

# Guide to Nottingham Reach of the River Trent

Steering Advice and points of conflict.

This Advice is for the River Trent, which passes through Nottingham from Beeston Weir down to Colwick Lock. It is for 'normal' training outings only.

Any races or events held on the River Trent will have their own circulation rules, which apply for that event only.

This stretch will be split into three sections

Each section will deal with upstream first then downstream after.

Section One	Beeston Weir to Trent Bridge
Section Two	Trent Bridge to Lady Bay Bridge
Section Three	Lady Bay Bridge to Colwick Lock

## Section One Beeston Weir to Trent Bridge

### Travelling Upstream from Trent Bridge to the Pipe.

Crews will be on the North (City) side of the river having passed through the North (City) arch of Trent Bridge.

Crews should be on the City Bank (Coxes right or **Bow side**).

Approx 570m upstream of Trent Bridge, you will see a Suspension Bridge. Just after the Suspension Bridge, is a long sharp bend, which bends to the Coxes right (or **Bow side**).

The stream coming around this bend can be quite deceptive. It can push a boat across the river, into the path of oncoming downstream boats within two strokes, in high stream.

The Cox needs to be turning this bend before coming under the Suspension Bridge, and keep the boat parallel to the City Bank all the way around this bend for about 500m. Big Bend!

Next area of difficulty is 200m downstream of the Toll Bridge. In the past there used to be a Railway Bridge here. When it was removed, the Bridge Columns were not removed, just cut down to near the riverbed. Consequently when the river has low flow the tops of these columns are just a metre below the surface. When the stream is high there is quite a bit of turbulence generated by these ex-columns. Scullers have a particularly uncomfortable ride near here.

The Toll Bridge has a very narrow arch on the City side of the river. The boat needs to be parallel to the city bank on the approach to the bridge. When under the bridge, the boat needs to be steered to the Coxes left (or **Stroke side**). This bend continues to the Black Gates, the stream is trying to push you to the City side of the river.

Just upstream of the Toll Bridge on the Coxes right (or **Bow side**) are a pair of Black Gates. This is where the River Leen enters the Trent. This is approx 2.2 km from Trent Bridge (approx. length of the Henley regatta course)

About 1km on from the Black Doors the river turns to the Coxes right (or **Bow side**) just opposite Bee Bank. Again, just like the Suspension Bridge bend, the stream is pushing the boat into the middle of the river. Don't get caught by the small bay just before the bend. Keep the bows into the stream.

After this bend there is a deceptive bay that draws you close into the side of the river. Here you may find yourself embedded in reeds and/or weeds if you get too close to the City bank.

Next we come to Clifton Bridge (approx 3.75 km from Trent Bridge), here the river is quite shallow (about 1metre) and quick moving. Note the Gravel shallows just upstream from the bridge on the County side of the River. We will meet that again on our trip downstream.

Again care must be taken to keep to your side, (Coxes right or **Bow side**) of the river.

Next there is the farm (approx 4.5 km from Trent Bridge)

After this you can go up to The Pipe (6km from Trent Bridge)

Here the river is shallow max depth 1metre.

Most crews turn in the part of the river between The Pipe and Miller's Island.

For the more intrepid sculler with a robust boat, you can get all the way upstream to the base of Beeston Weir.

This should only be attempted in good weather in the summer, as beyond Miller's Island the river is very shallow and quick. Also you have to navigate yourself around the constantly shifting gravel banks, looking every 10 or 20 strokes, to save running aground.

## **Travelling Downstream from The Pipe to Trent Bridge.**

When you turn you will be working with the stream, your boat speed relative to the bank will be quicker, hence we need to think about our steering a lot earlier.

From The Pipe to the Farm is about 1.5km boats should generally be just to the County side of the Riverside of the middle. Scullers and Steers will need to keep an eye open, as it is very easy to end up by either bank.

From the Farm to Clifton Bridge crews should be aiming for just to the County side of the River. Remember, there is a gravel shallow just before Clifton Bridge on the County. There are always some boats run on to it each year.

From Clifton Bridge to the Toll Bridge. Again keep to the County side of the River, do not turn the Bee Bank band too early. Leave room for those boats coming upstream who maybe steering erratically.

At this part of the river you will want to be well in to the County side of the River, avoiding being pushed into the bay at the end of the Floodwall. Just before the Wilford Church you will want to be safely in your half of the river (County side of the River).

The Black Doors will be on your (Coxes left or **Stroke side**), we need to start thinking about the Toll Bridge 500m away.

This is a narrow bridge and there can be a very strong stream as the river is funnelled through a narrow channel. Here the stream will push you to the City side of the river, so again, we need the boat well onto the County side of the River.

After the Toll Bridge we stay on the County side of the River, the river bends slightly to the Coxes right (or **Bow side**). From the Toll Bridge to Trent Bridge the river goes through 180 degrees, this is a long steady bend at first but then becomes sharper near the Suspension Bridge.

Again we want to be on the County side of the River, avoiding the temptation to take the corner early.

Here you need to be on the middle of the stream. If you get too far to the Coxes right (**Bow side**) you could crash into the County buttress of the bridge. Too far to the Coxes left (**Stroke side**), and you will hit boats coming upstream.

By the Rivermead flats, if your boat is in the middle of the stream, with your bows slightly on the City side, you should find that you need no rudder as you come through the Suspension Bridge. As the stream pushes your stern around and keeps your bows in the middle of the stream.

From the Suspension Bridge to Trent Bridge you should be on the County side of the River, aiming for the centre of the centre arch of Trent Bridge.

Coming under Trent Bridge you should be in the middle of the river and the crew paddling light as you go past the clubs.

## **Section Two Trent Bridge to Lady Bay Bridge**

### **Travelling Upstream from Lady Bay Bridge to Trent Bridge**

This section of river is the busiest for rowers as there are four rowing clubs, a Kayak club and a Dragon boat club.

Coming upstream boats will have just come through the middle arch of Lady Bay Bridge. As they are paddling upstream they will be close to the City side of the river, they will be rowing around the slight bend with blades about 3 or 4m from the wharf wall. They will then be aiming for the City arch of Trent Bridge.

### **Returning to the stages.**

University Stages. All crews will come through Lady Bay Bridge. Stop next to the City side of the river, then turn their boat when the river is clear, and cross the river quickly to their stages.

Town Club stages. All crews will paddle up to the canal entrance on the City side of the river. Stop, then turn their boat when the river is clear, and cross the river quickly to their stages.

### **Leaving the stages to go upstream**

All boats will be pointing upstream.

University Stages. On checking that the river is clear, both upstream and downstream, the crew will quickly cross the river to the City and proceed as normal.

Town Club stages, On checking that the river is clear, upstream and downstream and clear of Kayak's, the crew will quickly cross to the City side of the River and proceed as normal.

### **Travelling Downstream from Trent Bridge to Lady Bay Bridge**

Having come through the middle arch of Trent Bridge all crews will be paddling light in the middle of the river, slightly to the County side of the River.

The next arch to look for, will be the County side of the Lady Bay Bridge (Coxes right or **Bow side**)

All crews must take care in this area as there will be a lot of slow moving boats, beginners, kayaks and sometimes motor launches manoeuvring for the canal lock.

### **Crews returning to the stages.**

University Stages. Crews will paddle through the County side arch of Lady Bay Bridge and go approx 500m downstream before turning on to the City and proceeding as above.

Town Club Stages.

Crews will paddle down to the Forest Stand / Sims Boat Builders and turn their boats on to the City side of the river and proceed as above.

### **Leaving the stages to go downstream**

All boats will be pointing upstream at the stages.

University Stages. On checking that the river is clear, both upstream and downstream, the crew will spin into the middle of the river to the City and proceed as normal.

Town Club stages, On checking that the river is clear, upstream and downstream and clear of Kayak's, the crew will spin into the middle of the river and proceed as normal.

## **Section Three Lady Bay Bridge to Colwick Lock**

### **Travelling Downstream from Lady Bay Bridge to Colwick Lock**

After coming through the County side arch of Lady Bay Bridge, crews will be on the County side of the River, with the boats close to the bank. At the NFFC training ground, the river bends around to the Coxes left (or **Stroke side**). You will see a warehouse on the Coxes left (or **Stroke side**), this is known as the Green Doors. Here the boat should be steered to the Coxes right (or **Bow side**), as there is a small bay at the start of this bend. This will keep the crew out of the way of crews coming upstream. This part of the river is normally flattest and calmest.

The next bend is just past the T.S. Orion. Keep to the County side of the River as you may find some cruisers/motor boats who, will be coming up the middle of the river.

Just down from this bend there is a sailing club, care must be taken if the sailing boats are out. They turn quickly when sailing against the wind. If you have to go past the sailors then keep close to the bank, be prepared to stop, or sprint past them, when safe.

At the Sailing Club there is a wide bend, keep to the County.

Just downstream from the Sailing Club is the landing stage used for the National Water Sports Centre. Care must be taken around this area as there could be boats coming and/or going to this landing stage.

After the NWSC stage, there is an inlet for the Kayak Slalom course. Metal posts in the river mark the entrance to this. After this is the Colwick Lock. Keeping to the Coxes right (or **Bow side**) you can enter the approach to the lock if it is clear to do so.

There is enough room to turn an eight, just before the lock. The water is here is much calmer and there is very little flow on it.

If you are turning the boat outside the approach to the lock, be aware that the stream will take you towards the warning buoys and chains, in front of the large sluice gates.

### **Travelling Upstream from Colwick Lock to Lady Bay Bridge**

From the Colwick lock, keep right over to the Coxes right (or **Bow side**). Just up from the lock is the entrance to Colwick Marina. At this point the boat should be 4 or 5 metres off the City bank.

Opposite the Sailing Club the boat should be tucked very close to the bank on the Coxes right (or **Bow side**).

Ideally the boat should stay close to this bank all the way up the river.

When you come up to the T.S.Orion there are some moored boats. These sometimes cast off without looking for Rowing boats, so although we need to be close, we have to be aware of the motorboats. Keep an eye open for engine smoke or the bilge pumps spewing out water.

The bend just at the end of these boats is a difficult one.

If the large white pleasure cruiser (River Princess) is moored. Keep very close to this boat (about 2 metres)

Start to turn the bend as you approach the bows of this boat and keep turning to the (Coxes right or **Bow side**).

Here the stream can catch hold of the bows of the boat and push it across to the County side of the River very quickly. This is also made more difficult by the presence of culverted stream. When there has been any rain, the stream joins the Trent at an angle and increases the force pushing the boat across the river. So, the bows must be kept into the stream.

After this you pass the Green Doors (Old British Waterways warehouse). Keep to the Coxes right (or **Bow side**).

The river then bends slightly to the Coxes left (or **Strokeside**).

We then aim for the coxes' right hand (or **Bow side**) side of the large middle arch of Lady Bay Bridge.

### **Last Thought.**

If in doubt, don't go out.

If you are careful and respect the river and other users, you **can** have a safe enjoyable time.