/or semifinals, to prioritize grand finals, to re-order events, or to eliminate some events.

Reallocating Lanes

If alternative C (above) is utilized due to unfair conditions, the primary reseeding protocol is laid out below. When reseeding occurs, the highest ranked crew will be moved to one of the outside lanes, and the seeding will then proceed in order across the course. While this will be the first approach to re-seeding, the fairness committee is not limited to these options.

Protocol I: (Seven lanes)

Original Lane Assignment:	Option “A”	Option “B”
4	1	7
5	2	6
3	3	5
6	4	4
2	5	3
7	6	2
1	7	1

Protocol II: (Six lanes)

Original Lane Assignment:	Option “A”	Option “B”
4	1	6
5	2	5
3	3	4
6	4	3
2	5	2
7	6	1

Eliminating a Round of Racing

The Fairness Committee will utilize the results of previous races to seed subsequent racing. For example, if repechages are eliminated, heat results will be used to seed the semifinals. A progression system based on placement in the immediately preceding event will be used, with Modification made to the published standard progression.

- a. Example: if reps are cancelled, the top three finishers from each heat will advance to the A/B semifinal. This deviates from the normal progression of the top 2 advancing. Places 4-6 in each heat will compete in the C/D semifinal.
- b. If reseeding of lanes must occur in the event following a cancelled event (semifinal lanes are reseeded following cancellation of the reps), seeding will be based first on crews who qualified for the race based on the originally published progression, then based on those who qualified for the event following the modification

Reordering Races

The IRA, having been founded and contested for its first 90 years—originally as a *de facto* and then as an official—Heavyweight Men’s National Championship, shall hold to its founding principal. Therefore, in the event that weather may potentially impact racing, in order to crown National Champions and a Ten Eyck Champion, the Fairness Committee may prioritize races in the following order:

1. The three National Championship Events,
2. The remaining Men’s Heavyweight 8+ events
3. Remaining races will be prioritized based on their historical presence at the regatta.
4. **While this will be the first approach to re-ordering, the fairness committee is not limited to these options when considering all aspects of SAFETY and FAIRNESS.**

There will be two exceptions to this policy:

1. The Men’s Varsity 4+, although it has been contested at the regatta longer than the lightweight events, is not a point scoring event for team championship trophies. Therefore, the Men’s Varsity 4+ will be of last priority.
2. If reordering needs to occur on the date of the final, if a race for lanes has already occurred in any events (see below section on cancelled races), those events will be of lowest priority since their race for lanes can be used to crown a national champion.

Cancellation of Finals

In the event that the finals are cancelled, only races in which all boats in the event have previously competed in the same race (ex: completed a race for lanes) can a previous result be used to crown a national champion. In the event that finals are cancelled and a race for lanes has not occurred, no national champion shall be crowned in that event.

Regatta Relocation

Under no circumstances will the regatta relocate once the regatta has begun. The IRA will not sanction any races that occur other than at the official regatta site under the direction of the IRA and supervision USRowing Officials. Any teams who chose to go to an alternative site will be doing so at their own risk and the results will not be recognized by the IRA.