The Forth Midsummer Race
Saturday 20 June 2015

When Newhaven Coastal Rowing Club formed in 2010 we had no skiff and no place to call home. A lot of hard graft produced a skiff and a warm welcome from the Forth Corinthian Yacht Club gave us a base and facilities in neighbouring Granton Harbour. The idea of a joint event, hosted by the two clubs, seemed natural and evolved into last year's inaugural 'Forth Midsummer Challenge' relay race where we paired visiting skiffs and local yachts together in teams for a bit of friendly sport messing about in boats. Last year we had a ball with four teams giving it their all, this year it looks like we may have nine teams – a fantastic response, so a big thank you to everyone coming!

Race Concept

The concept is simple – a relay race based around the neighbouring Granton and Newhaven Harbours on the north Edinburgh waterfront and involving six individual legs - two each of running, rowing and sailing in one overall race. The skiff clubs are asked to bring their own runner(s) who, as well as running their legs, also act as the race baton and have be carried by the skiff and yacht in their legs of the race.

The emphasis is on having fun – there are no strict race categories and everyone who takes part will go home with a medal. Skiff crews are simply expected to be mixed crews (a minimum of two female rowers at all times) of any age and teams can bring one or two rowing crews and one or two runners if they wish, as there are two rowing and running legs, with time for changeovers in-between.

Yacht and skiff pairings will be drawn out of a hat the night before and announced at the briefing on the day. To ensure an even competition, the yachts will follow sailing protocol and be handicapped according to their size by a 'stern chase' start - this means winning will just be down to the individual efforts of the skiffies, yachties and runners in each team. This year, to make the finale even more interesting, the final rowing leg will only start once all of the teams have completed the previous five legs. The skiffs will then be started at even intervals in the order that their teams completed the first five legs of the race. First skiff to complete the final course wins the overall race for their team.

All activities will be centred around Granton Harbour, where skiffs will launch, the race starts and ends, and refreshments will be available all day.

All that we ask is that you bring a sense of fun, some rowers, and a runner of some description. If you are short of rowers or runners – let us know and we'll arrange someone for you.

To cover the costs of medals (which are rather special) and the safety boat there is a registration charge of £2 for each participant.

Order of Events

Tides dictate when we launch and land skiffs in Granton Harbour so the event timings are geared to suit – an early afternoon launch with racing over by 6.15pm in time for a BBQ and prize giving at the Forth Corinthian compound at Granton Harbour.

1400 – 1430	Arrival and registration of rowers, runners and yacht crews Drinks and food available at Corinthian compound
1430	Race introduction / safety briefing for coxes, crews and runners
1445 – 1500	Yacht crews and runners board yachts Skiffs launch at slipway and tie up on the Granton pontoon
1515	Race starts with yachts leaving Granton in a 'stern chase' handicapped start

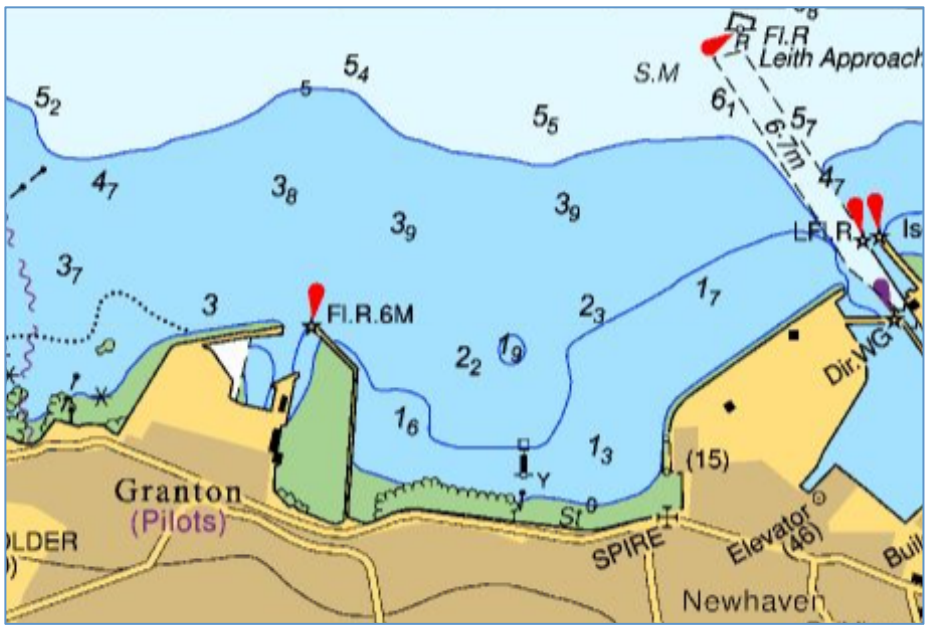
It's expected the race will run to the following approximate timings:

1515 – 1545	Yachts with runners on-board arriving at Newhaven Harbour pontoon
1545 – 1600	Runners race back to waiting skiffs at Granton pontoon via waterfront
1600 – 1630	Skiffs with runners complete course around bay, returning to Granton
1630 – 1645	Runners race back along waterfront to Newhaven and waiting yachts
1645 – 1715	Yachts race back to Granton Harbour carrying runners. Order of completion recorded for setting the starting order for the final leg
1745 – 1815	Skiffs started at intervals for the grand finale, finishing within the harbour
1815 – 1830	Skiffs recovered at public slipway
1830 – 1930	BBQ and prize giving

The Course Area

Granton Harbour and the much smaller Newhaven Harbour are very close – at most one kilometre apart on the north Edinburgh waterfront. In recent years pontoons have been installed in both harbours, making it easy for boats to tie up, pick up runners, swap crews, etc.

The precise courses to be followed will be advised at the briefing and will be tailored to suit wind / weather conditions on the day



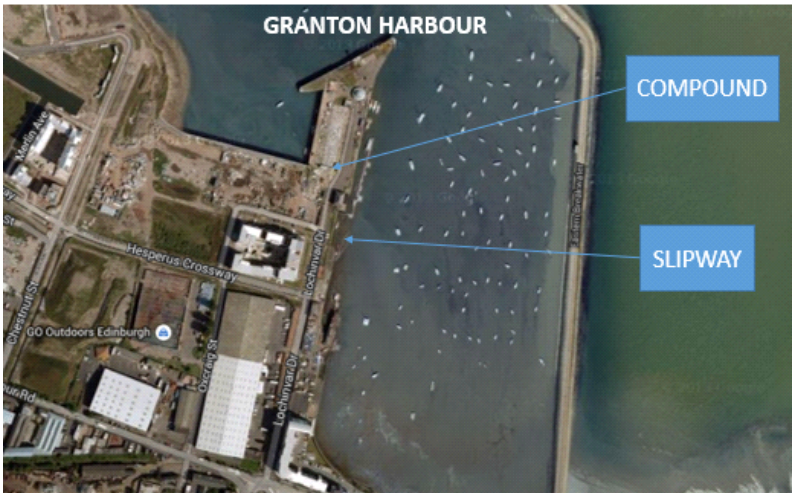
Skiff Arrival, Reception and Briefings

Skiffs and their crews are requested to arrive at Granton by 1400 for registration and the skipper briefing at 1430. After the briefing is over, skiff crews will be able to launch the skiffs and the runners and the yacht crews will make their way to the yachts to be ready for the race start at 1515.

The skiffs launch at the public slipway in Granton Harbour and tie up on the adjacent pontoon. The area immediately above the slipway will be reserved for trailer parking. There will be race marshals there to assist with unloading and trailer parking beside the slipway. Please bring fenders and lines for use on the pontoons.

Cars can be parked on the adjacent roads and outside the Forth Corinthian Yacht Club compound which is approximately 100m past the slipway.

The race introduction and safety briefing will take place at the Corinthian compound at 1430 and this will be the centre for all race activities throughout the afternoon. Toilets, food and drinks will be found here and once racing is concluded this is where BBQ and prize giving will take place.



Registration

All rowers, yacht crews and runners are required to register on the day and must be members of a club with the appropriate insurances to cover involvement in racing activities of this nature. A registration fee of £2 is asked for – to cover safety boat costs and participant medals

Registration will take place at the Corinthian compound between 1400 and 1430.

Race Safety Briefing

The race introduction and safety briefing will take place at the compound at 1430. As this event combines sailing and rowing, it is important that all coxes and skippers attend and fully understand the specific requirements of the Race Safety Officer which will incorporate the requirements of both the RYA and SCRA racing rules. Particular care and respect for others should be shown approaching the pontoons.

A safety boat will be positioned in the bay and will be manned by a race umpire.

While marshals will be present to assist at both the Granton and Newhaven pontoons, the running course will not be marshalled. Runners must therefore take appropriate care and give way at all times to members of the public on the waterfront walkway.

FAQs

Do we need to organise a yacht or sailors?

No, Forth Corinthian Yacht Club arrange these and the skiffs and yachts will be paired up into teams on the day.

How many rowers / runners do we need?

As there are two rowing and two running legs you can bring up to two full crews and two runners if you wish. Alternatively, don't worry if you only have one crew or runner – it's not a long course and you get to rest between legs.

If we don't have enough people can you help?

Yes, we'll be able to arrange some spare rowers / runners if you give us advance notice

Can the runner double up as a cox or rower?

No, the runner is effectively the baton and has to be carried by the skiff crew.

Is this race covered by the SCRA racing rules and are there any specific restrictions?

Yes, your cox(s) need to be familiar with the racing rules and you will need to carry the stipulated safety equipment.

The race is a 'mixed open' for skiffs – that means each crew must have a minimum of two women rowing at all times.

Where do we need to be and when during the race for changeovers and picking up runners?

This year the skiffs will always be racing in and out of Granton Harbour, so everything will happen at the pontoons there (just in front of the Corinthian compound).

How long are the rowing and running legs?

The running legs between Granton and Newhaven Harbours are approximately one mile – so you don't need to be an ultra-runner!

The skiffs will follow a set course around the bay and will be timed to take 20mins to 30mins, which is a pretty standard race length for skiffs.