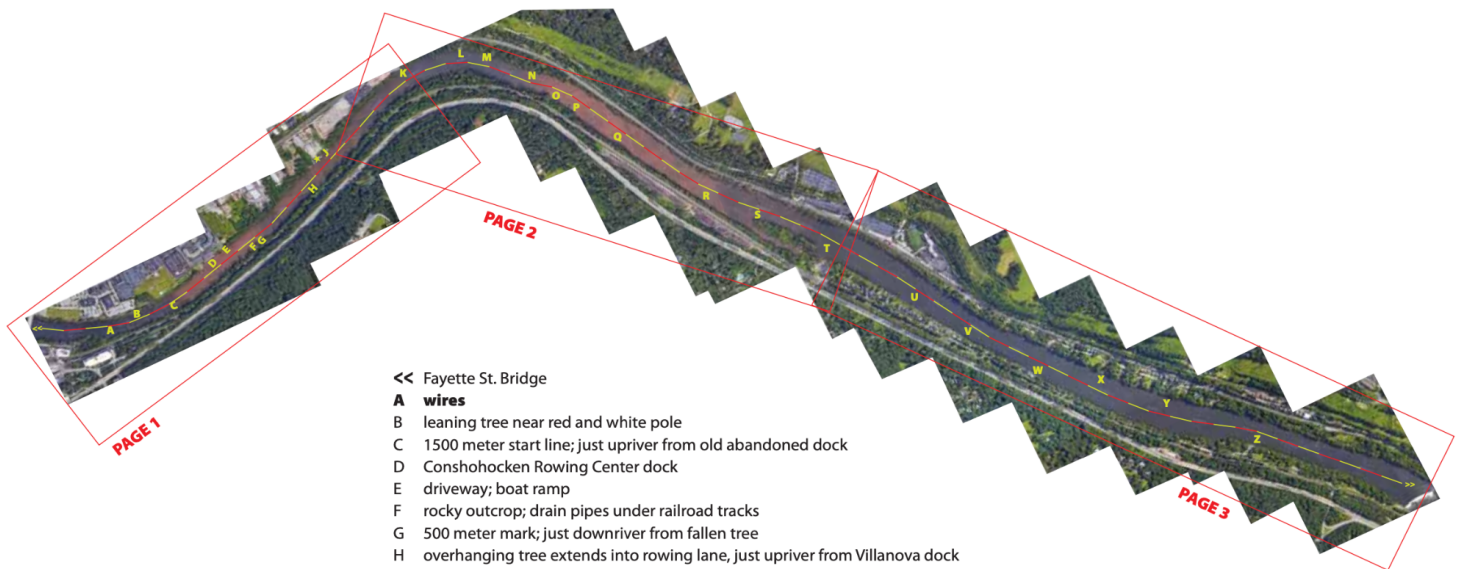


UPPER SCHUYLKILL RIVER ROWING SAFETY GUIDELINES

Below are safety guidelines for the Upper Schuylkill River (USR) in Conshohocken, PA. These guidelines were created within Hines Rowing Center (HRC), but are reflective of a general consensus for safety. The USR is noted as being **BELOW Fayette Street** and **ABOVE Flat Rock Dam**.

Traffic.....2 Equipment.....4 Safety.....6 Map.....8 Swim Waiver.....12 Link.....13

OVERVIEW



- << Fayette St. Bridge
- A wires**
- B leaning tree near red and white pole
- C 1500 meter start line; just upriver from old abandoned dock
- D Conshohocken Rowing Center dock
- E driveway; boat ramp
- F rocky outcrop; drain pipes under railroad tracks
- G 500 meter mark; just downriver from fallen tree
- H overhanging tree extends into rowing lane, just upriver from Villanova dock
- ★ **Hines Rowing Center docks**
- J 1000 meter mark; at coach/launch dock in front of Mount boathouse
- K 1500 meter mark; end of parking garage
- L fisherman's point
- M sticks marking 2 submerged rocks
- N buoy just upriver from rocky point
- O rocky point**
- P fallen tree just downriver from rocky point
- Q cell tower
- R hippo rock
- S top of the island
- T VFW
- U middle of the new houses
- V lighthouse
- W end of the houses
- X marina
- Y tiki bar
- Z boat ramp**
- >> bottom of river just above Flat Rock dam

<p>Conshohocken side = same side as HRC docks Lower Merion side = opposite side as HRC docks</p>
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TRAFFIC

1. All launches and boats shoving from the dock, must remain on the **Conshohocken side** of the river, until it is clearly safe to spin your crew.
2. All launches and boats rowing downriver, should stay to the side opposite of the docks, or the **Lower Merion side** of the river.
3. If you are spinning, it is your responsibility to make sure the path is clear of regular boating traffic before making the turn.
4. Faster shells pass towards the middle of the river, slower shells, or shells and launches that are stopped, must stay to the **Shore side** of the river.
5. Slower launches and shells shall move to **Shore** and yell “Look Ahead” to launches and shells coming upon them. Overtaking launches and shells shall stay to the **Middle of the River**.
6. **AFTER SCHOOL ROWING:** Coaches should instruct rowers to continue rowing past the docks to wait for their coach, or other boats. Rowers and coaches should avoid clustering in front of and near all docks from the Hines Rowing Center to the Conshohocken Rowing Center.
7. HRC strongly advises against rowing above Fayette Street Bridge. Rowing above the

Fayette Street Bridge is done at your own risk, and liability, due to the presence of rocks. Note that the same traffic pattern applies.

8. Launches and shells returning to docks shall stay towards the **Conshohocken Side** and proceed at a wakeless speed (< 5mph) in a single file down river.
9. Avoid clustering in between HRC and CRC docks.
10. No turning or stopping within 100 meters of the turn from the **Garage (H&K on the 8th page map) to Rocky Point (O on the 8th page map)**. **!! Row single file through this stretch during high traffic hours. !!**
11. There is no permitted use of megaphones, down river of the island. Megaphones are only permitted at the island and above (up river), and below (down river of) Fayette Street Bridge.
12. **River Traffic:** Directly from the HRC return dock on the Lower Merion side, is a 4 to 6 inch stuck log about 50 feet off to the shore. It can only be seen as the water level gets lower.
13. **River Traffic:** On the Lower Merion side of the River, ~200 meters down river from HRC, ~50 feet from shore is a stuck tree.
14. **River Traffic:** Past the bottom of the island and just down river of the VFW building, ~50 to 100 feet offshore is a struck log. You can only see it at lower water levels.
15. **River Traffic:** Stuck log ~100 to 150 feet offshore.

EQUIPMENT

1. All shells must be equipped with a bow ball.
2. All shells that row before sunrise and after sunset shall have fixed, flashing lights bow and stern.
3. Each coaching launch shall be equipped with a cell phone.
4. Launches must be equipped with 9 approved life jackets plus one for each person in the launch.
5. Launches must be equipped with all equipment required by the United States Coast Guard and the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission, including red and green lights fore and a white light aft. The Coast Guard requires the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania registration sticker, the state issued number in 3" high letters affixed to the bow of the boat, life jackets, a sound producing device for emergencies (horn, whistle, siren), navigation lights and three hand held red flares. In addition, each launch should carry an anchor with line affixed to the boat, a paddle and a safety throw line for easy attachment to a shell.
6. Each organization shall assure every person operating a motor launch is familiar with the equipment and the rules and courtesies of the USR.
7. All motor boats must have 360 degrees of visibility.
8. All motor boat drivers shall keep their wash to a minimum when passing other boats and shall proceed past the docks at idling speeds with no wash.

9. No motors brought to the river shall be in excess of 25 HP.
10. Each organization shall ensure the safety of its equipment.
11. All launches shall be moored in their designated slips, per respective program.
12. Each rower should be aware of basic shell safety and check equipment before leaving the dock.

SAFETY

1. **HRC STRONGLY CAUTIONS AGAINST rowing during a Flow Rate above 12,000-15,000 cubic feet per second, and when wind is over 20 mph/ gusts over 30mph.**
2. Each program should consider setting their own limits for appropriate practice conditions. Decisions made to row in conditions cautioned against, are up to the discretion, with full liability, of the coach.
3. **RACING PIECES** are recommended to be done safely downriver, away from the dock area. Race pieces executed near the docks are a safety hazard for the boats rowing, launching or docking.
4. *All Rowers should turn in a signed swim waiver to their program, verifying their ability to swim* (Swim Waiver provided on page 11).
5. No youth* shall be permitted to row unsupervised.
6. Novice crews must be accompanied by a launch at all times.
7. In case of emergency, no rower or coxswain should ever leave a flotation device to swim to shore.
8. All Oarswomen, and Oarsmen should sign in and out in accordance with their program procedures.
9. Be aware of weather forecasts and do not row in dangerous conditions, consistent with

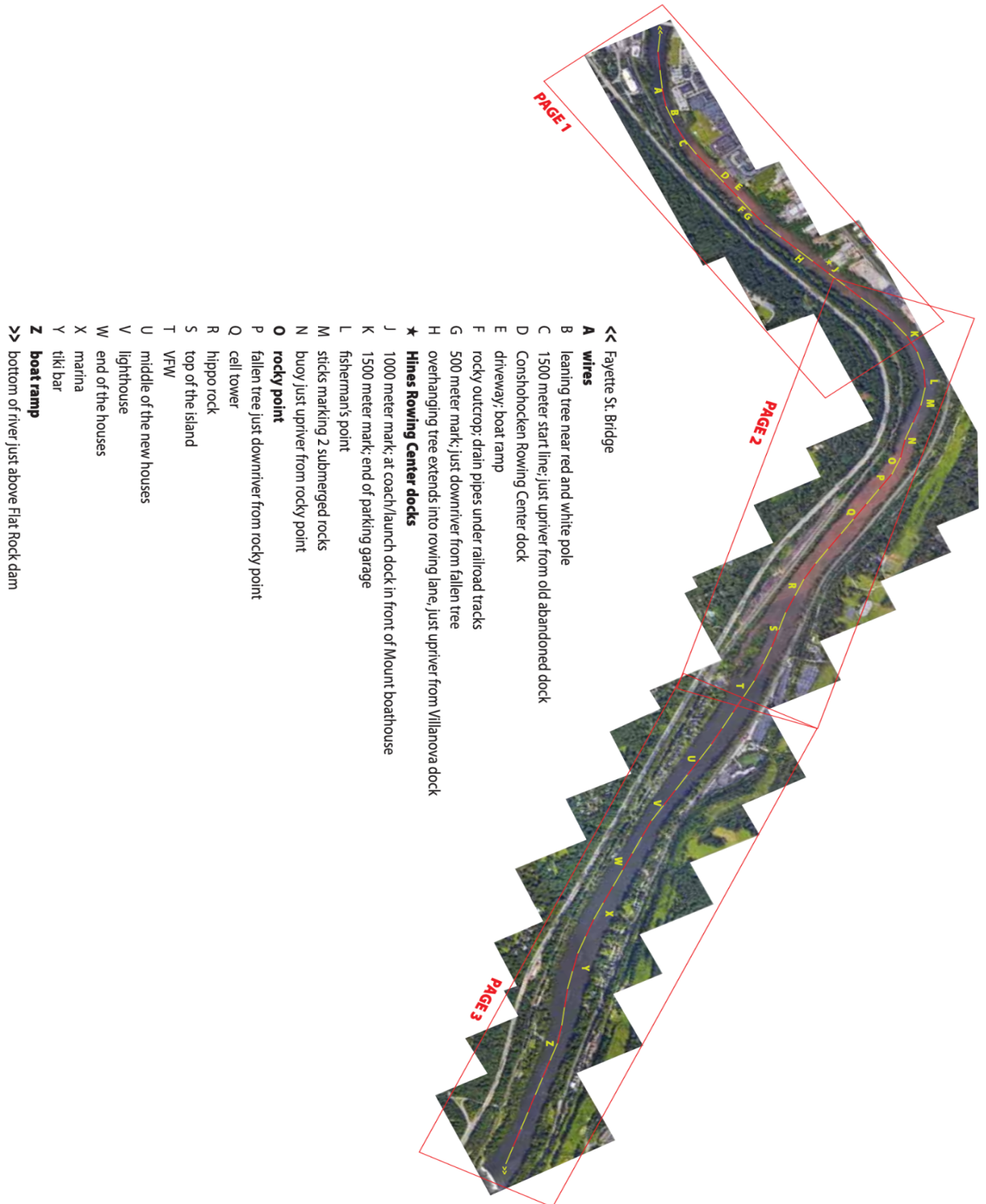
the [USRowing Safety Expectations Policy](#). (Click the link, and search ‘weather’).

10. Swimming is not permitted off the docks.

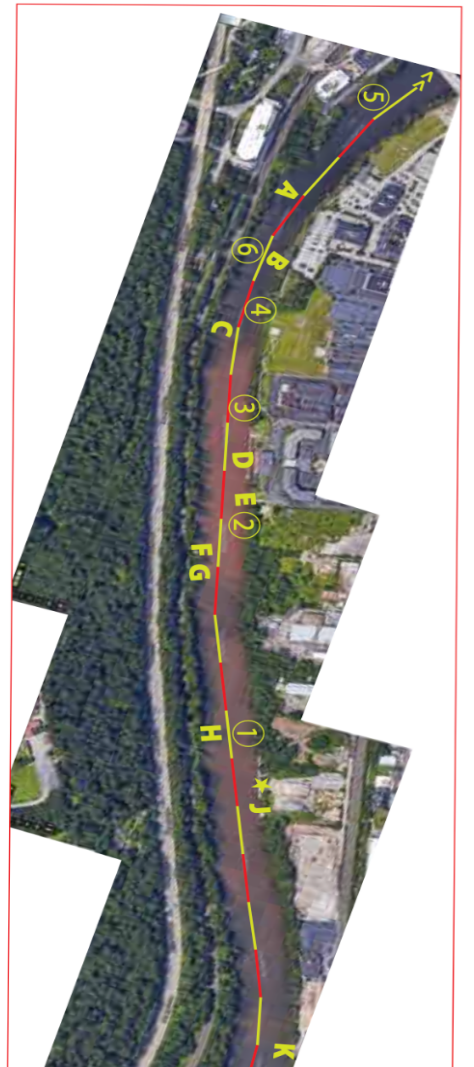
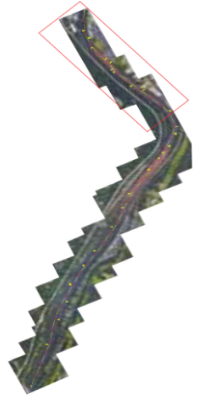
**A Youth is a Competitor who in the current calendar year does not attain the age of 19, or who is and has been continuously enrolled in secondary school as a full-time student seeking a diploma. A Competitor is no longer a Youth after December 31 of the year of his or her 18th birthday,*

MAP

OVERVIEW



- << Fayette St. Bridge
- A wires**
- B leaning tree near red and white pole
- C 1500 meter start line; just upriver from old abandoned dock
- D Conshohocken Rowing Center dock
- E driveway; boat ramp
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- Q cell tower
- R hippo rock
- S top of the island
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- U middle of the new houses
- V lighthouse
- W end of the houses
- X marina
- Y tiki bar
- Z boat ramp**
- >> bottom of river just above Flat Rock dam



HEADING UPSTREAM

Beginning at:

★ **Hines Rowing Center Docks**

Before moving to head upstream, first check for traffic coming upstream as well as traffic at or near Villanova's dock. Make sure you have a clear lane before showing off. Stay on the Conshohocken side of the river when heading upstream.

1 Just upriver from Villanova's docks there is a tall tree that extends out into the river. Steer clear.

2 Just before **E-Driveway/Boat Ramp** there is a tire swing. Always check to see if there are kids playing or swimming in this area, or to see if anyone is fishing from the shore.

E-Driveway/Boat Ramp

Check to make sure that the driveway is clear. At this point check to make sure the area around the **D-CRC Docks** is clear of traffic.

D-CRC Docks

Make sure you are well clear of dock and launches.

3 Upriver from CRC's docks the river becomes shallow near the Conshohocken shore. If you are hugging the shore, move out so your blades don't scrape the river bottom.

Proceed past the helpaid with the windsock. Note the wind, strength and direction. At the upriver end of the helpaid is a **4** tall red and white striped pole.

B Leaning Tree

Just upriver from the **4** red and white striped pole is a tree that leans way out over the river. The river bends to starboard at this point. If you fail to make this turn and continue straight you will head over to the wrong side of the river and into the path of turning traffic.

A Wires

Continuing upriver there will be some electric/telephone wires overhead that extend across the river. Club boats should spin at this point. Always check for traffic coming upriver, as well as traffic that may be coming downriver before spinning.

5 Privately owned boats may continue upriver at your own risk. The river gets shallow and there are submerged rocks near the bridge. Never go through the bridge.

Complete your turn quickly and get to the Schuylkill Expwy side of the river facing downriver.

HEADING DOWNSTREAM

6 Across from the red and white pole on the Schuylkill Expwy side is a rocky shelf that extends underwater along the bank. Always, and especially when the river is low, steer well clear of the bank.

C 1500 Meter Start Line

Well hidden in the trees and bushes, on both sides of the river, are black and white poles that mark the start of the 1500 meter course.

Along the bank from **C** to **F** there are some dangling vines. Check over your left shoulder occasionally to avoid getting your blades tangled in these vines.

F Rocky Outcrop/ Drain Pipes

Almost 500m from the start and just past the driveway on the other side, there is a rocky outcropping where drain pipes empty into the river. Steer clear of this area.

Just past the rocky outcrop, check over your left shoulder for a downed tree that blocks the lane near the shore. Move out.

G 500 Meter Mark

The 500 meter mark is just downriver of the downed tree.

Along the bank from **G** to **H** there are some dangling vines. Check over your left shoulder from time to time to avoid getting your blades tangled in these vines.

H Overhanging Tree

There is an overhanging tree blocking the lane along the starboard shore just upriver from the Villanova docks.

J 1000 Meter Mark

Well hidden black and white poles, on both sides of the river, between the dock for the launches and the return dock, mark 1000 meters.

As you near **K-End of the Parking Garage** the river bends slightly to port. Debris tends to accumulate along the Schuylkill Expwy side of the river near the end of the parking garage. It's best to stay a little wide before making a long turn to starboard to continue down river.

K End of the Parking Garage Wall

The end of the Parking Garage Wall marks the end of the 1500 meter course. Spin here or continue downstream.

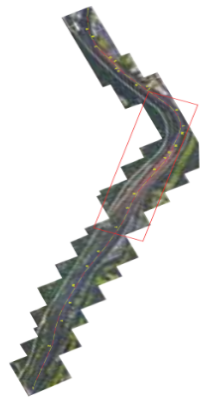
GO TO PAGE 2 TO CONTINUE DOWNSTREAM

HEADING UPSTREAM – CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

You will frequently find fisherman at **K End of the Parking Garage Wall**. Move out away from the starboard shore.

From **K** to **J** there are overhanging branches. Don't hug the shoreline too closely.

As you approach the dock for the launches, slow down or stop. Make sure the **★ Hines Rowing Center Docks** are clear of traffic and you can safely pull in. Move your boat upriver to make room for other returning boats. Vacate the dock quickly.



CONTINUING DOWNSTREAM FROM PAGE 1

Beginning at
K End of the Parking Garage

Continuing downstream from **K-End of the Parking Garage** and the 1500 meter course, the river begins an almost 90° turn to starboard.

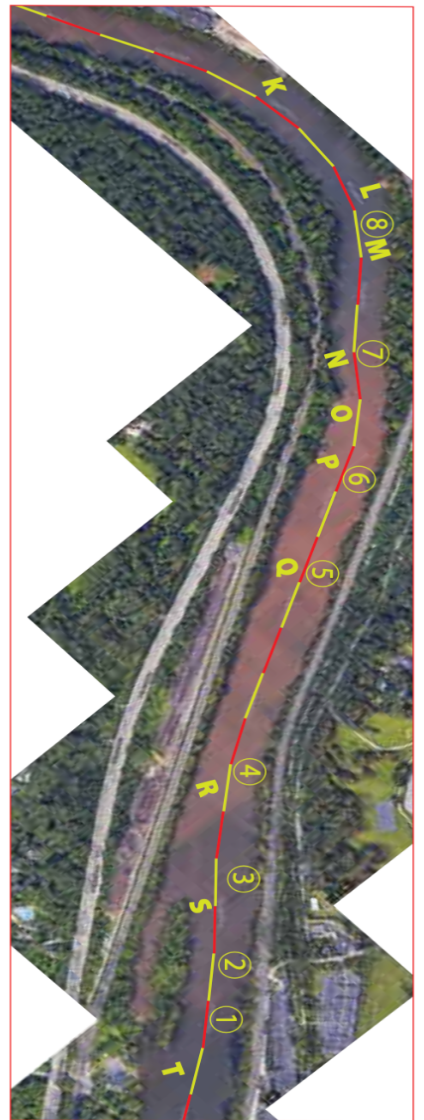
Hug the starboard shore and check continuously for traffic heading upriver. This is a blind corner, the river is narrow, and the water is swirly in this section. Exercise extreme caution.

M Two Poles/Buoy Marking Submerged Rocks
 If you haven't completed the full 90° turn you will head to the wrong side of the river and the poles. Check over your right shoulder and steer clear.

Because the poles can be almost submerged at times, they are now marked by an orange ball buoy.
N Can Buoy Marking Rocky Point
 This buoy is a warning that the Rocky Point is near. It tends to get repositioned during storms so don't rely on it as a guide, just as a warning, and steer well clear.

O Rocky Point
 If you have had to steer a little to port to get around Rocky Point, you will need to steer slightly to starboard just as you pass the Rocky Point.

Check over your left shoulder for the **P-Fallen Trees** along the starboard bank just below the Rocky Point.



HEADING UPSTREAM— CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Q Cell Tower
 Once you pass the cell tower on your left, begin looking downriver for **R-Hippo Rock**. You will need to move out to the center of the river in this section, so also check for traffic heading upriver.

R Hippo Rock AND Small Submerged Rock
 Hippo Rock is marked by a can buoy, but this buoy can become repositioned or disappear following storms. Steer well clear of the rock keeping it to starboard as you pass it. There is another (submerged) rock that is only visible when the river is low. It creates a ripple disturbance when it is submerged. **THIS ROCK IS MORE DANGEROUS THAN HIPPO ROCK BECAUSE IT IS HIDDEN.** Steer well clear of Hippo Rock.

Past the Hippo Rock make sure to continue heading slightly to port to avoid the field of rocks at the **S-Top of the Island.**

S Top of the Island
 THE RIVER ON THE SCHUYLKILL EXPWY SIDE OF THE ISLAND IS NOT NAVIGABLE. Stay clear. With the island off your starboard blade, keep checking over your right shoulder for traffic heading upstream.

T Bottom of the Island and the VPW
 Coaches are not permitted to use megaphones downriver of the island. Conswains reduce speaker volume. Spin here or continue downstream.

GO TO PAGE 3 TO CONTINUE DOWNSTREAM

1 Just upriver from the bottom of the island are two trees on the starboard shore that extend into the rowing lane. Don't hug the shore too tightly.

2 Where the overhead wires cross near the middle of the island, there is a sandy point. There are often people fishing from this point. Steer clear of any fishing lines.

3 Near the top of the island are two more trees on the starboard shore that extend out into the rowing lane. Steer clear.

4 Just upriver from the hippo rock the river bends to starboard. If you maintain a straight course you will head across to the wrong side of the river. As you pass the branches in the river along the starboard shore, steer back to starboard and check your point.

5 Across from the cell tower there is a white ball buoy anchored to the river bottom marking a rock. You may safely travel to either side of this white ball.

Above the white ball to the rocky point the water gets very swirly and can often rearrange your point. Check your point often in this stretch to make sure you are not on the wrong side of the river and to check for traffic heading downriver from the Rocky Point.

6 Upriver from the white ball there are submerged tree branches which extend out into the rowing lanes along the starboard shore. Steer clear

7 Just upriver from the Rocky Point there is a downed tree that extends into the rowing lane along the starboard shore. You must steer to port as you pass the rocky point and look over your left shoulder for this tree. At the same time check for traffic heading downriver.

M Two Poles/Buoy Marking Submerged Rocks
 Upriver from Rocky Point you will need to check over your left shoulder to steer clear of the two poles AND over your right shoulder for traffic coming downriver around the 90° turn.

8 Just upriver from the sticks is another sandy bar on the starboard shore that is frequented by fisherman. Make sure you are clear of any fishing lines. Begin the sharp 90° turn to port.
GO TO PAGE 1 TO CONTINUE UPSTREAM



CONTINUING DOWNSTREAM FROM PAGE 2

Beginning at:

T-Bottom of the Island and the VFW

Continuing downstream from the VFW, stay wide of the starboard bank. There are private docks, some with buoys out, and you want to leave plenty of room.

You will pass a row of **U-New Houses**. Take note of the flags flying along this stretch. **T - V**, to get an idea of the direction and strength of the wind you will face on the way back.

From here you will pass a series of landmarks, but no real hazards. On the starboard shore are the

V-Lighthouse, W-End of the Houses and Z-Gladwyne Boat Ramp. On the port shore are the **X-Marina** and **Y-Tiki Bar**.

As you approach **Z-Gladwyne Boat Ramp** the shore pushes out and makes a turn to port. When you pass **Y-Tiki Bar**, move towards the center of the river and steer well clear of the shore.

You can continue downriver 500 meters below the **Z-Gladwyne Boat Ramp** but keep an eye out for the buoys marking the Flat Rock Dam.

Spin and cross to the Conshohocken side facing upriver.



HEADING UPSTREAM

1 Beginning from a little shoal downriver and on the opposite shore from the **Z-Gladwyne Boat Ramp** you are exactly 5k from the HRC dock.

You will pass a **2** structure with a white peaked roof, where the river begins to bend very slightly to port. Continue past the **Y-Tiki Bar** and a **3** octagonal shaped structure on stilts.

Once you are past this octagonal structure start looking over your left shoulder for the **X-Marina**. There is a buoy marking a swimming area, placed about 30 feet off shore during the summer season. Steer well clear of this buoy and keep an eye out for any swimmers.

Once you are past the **X-Marina** you will approach a **4** oversized American Flag and the **W-End of the Houses** on the opposite shore. The river bends slightly to starboard here.

Across from the **V-Lighthouse** on the opposite shore is a water tower. Start looking back for the buoy that marks a **6** shoal that extends far out into the rowing lanes.

The **6** shoal, across from the **U-New Houses**, becomes hazardous when the river is shallow. Steer clear.

GO TO PAGE 2 TO CONTINUE UPSTREAM

From **T-Z** there will often be motor boats, waterskiers, jet skis, and party boats. Avoid any

confrontation with operators of motor craft. Most are respectful, but some will not be tolerant of rowers. Find another stretch of river for your workout, if possible. Report any dangerous behavior to the club captain and proper authorities.

Additionally, there may be paddleboarders, SUPs, canoes and kayaks anywhere along the river, but particularly in the stretch from **T-Z**. Most do not realize that you don't see them and will not call out warnings to you. Keep alert.

SWIM CERTIFICATION

The sport of rowing poses **significant risks** to the participant because most activities occur in, on, or around water. These risks include but are **not limited to:** expected and unexpected immersion into cold water as a result of a boat flipping, collisions with other boats, being involuntarily removed from a boat as a result of an oar’s momentum (“crabbing”), falling off docks, authorized and unauthorized swimming, changing weather conditions, or other occurrences.

I **certify** that I am a competent swimmer and can perform the following competently while wearing typical rowing clothing:

a) 50 yards continuous swim, any stroke;

b) 10 min. continuous tread water; and,

c) Put on and secure a life jacket during the last two minutes of treading water.

- I further certify that cold weather conditions can quickly impede my swimming ability and will follow boathouse recommendations with regard to cold water safety precautions.
- As a Parent/Guardian of a Child Under 18 Years of Age, I certify that my child is a competent swimmer and can perform the above following competently while wearing typical rowing clothing.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Child’s Name (if under 18):


Parent’s Name:

Parent Signature:

Date:

SAFETY LINK

In a digital version of the USR Rowing Safety Guidelines, please click the link below for a video detailing a review of the Upper Schuylkill River rowing course. The video explains how to reach the HRC campus, parking, and takes you through a Google Earth view of the entire course, in addition to important points along the river.

 [Hines Rowing Center Course Map](#)

Otherwise, please search “Hines Rowing Center Course Map” on Google or YouTube to find the video.