



The Skiff Club

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As a new member to The Skiff Club, we would like to take this opportunity to welcome you & to wish you many hours of pleasure both on & off the water.

To make your time as enjoyable & safe as possible we would like you to familiarise yourself with the following information. Anything that is unclear, please ask one of the Committee Members for further guidance.

Boat Safety



RULES OF THE ROAD

Unlike the roads in the UK, you drive on the right hand side of the River and pass oncoming boats port (left) side to port side. When overtaking other boats you do so on its port side towards the middle of the river.

Near bridges and bends, a boat going upstream must, if necessary, give way to boats coming downstream and motor boats should always give way to sailing boats, rowing boats and larger passenger vessels which may have difficulty manoeuvring.

Keep a good lookout and be prepared to slow down or stop.

LOCKS

It's safer for Skiffs to enter a Lock last behind powered craft, although the Lock Keeper will advise.

Do not fend off with hands or feet but use the chains or pipes provided.

Do not secure your bow/stern lines to fixed mooring points in a falling lock but adjust your lines to keep them taut.

RIVER CONDITIONS

Any activity on the river poses a greater risk when there are strong currents and high river levels. Warning signs displayed at the locks should always be heeded.

**CAUTION
STREAM
INCREASING**

When the yellow CAUTION STREAM INCREASING / DECREASING warning boards are displayed, all unpowered craft are advised to moor up until the stream abates. When INCREASING stream is indicated all vessels are advised to seek a safe mooring. If a DECREASING stream is indicated, powered craft may proceed with caution.

**CAUTION
STRONG
STREAM**

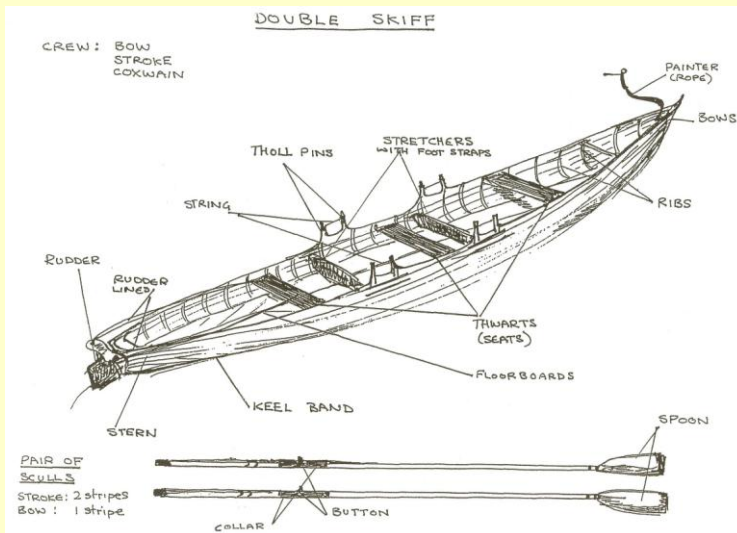
When the red CAUTION STRONG STREAM warning boards are displayed, all craft are advised not to navigate until the stream abates. In strong stream conditions it is advisable to keep off the River.

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Boathouse Security

Once proficient to manage a boat, you will be provided with the combination to the boathouse. When the boathouse is in use, please ensure that the lock is left with the tumblers set on a different number. And on leaving, ensure that the lights are switched off, the door bolts are in place and that both the blade storage area and the main storage areas are secured.

Boat Handling & Maintenance



MOVING OUT OF THE WATER

Ensure that you have sufficient numbers of people to safely move the boat without straining.

Use your legs not a bent back & take care not to trap fingers between boat & rack.

As far as possible, boats should be carried in & out of the boathouse. Lift by the bow, stern & thwarts (seats) where the construction is strongest.

Always slide the boat as far as possible on the shelves before lowering to the ground.

When dragging the boats during launching or recovery, always ensure they remain vertical i.e. running on the metal keel band, to prevent scraping the varnish.

Sculls should be laid on the ground tips down, not leant against the boathouse.

IN THE WATER

Step into (embark) & out (disembark) onto/from the keel & centre boards, ensuring that these are seated correctly in the boat first. If boarding from the bows, walk down the centre line as if on a tightrope. Only one person should move in the boat at a time, which applies to changing places whilst out Skiffing.

Push off from the quay/bank by using the butt of the blade rather than the spoon end. Paddle on strings whilst manoeuvring in the creek.

Glide to a halt when bringing the boat to shore to avoid hard contact with the quay/bank.

Basic navigation rule is to keep to the starboard hand; so going upstream keep to the Middlesex/Teddington/Hampton side, downstream the Surrey/Kingston/Thames Ditton side. It is conventional for boats going upstream to stay close to the bank (but watch out during the season for fishing lines),

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downstream boats nearer to the centre. At the bridges, use whichever arches are most appropriate to the above.

When Skiffing in a single, look round every 5-6 strokes. Doubles should normally be coxed; if no coxswain is available, then the bow sculler is responsible for looking ahead and a weight in the stern makes the boat easier to steer.

Keep a particular lookout near the other clubs (KRC, DSPC, KGS) where boats may be crossing.

Overtaking; it is the responsibility of the overtaking boat to keep clear (although many do not seem to know this!). In close quarters, the overtaking boat should pass to the port side of the overtaken. Since we are the slower boats on the river, it is polite to move to starboard (ie. towards the bank) when being overtaken.

Do not stop near the bridges or the weir.

Sailing boats have right of way, except where there might be another obstruction. When racing they should leave a navigation channel, which is not always obvious and the sailors may not know of its existence. The navigation channel past Tamesis is marked by a buoy labelled 'distance mark' off the race control box.

If you are about to be involved in a collision, **STOP** even if you think you have right of way.

If a collision does occur and results in damage, write down all details (where on the river, name/type of other boats, other parties etc) and report the incident to the Captain.

If sculling after dark, an all round white light must be shown. This is a legal obligation – failure to comply can lead to the club being censured and would affect our liability if any collisions occurred.

ON RETURN & RACKING

It is your responsibility to sponge out & rack your boat unless someone takes it over. Racks should be filled from top to bottom and from back to the front of the boathouse, preferably leaving 2 singles on the floor.

When racking the boat, take particular care not to damage the Tholl pins on the rack above when sliding the boats.

Ensure that you have at least two people bow & stern when lifting on/off the rack & more when using the high level racks. If not wait or obtain help from one of the other clubs.

Ensure that you have a strong position before lifting the boat off the rack & do not over stretch.

Beware of the door header when storing boats on the top shelves nearest the door.

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NOTIFICATION OF DAMAGE

One finding damage to a Skiff, enter the details in the relevant section, pertaining to Skiff's name, of the Maintenance Log located on the left inside the door to the blade storage area.

If you are able to fix it without the need for professional help then do so and record the work performed.

Otherwise, obtain a 'Boat Under Repair' notice from the Log & place on the Skiff in a prominent position.

At the earliest possible time please ensure that one of the committee members is made aware of the problem.

NOTIFICATION OF INCIDENTS

If an incident e.g. collision with another boat or object, occurs during an outing the details should be recorded in the Incident Log located on the left inside the door to the blade storage area.

At the earliest possible time please ensure that one of the committee members is made aware of the incident.

GUEST MEMBERS OR OUTINGS WITH FRIENDS

Guests or friends invited to try out skiffing must complete a 'Trial Membership' form to cover both the Club & the individual for insurance. Forms are located just inside the blade store area on the left. Approval must be gained from the Captain or one of the Committee Members before taking them on the river. At least one competent member must accompany guests during the outing.