



Race the Thames Live 2026

Rules and FAQs

The rules for Race the Thames Live are outlined here and formatted as a set of FAQs. All participants should take their time to read this whole document. These rules are binding, and the decision of the organisers is final in all circumstances.

Our Ethos:

Everyone enters this event in good faith, to support each other, and support other teams, with respect and tolerance.

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Welcome to Race the Thames Live!

What is the event?

Race the Thames Live (RTT Live), is a fundraising event that runs alongside the National Junior Indoor Rowing Championships (NJIRC). NJIRC is the world's largest junior indoor rowing event. Both events are run each year by LYR (London Youth Rowing). See the [NJIRC homepage](#).

Race the Thames Live is a team challenge, where a group of 8 people aim to row the length of the Tidal Thames (72km), non-stop using one Concept 2 indoor rowing machine. Competitors cover the distance in a relay format, with live changeovers on the machine – the aim being that once the rowing machine starts, it doesn't stop until the 72km are completed.

The Challenge starts at ~09.30, shortly before NJIRC begins and runs alongside up to 2000 young people from across the UK racing for their schools and clubs. RTT Live will run right through to 3.00pm (or earlier if every team completes the distance before 3pm) and there are no breaks and no way to pause the machine – when it starts you must keep going until the Challenge is over. The winning team will be the team that rows 72km the quickest. A running score is presented on TVs around the arenas where RTT Live takes place. The results will be collated at the end of the day to crown an overall winner in each venue and an overall national winner.

What are the fundraising requirements?

Each Team is asked to raise a minimum total of £2,000 (£250 per person for a team of 8). Any teams not making this total within a week of the event will be invoiced for the difference. It is hoped that this amount can be 'matched' by the parent companies (or used to get to the total amount) to support LYR, we are also happy for teams to use RTT to raise additional money for other charities.

Your team captain will set up a team fundraising page for your team that is linked to LYR, that you will be asked to use to collect donations. Please do not set up your own individual pages.

Follow this [link to see the guidance to set up your fundraising page](#).

When and where is this year's event?

The event will run at The Copper Box Arena, on the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, 20th March 2026

The event starts at ~9:30am, you are asked to arrive at 8:30am. The event will close at 3pm (or earlier if every team completes the distance before 3pm). This is plenty of time for teams to finish the event, however if a team starts late, they may be asked to stop before they have completed the distance if past 3pm. There will be a prize giving shortly after 3pm.



RTT Live London – Information for the Copper Box?

The Copper Box Arena is located at Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, London E20 3HB. Follow <https://what3words.com/lamps.home.voting>.

Venue information is here: [**RTT Live London – Venue Information**](#)

Public transport is the best and easiest way to get to and from the Park, either by train, underground, bus or cycle.

- The nearest overground station is Hackney Wick (10 minute walk)
- the nearest underground station is Stratford (20-minute walk)
- The 388 bus runs every 10 minutes from Stratford bus station to Blackfriars station and stops directly outside the Copper Box Arena (stops M & N)
- Stratford International station is just a 10-minute walk away, Kings Cross is 7 minutes away.
- There are more than 140 cycle racks outside the Copper Box Arena, including a Santander Cycles docking station located outside.

The M25 is only a 25 minutes' drive away. There is **no parking** available at the Copper Box Arena, but the Westfield Shopping Centre is a 15-minute walk away where there is a huge amount of paid for parking.

On occasion, services may be disrupted due to events across Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. Check the latest visitor information ahead of your visit. <https://www.queenelizabetholympicpark.co.uk/the-park/plan-your-visit/latest-visitor-information>

Is the Copper Box accessible?

The Copper Box Arena is fully accessible with accessible changing rooms and toilets. There are limited spaces for accessible parking. It is advisable to contact the venue before your visit if you are planning to drive as spaces during events may be unavailable.

When do entries close?

London - Team entries will close at 5pm on 28th February 2023.

Participants must be registered by the same deadline or complete the required documentation on the morning of the event.

How many people can I have in a team?

Teams can be any number of people up to a maximum of 8. Smaller teams are welcome but will be at a disadvantage. There are no separate result lists for smaller groups.



What is the requirement for the different entry categories (male/open, female, mixed)?

The gender split for a team is as follows:

- A male/open crew must be all male
- A female crew must be all female
- A mixed crew must be at least 50% female

Race the Thames is a fully inclusive event. Race the Thames is a fully inclusive event and we support participation from anyone and everyone in whatever teams make sense for you.

What does the team captain need to know?

The team captain is responsible for:

- Building a team of up to 8 people, entering the team and making sure each member of the team has signed up as a participant, and setting up a fundraising page.
- Understanding these rules and FAQs and the nature of the event, motivating the team and passing on any messages from the event.
- Understanding that LYR reserve the right to refuse or deny entry to any team or individual at any time if deemed appropriate or necessary.

What support will we have on the day?

LYR have a team of great coaches who will be on call to help you for whatever you need on the day. Support from staff members of Concept 2, the world's leading experts on indoor rowing, will also be available to support for the London event.

What is the process after Team entry to allow Team members to participate?

Once registered, we will send you weekly event updates.

1. Once the team is registered, the team leader will receive a link to send on to the participants of that team (note: the Team Leader will already be registered). Each participant needs to sign up individually, agreeing to the rules of the event. If this is not completed prior to the event, any team members who have not registered will need to do so on the morning of the event.
2. Once the participants have signed up the only tasks are training up for the event, and to fundraise to help us make an impact with this great sport to people who really need us.

What do Participants need to know?

As a participant you are asked to abide by the ethos of the event (outlined at the top of the page) and help your team-mates through training and getting prepared for the event.



You also must understand the nature of the event and the physical requirements expected from your team. LYR expects you to complete the distance at an intensity that you as an individual are completely happy with.

As outlined in the Disclaimer, London Youth Rowing cannot accept responsibility or liability for any injuries, losses and/or damages that anyone participating in this event incurs.

You also need to commit to fundraising your share towards your team's target to help us make an impact with this great sport to people who really need us.

How do we calculate the fastest team?

We use Concept 2 rowing machines. We will link them all up to the LYR race platform where you will be able to see your teams' progress against all the other teams at your venue. When you finish the race, your time will be logged in the race platform and when all teams have finished, the results will be announced at each venue. We will also publish the results on social media and online.

Could this event be physically tough?

All participants must be aware of the physical stress this event could create. It is for you to govern your own approach to completing the distance. Each participant must have read the guidance in the H&S Notice and Disclaimer and ensure they participate in a safe and sensible manner.

We advise that all participants train on a rowing machine before the event and at least feel comfortable with the rowing stroke.

What do I win? What do I get for participating?

Everyone will have the choice of receiving a fantastic looking Race the Thames Medal or we'll plant a tree in your honour in the LYR forest (now filled with over 1800 trees)! You can let us know which you prefer when you sign up as a participant.

Will there be refreshments available?

Due to the length of the challenge and the different foods that the Team Members will need / want throughout the Challenge, we will not be providing food during the race. We will, however, provide some hot food at the end which will be served at approximately 3.00pm. There will be water available from a water cooler throughout the entire day so please bring your own water bottle with you.

What should participants wear?

All participants should wear appropriate sportswear: trainers, shorts, and t-shirt. The arena can get quite hot so wearing layers is a good idea. Make sure you can tie your hair back if needed. All clothing should be fitted or can be tucked into trousers or shorts to avoid becoming caught in a rowing machine. No-one will be allowed to compete without a top, at least a vest top must be worn.



What should participants bring?

We suggest everyone brings a change of clothes, towel and lunch or snacks to see them through the challenge, a refillable water bottle, money for the much-needed taxi home and a camera to record the moment that you rowed the length of the Tidal Thames ...on a rowing machine!

How does the event work / what happens?

- There will be a series of numbered Concept 2 Model D machines, one allocated to each team.
- They will be set approx. 2 meters apart inside your own pen with some chairs for team members to rest in between sessions.
- The Teams will race one person at a time and that person can row for as long as they want to.
- All Team Members will have to row at least 10 sessions throughout the Race.
- The progress of each rowing machine will be shown on a screen to see how far they have travelled and how far they must go.
- The race is over 45 miles – the length of the Tidal Thames – 72,420metres
- The winning teams (male, female and mixed) will be the team that covers the complete distance in the quickest time.
- There will be a cap placed on the timing at 3.00pm – 5 ½ hours after the start. The Teams will be stopped at 3.00pm and the distance travelled will be recorded and added to the results. If all Teams fail to cover the distance in the allotted time, the Team that has travelled the furthest in the time allowed will be the winner.
- At each venue, there will be prizes awarded to the winning Male/Open Team, winning Female Team and Mixed Team.
- At each venue, there will be a prize awarded to the Team that has raised the most amount of money at 3.00pm on Race Day.

Can individuals set the resistance on the rowing machines?

The machines are all Concept 2 Model D machines with a damper lever to set resistance. Each team may set the resistance to whatever level they prefer before the race starts but not during the Race.

When are prizes presented?

After the Race is finished – shortly after 3.00pm.

Are toilets and showers available?

There are toilets and changing rooms available.

Is first aid provided?

Paramedics will be available throughout the whole race and for a period after 3pm.

Can I change the details of my team?

Team names and details can be made up to the entry deadline for each venue. We cannot guarantee changes submitted after this time will be accepted.

Changes can be made by emailing events@londonyouthrowing.com



What happens if the event is cancelled or postponed?

Any postponements of the event will not be considered as a cancellation and so all entries will automatically be carried forward and those who have entered will be notified of the changed date of the event.

Should a team wish to cancel or withdraw their entry they may do so but they must notify LYR by email to events@londonyouthrowing.com and express their wish to cancel or withdraw. London Youth Rowing will consider each request case by case.

Treatment of donations in the event of a team's withdrawal/cancellation/postponement:

If the event is postponed, and you are still planning to participate in the rescheduled event, we would recommend that Team Captains inform their donors that they will still be taking part and that their donations will be held by LYR / second charities until the event is completed, then used.

If the event is cancelled, or you withdraw, we would ask that donations that have already been made are kept by LYR. To discuss options for donations that have been passed to LYR, please contact events@londonyouthrowing.com. We will consider such situations on a case-by-case basis.

For money held at the event Fundraising Platform that has not yet been transferred to the beneficiary charities, you may be able to request a refund of donations by contacting them on their help function.

In either case, you may wish to consider closing your donations page (permanently or temporarily) to prevent additional donations being made once you know the event is not going ahead as planned.

Force Majeure

London Youth Rowing shall not be liable for any delay or failure to perform any of its obligations if the delay or failure results from events or circumstances outside its reasonable control, including but not limited to acts of God, and London Youth Rowing shall be entitled to a reasonable extension of its obligations.

Who are the LYR Champions?

LYR has an amazing community of people and businesses who support the charity and are brought together by being an LYR Champion. Anyone can join, and there are a range of entry options for individuals (LYR Solo Champions) or businesses (LYR Crew Champions).. Sign up here [LYR Champions](#)

What will you do with my data?

Please review the privacy notice detailing how we will use your personal information when you sign up as a participant.

I can't find the answer to my question – what should I do?

Please contact LYR at events@londonyouthrowing.com and we'll do our best to answer your query.