



Staines Boat Club

Safety Launch Guide

Starting-Up

- ◆ The engine uses STANDARD UNLEADED PETROL. Be careful when filling the fuel tank (use a funnel!) and NEVER fill it on the launch.
- ◆ On the engine, move the tilt lock knob to Unlock, then raise the engine to the release position and then gently lower the engine into the water.
- ◆ Take the stern kill cord from the side pocket at the front, attach it to the kill switch on the engine and also secure the other end.
- ◆ Place the fuel tank by the engine. Loosen the air intake valve on top of the fuel cap and attach the fuel line to the engine. Pump the bulb on the fuel line a few times until firm to feed fuel to the engine.
- ◆ Attach the launch key kill cord to the kill switch next to the keyhole. Ensure the engine control handle is in Neutral, then insert the key and then raise the neutral warm-up lever a little (applies to both cold and warm start-ups). Turn the key to the start position and push the key to operate the choke, releasing hold of the key when the engine has started. Return the neutral warm-up lever to the closed position.
- ◆ Upon engine start-up, a red light on the engine (oil pressure warning) should come on momentarily and then go out, and the cooling water outflow from the engine should start.
- ◆ Important notes:
 - *If the red light remains on (or blinks off and on) or the cooling water outflow does not start then switch off the engine and seek advice.*
 - *Unless there is an emergency to attend, the engine MUST be allowed to warm-up for 2-3 minutes before moving off. This allows oil to circulate to all parts of the engine and helps extend engine life.*
 - *The neutral warm-up lever MUST NOT be overused in order to prevent the engine sucking up silt from the riverbed.*
 - *The choke shouldn't be required for starts when the engine is still warm (e.g. 2nd outing).*

- ◆ Once the engine has warmed up, the mooring lines can be untied. Before moving off, unclip the front kill cord from the key ring and attach it to your ankle or shoe. Also ensure you are wearing a life jacket!
- ◆ The following equipment should be taken out on the launch:
 - Paddle
 - Plastic Tub containing Bailer, Whistle, Knife & Thermal Blankets
 - Throw Line
 - Anchor (should already be fitted to launch)
 - Life Ring & Spare Life Jacket
 - White bow and stern lights if out in the dark

Shutting-Down

- ◆ Once returned to the landing stage, switch off the engine and secure the launch with the mooring lines. Remember to lock up the launch to either the landing stage or the other launch. Also ensure that the bows are in contact with either the tyres or wooden pallets and not the wall.
- ◆ Remove the keys and kill cords, returning the stern kill cord to the side pocket at the front.
- ◆ Disconnect the fuel line from the engine and close the air intake valve on top of the fuel tank cap.
- ◆ Shift the engine control handle into Forward, then raise the engine up 6 clicks, then move the tilt lock knob to Lock and then gently lower the engine. Return the engine control handle to Neutral.
- ◆ Return the fuel tank, life ring and paddle to the container.
- ◆ Return the keys, plastic tub and other equipment to the coxes cupboard.

Following these instructions will help keep the launches and their engines in good condition and reduce the need for expensive repairs. The launches have hour meters fitted so that we can keep track of their use and get them serviced when due.

IF IN DOUBT ABOUT ANYTHING – ASK!

General Guidance and Responsibilities

By accepting the role of safety launch driver, you are taking on responsibilities towards others and for your own benefit you must ensure that you are well trained, well practised and up to date with the current rescue techniques.

The primary aim of all safety launch drivers is the safety of all river users within their area of responsibility. If the launch is being used for secondary duties, e.g. coaching, then these must give way to safety duties should the need arise. Launch drivers must also not forget the responsibility they have for their own safety.

The objectives of all safety launch drivers are to:

- ◆ Provide rescue facilities to regattas, head races and other club activities.
- ◆ Recover capsized athletes without worsening their condition.
- ◆ Quickly and safely get injured rowers to medical attention (or vice versa).
- ◆ Not become a victim themselves.

Launch drivers should:

- ◆ Be aware of the relevant section in the British Rowing Water Safety Code (summarised in this guide).
- ◆ Be relevantly trained in boat handling, resuscitation and First Aid.
- ◆ Be up to date in knowledge and skill.
- ◆ Ideally hold an RYA Level 2 Powerboat Handling Certificate, and boat handling skills and rescue techniques should be practised regularly.
- ◆ Hold a recognised First Aid Certificate since they may well be the first on the scene of an accident.

The driver, and all crew members/passengers, must wear a lifejacket while afloat.

General points:

- ◆ Choose the right clothing for the prevailing weather conditions and bear in mind the length of time afloat, the possible need for one crew member to enter the water, inactivity for long periods in cold weather and the need for agility when moving about the launch.
- ◆ Hot drinks on cold days, and vice versa, will maintain the efficiency of the crew.
- ◆ Boat handling skills should be second nature so that the rescue can be concentrated on rather than having to think about how to get the launch into the right position.
- ◆ When manoeuvring in close quarters make sure that the correct helm is applied before engaging gear. Look in the direction of travel and check the way is clear.

When a rower needs to be recovered from the water, the following precautions must be observed:

- ◆ The only time high-speed manoeuvres should be used is when transiting to the scene of trouble or when taking injured rowers back to the landing stage.
- ◆ Any high-speed approach to the scene must make allowance for the safety of other river users. Use an audible warning device to alert other craft. Give way if need be.
- ◆ The final approach to the rower in the water must be made carefully and at low speed, in order to weigh up the situation and to avoid alarming the person in the water.
- ◆ On approach provide a buoyancy aid to person in the water.
- ◆ Talk to the person in the water. Make sure they understand what you intend to do and what you want them to do.
- ◆ Approach from downstream/downwind, as appropriate, in order to maintain control over speed and steering.
- ◆ When bringing the rower aboard, the engine must be turned off so that no injury can be inflicted by the propeller. Leaving it in neutral is not enough. If the speed of the current or other hazards make this dangerous then use the anchor to hold the launch in position.
- ◆ Should the rower require urgent First Aid treatment this should be applied before moving off.
- ◆ Where there are several rowers in the water, priority should be given to any injured or younger rowers.

Remember:

- ◆ Keep a good look out at all times.
- ◆ Don't overload the launch.
- ◆ Obey speed limits.
- ◆ Keep to the right.
- ◆ When crossing a channel, cross quickly at right angles.
- ◆ Keep clear of swimmers, fishermen, canoeists, dinghy sailors, etc.
- ◆ Think how your wash will affect others.
- ◆ Look out for deteriorating weather conditions.