

BRIEFING, SAFETY, RACE RULES, AND ROUTE

BRIEFING

- Race notice and rules will be on display at the start (i.e. Salmon Leap Canoe Club) on the day of the race.
- Canoeing Ireland rules will apply.
- The Junior Liffey Descent is restricted to participants over the age of 12 and under the age of 23 as on the 1st January on the year of the race.
- It is the responsibility of clubs to ensure that all participants have adequate experience for the race and that their equipment is in proper condition.

SAFETY & RULES

- All competitors must wear approved buoyancy aids.
- All craft must have securely fitted and adequate buoyancy. There should be foot bars or adequate padding fitted, where necessary.
- All competitors under the age of 18 years in all classes (including K1, K2, general purpose, open singles, down river racers, touring doubles and Canadian doubles) must wear approved helmets. Competitors in other classes are strongly recommended to wear helmets.
- Adequate footwear should be worn, as the terrain at the portage is very uneven.
- All boys under 15 and girls under 18 are eligible to receive assistance, which is permitted at the portage only. Paddlers may only receive assistance with their boat, not have their boat carried for them.
- It is also important to consider, because of the possibility of changeable weather conditions, that adequate thermal gear/ wet suit is worn.
- If any participant's equipment is considered inadequate or insecure by scrutineers, approval to participate in the Junior Liffey Descent will be withheld.
- Spot checks will be carried out along the race route to ensure that participants are wearing helmets and buoyancy aids.
- The Junior Liffey Descent will finish approximately three hours after the start. Competitors taking longer than this should leave the water.
- All previous race numbers must be removed from your boats.

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RACE ROUTE

Salmon Leap Canoe Club, Leixlip Lake (start)

- Paddling advice: Paddle 10 mins to cross lake. In high water conditions it is possible to paddle the shorter route across the right hand side of the lake but in low water conditions it is necessary to follow the original river course around the left hand side of the lake, mud banks to the right of the island visible from the bridge indicates which route to take (left route across the lake if the mud banks are showing).
- Notes: Collection point for bibs and boat inspection on the morning of the race.

Portage (start)

- Road directions: Take N4 West until junction 5. Follow signs for Leixlip via R148. Park in Salmon Leap Pub car park on LHS. Walk to road bridge or start of portage (allow 10mins)
- Paddling advice: End of paddle across lake. 5 min run to get in point (750m)
- Notes: Wear some form of foot protection. Portage is predominantly a good tarmac road, but reentry is a steep, possibly mucky descent back to river bed. Brace yourself using paddles, etc

Portage (end) – Leixlip road bridge

- Paddling advice: Paddle very hard when getting back on the river after the portage to the centre of river to avoid right hand bridge arch and risk of pinning. You must paddle aggressively to avoid the arch

Sluice weir

- Parking: Access and parking for Sluice at car park at St. Catherines Park
- Paddling advice: 10 – 15 min paddle from portage. The Sluice is on the far left hand side of river taking eddy line down (this is slightly right of centre) and expect to be pushed very close to left hand sluice wall (this is normal, remain calm and prepare to brace. Shoot over weir on far right of river (right against bank), a plunge pool is about 3m from right hand bank. Viability of shooting here in “K” boats will depend on water levels on the day.
- Safety: Keep legs raised if you swim shooting the actual sluice drop.

Lucan weir

- Vantage point: River bank at chicken shoot or Lucan road bridge
- Paddling advice: 10 – 15 min paddle from Sluice weir. Difficulty of shoot varies. The first part of Lucan weir that appears on your right as you paddle down river is called the chicken shoot. It is about 30m long before you encounter the fish boxes. After this there is the high drop about 50m long – a steeper portion of the weir. Due to work in recent years the water level below the weir (especially the chicken shoot is quite low. It is best to shoot the chicken shoot from about the halfway point to the fish boxes. Racing boats (long ones) should shoot completely side ways to avoid damage to boats

Anna Liffey / Shackelton's weir

- Vantage point: Not easily viewed as a spectator
- Paddling advice: 5 min paddle from Lucan weir. Easy to shoot. Shoot weir straight down fish shoot – approach slowly and easily found.

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Wren's nest weir

- Paddling advice: 15 min paddle from Anna Liffey / Shackelton's weir. Moderate to difficult shoot depending on where weir is shot. Wren's is a V weir and is normally shot down the V.
- One method is to shoot from right hand side of the tongue of water paddling hard over the tongue away from the danger of swimming in the large right hand stopper.
- Another method is to deliberately steer immediately to the left of the tongue bracing for support on the tongue of water to your right (Do not paddle too fast on this line for fear of paddling through the tongue of water and into the stopper.
- A third shoot is to aim to balance right on the tongue of water, a good strategy in low water but in high water you run the risk of dropping into the big right hand stopper.
- Short boats and tough boats can shoot straight over the left hand portion of the weir (the chicken shoot)

Palmerstown weir

- Paddling advice: 10 – 15 min paddle from Wren's Nest Weir. Difficulty of shoot varies. The line for racing boats is to shoot directly down the main 'V' of the weir, aiming towards the right hand side of the tongue to avoid the stopper on the left. Plastic and GP boats can shoot on the far left of the weir, paddling directly down the face of the weir.

Canoe Centre (finish):

- Road directions: Travelling from Dublin City, take the exit for Palmerstown village off the R148. From the M50, take junction seven for Palmerstown and follow the signs for Canoe Centre and Rafting.ie
- Parking: At the Canoe Centre - Mill Lane, Palmerstown, Dublin 20. D20 DY26