



Race Rules

Saturday 28 February 2026

BRUGGE BOAT RACE CUP

Lot assignment and start order

- Drawing of the starting order place on the Sunday before the races, 22 February 2026.
- The 5KM best times provided by the participants on the entry forms will be taken into account to organise and to determine the starting order of the board-on-board races between equivalent teams.
- The race organisation will compile a list with the best times and, if not available, with comparable times. From this list the pairs will be selected within the same category. If this is not possible, pairs may be selected across categories. When several pairs of participants are equal, then the starting order is assigned by drawing.
- The assignment of even or odd numbers is done by drawing.

Instructions for oarsmen and coxes

- A cox briefing is held in the Clubhouse on 28 February 2026 between 10:00am-10:00am to review and explain the race rules and instructions. Attendance is compulsory for all coxswains and strokes.
- Bow numbers will be handed out at the secretariat.
- All races are rowed according to the 'Brugge Boat Race' race rules, in addition to the World Rowing and the KBR (Royal Belgian Rowing Association) regulations.
- The security of the participants is of the utmost priority; every participant is obliged to help other participants in case of danger. When necessary, the race will be suspended or stopped.

Embarking – rowing up

- Teams must be ready to embark 90 minutes before the start of their race. Embarkation is done by order of bow number, in reverse order, under the direction and instructions of the marshals and the umpire.
- Bow numbers are grouped in time slots. The teams embarking after their assigned time slot may be penalised by 15 seconds.

- The teams which arrive too late for embarkation and are deemed unable to reach the starting point in good time, will be refused at embarkation.
- Rowing up happens at bowside (the bank on the other side of the Club House).
- The boats have to row up to the starting zone at Nieuwege Bridge, row underneath the bridge - careful: low passage, lie down backwards - and line up behind the Nieuwege bridge according to bow number.
- Warming up is done during the rowing up and in the lining up area. 10 minutes before starting, the teams are to follow the instructions of the marshalls and the umpires and row toward the lining up area just in front of the Nieuwege bridge.
- The professional inland navigation has total priority.

Lining up

- In the lining up area after the Nieuwege bridge there are assigned waiting areas per bow number.
- The first teams to start will be lined up in the area closest to the bridge. The last teams to start will be waiting in the furthest away area.
- The instructions of the line-up marshals have to be closely observed.

Pre-start at the Nieuwege Bridge

- The pre-starter on the Nieuwege Bridge will call the participants one-by-one by their bow number to approach and row back under the bridge.
- Once they have passed the Nieuwege Bridge the boats must take their assigned starting lanes: lane 1 on port side - lane 2 on starboard side.
- Teams that are too late for the pre-start will be moved to the back of the starting grid and start after the last boat of the relevant heat.

Assistant Starter

- The teams should row up to the assistant starter in the correct order.
- The Assistant Starter is positioned 50 meters before the starting line.
- No team is allowed to row past the assistant starter without clearance to do so.

Start on Saturday

- The start will be a "flying start".
- When reaching the Assistant Starter the two boats will lie still next to each other in their assigned lanes.
- Every minute the Assistant Starter will give clearance to two boats to approach the starting line.
- The time measurement is started for each boat individually as they cross the starting line.
- The eights have to keep their lane until they have passed the first bend (after 400 meter).

- A no show on the starting line does not affect the lane assignment defined by the drawing.

Overtaking

- Safety and sportsmanship should always prevail when overtaking other boats.
- Once the bow of the team that is overtaking reaches the stern of the overtaken team, this last one has to give way by moving sideways without interfering the team that is overtaking.

Finish – Cooling down – disembarkation

- After the finish the teams have to keep on rowing underneath the railway bridge.
- Boats can only turn in the area behind the railway bridge.
- The return to the mooring area to disembark is only allowed behind the buoys.
- Ongoing races should never be disturbed.
- Part of the mooring area will be reserved for teams swapping boats between heat 1 and heat 2. Boats that are being used in both heats do not need to go back to the boat meadow.

Marshals – Umpires – Jury

- Marshals assist the umpires during the race. Marshals supervise the correct implementation of the 'Brugge Boat Race' regulations. Their instructions must be followed at all times.
- Failure to observe by marshals' or umpires' instructions may result in time penalties or even disqualification.
- Any interference may result in a time penalty or even disqualification.
- This is the exclusive responsibility of the jury.

Handicap races for Masters

- The winner in the Masters events is determined by applying handicap factors. The rowed times are multiplied by a handicap factor calculated for each entry based on the formula:

$$\text{Handicap factor (HCP)} = \text{hhcp_boat} \times \text{hhcp_age} \times \text{hhcp_gender}$$

- The **handicap for age** (hhcp_age)

- the average age of the boat is calculated excluding the Cox. Rowers with no known date of birth are not included in the calculation
- if no date of birth is known, the default age handicap is 1
- as soon as there is one person in the boat younger than 27, the entire boat is considered a senior boat with handicap factor 1
- Using the average age, the handicap is retrieved from the table 'Age factors by category'
- The **handicap for gender** (hhcp_gender) is calculated by :
 - added 1 for each male and 0.9 for each female
 - this sum of which is divided by the number of rowers excluding the Cox
- The handicap for the boat (hhcp_boat) :
 - is retrieved from the table below
 - if the boat is not found in this table, the default boat handicap is 1

| Age factor per categorie | | |
|-----------------------------|-----|--------|
| Category | age | factor |
| Master A | 27+ | 0,991 |
| Master B | 36+ | 0,977 |
| Master C | 43+ | 0,961 |
| Master D | 50+ | 0,944 |
| Master E | 55+ | 0,927 |
| Master F | 60+ | 0,906 |
| Master G | 65+ | 0,878 |
| Master H | 70+ | 0,841 |
| Master I | 75+ | 0,793 |
| Master J | 80+ | 0,743 |
| Master K | 83+ | 0,698 |
| Master L | 86+ | 0,644 |
| Master M | 89+ | 0,582 |

| Boat factor Saturday | |
|-------------------------|--------|
| boat type | factor |
| 8+ | 1,206 |
| 8X+ | 1,244 |
| C8+ | 1,130 |
| C8X+ | 1,163 |

| Boat factor Sunday | |
|-----------------------|--------|
| boat type | factor |
| 1x | 1 |
| 2+ | 0,985 |
| 2- | 1,039 |
| 2x | 1,076 |
| 4+ | 1,094 |
| 4- | 1,122 |
| 4X+ | 1,130 |
| 4x | 1,164 |
| C1x | 0,900 |
| C2+ | 0,886 |
| C2- | 0,927 |
| C2X+ | 0,910 |
| C2x | 0,964 |
| C3X+ | 0,990 |
| C3x | 1,040 |
| C4+ | 1,035 |
| C4X+ | 1,042 |

| Gender | |
|--------|--------|
| | factor |
| M | 1 |
| W | 0,9 |

Mixed Master teams

- The results of the Master races of the Brugge Boat Race are determined on the basis of corrected times applying the above handicap factors that take into account age, boat type and gender of the rowers in a boat.
- The composition of a mixed master team may differ from the equally divided composition imposed by World Rowing Rule 14 regarding Mixed Master Events.