



Putney Town Rowing Club

# ***P.T.R.C. SAFETY GUIDANCE***

3 August 2009

## **Hammersmith Bridge & Dove Pier hazard bulletin**

This region of the Thames Tideway has proven on many occasions during strong incoming tides to be a particular hazard for rowers. The personal dangers of collision here cannot be understated.



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Rowers passing under the bridge, correctly positioned on the starboard side of the fairway are prone to being carried over to the outside of the bend as they row the short distance past the boat clubs and houseboats. Current shown by blue arrows. The distance from Middlesex gives them a false sense of security, but once passing the houseboats, there can be no longer sufficient time to pull out to avoid the barges at the end of the pier.



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### Hammersmith Bridge & Dove Pier hazard bulletin (continued)

The area around Hammersmith Bridge and Dove Pier is a well known hazard for rowers from clubs down at this region and from Putney, but it can be unfamiliar to Mortlake rowers some of whom seldom row this stretch of the river. Tempted by the timings of the tide however, we can row down to Putney to catch the tide turn for an easier row back with the incoming water, but we can then be passing this point at its most dangerous.

Strong tides and currents run around Hammersmith bend drawing floating objects to the outside of the bend. Barges place no restriction on the current which flows freely underneath, so unwary rowers can be drawn towards the barges with drastic consequences. Worse still, anyone in the water upstream of a barge can be drawn underneath it by the current.

It is important that all rowers in this section of the river are aware of this hazard and row no closer to the Middlesex bank than the centre of the river (unless accessing the clubs at Hammersmith). This is the Middlesex limit of the fairway from Hammersmith bridge to Chiswick Eyot (p8 - Rowing on the Tideway, PLA guide). Passenger boats and motorised craft will also be following this line, so don't be surprised to see them in the middle of the river or expect them to move out of your way. Even stopping or slowing down may present an unacceptable hazard to a tourist boat on this stretch.

It is prohibited for rowers in the fairway to stop or turn in the vicinity of Hammersmith bridge, but I would recommend all rowers in the fairway not to stop or turn in this whole section of the river, anywhere between the Dove Pier and Hammersmith bridge (unless landing at the clubs at this point).

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