

PNSW Harbour Series Race Cancellation Policy 2021

Preamble:

The PaddleNSW Harbour Racing Committee is committed to providing safe, enjoyable racing for intermediate and advanced paddlers on protected harbour waterways in NSW.

The Harbour Series committee is comprised of representatives of each host PaddleNSW club, together with a representative from PaddleNSW and some independent committee members.

Each race is conducted by a different host club, with entry fees shared between that host club and the PNSW Harbour Racing Committee after costs.

Clubs use these funds to improve the quality and quantity of support services for their members, while the PNSW HRC uses their share to provide series prizes, maintain core equipment and invest in new equipment and services.

Many of the waterways used for Harbour Series events change character in different weather conditions. In general, the arrival of whitecaps signals the arrival of difficult conditions for the less experienced paddler.

PaddleNSW has set the upper wind level of 18 knots steady (with peaks above) as the upper safe limit for harbour races. This is based on several factors:

1. Many less experienced paddlers will be struggling to remount if capsized in winds of this strength
2. Being in enclosed waters, there is much greater likelihood of paddlers being washed into dangerous areas such as oyster leases, maritime structures, shipping channels etc
3. Higher winds especially in the winter months increase the risk of hypothermia in capsized paddlers.
4. Increased numbers of safety craft are required to patrol the course, leading to increased costs for the host club, and unpleasant conditions for the volunteer safety boat crews.

Policy:

Race organisers will be aware of impending weather conditions in the days leading up to their event, and will base a decision on whether to proceed with the race on:

1. Predicted wind strength
2. Air/water temperature
3. Predicted wind direction, and associated hazards
4. Distance of travel for participants in the event of cancellation on the day

A decision on whether to proceed will be made by 12.00pm on the day prior to the race

The decision will be published on the PaddleNSW website.

An email will be sent to all participants alerting them of the decision.

Some social media may be used in addition.

Where possible, a race that has been postponed will be run at a later date preferably on the reserve date on the PNSW race calendar.

All entries for the postponed race will be transferred to the new race date. No refunds of entry fees will be possible, and entry fees cannot be transferred to a different race.

If a race is cancelled on the day due to weather, safety or other unforeseen circumstances, no refunds or transfer of entries will be possible, and paddlers will forfeit their entry fees. Where it is not possible for a race to be rescheduled due to unavailability of the race venue, the race will be cancelled.

Conclusion:

Race cancellation is not a situation that PaddleNSW and the host club wish upon any paddler, but substantial costs have already been borne by the host club in presenting the race, and in all fairness these costs should be covered.

Host clubs are no-for-profit organisations, and are unable to absorb the costs incurred on the day, such as catering, portable toilet hire, safety boat costs, event licence application costs and first aid etc.