



Race Rules

Sunday 1 March 2026

Foodlink cup



Lot assignment and start order

- Lot assignment takes place on the Sunday before the races, 22 February 2026.

Instructions for oarsmen and coxes

- A cox briefing is held in the Clubhouse on 1 March 2026 at 8:45–9:00am 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 bowsides (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 marshals 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 lie one behind the other
- 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 Sunday

- The start will be a "flying start".
- At the prestart the boats will lie still.
- Every 15 seconds a boat will start on sign of the Assistant Starter.
- The time measurement is started for each boat individually as they cross the starting line.

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.