

Golden Oar: Master's Category – Ranking & Handicap Guide

This guide explains how the Golden Oar Regatta ranks and handicaps Masters category crews to create fair, competitive racing across age groups.

Rankings for the Sprint Finals are determined by comparing crews' average speeds from the 1500m race and the 3000m time trial against standard age-based prognostic speeds. Prognostic speeds adjust for age, ensuring fair comparisons across different age groups. Rankings are used to allocate crews into six lanes finals, i.e. crews ranked 1 to 6 are allocated into the A final; 7 to 12 into the B final; 13 to 18 into the C final, etc.

Ranking Process:

1. Crews complete both the 1500m race and the 3000m time trial.
2. Raw times from both races are combined.
3. The combined time is converted into an average speed.
4. This speed is compared to the standard prognostic speed for the crew's age category to calculate a prognostic percentage performance.
5. Crews are ranked from highest to lowest prognostic percentage for entry into finals.

This approach is familiar to many Masters rowers from other regattas, such as the Saltwater Challenge in Victoria (see: <https://rowingmanager.com/mobile/regatta/6457/results/race/12>), or the Iron Cove Classic in NSW (see: <https://rowingmanager.com/regattas/6583/results>), which also use prognostic speeds for ranking purposes.

Handicap Process for the Sprint:

- Handicaps are calculated using the difference between each crew's age-based prognostic time for 350m and the crew with the fastest prognostic time in the respective final.
- Crews in older Masters categories, with slower prognostic speeds, start earlier.
- This creates a staggered start aiming for a simultaneous finish.

The winner of each final will be the first boat to cross the line.

Race Rules:

1. For the 1500m race, Rowing ACT will aim to cluster like Masters categories, where possible, within heats. All crews will commence their racing within a heat at the same time.
2. For the 3000m time trial, the starting order will go from fastest to slowest based on crews' raw times from the 1500m race. This is to reduce the risk of crews being overtaken.
3. Handicap times for each crew will be rounded down or up to the nearest second for the practical purposes of starting the race by the Official Race Umpire. No adjustments will be made to actual finish times in the sprint to take this adjustment into account.
4. Prognostic speeds are by Masters Category (source: Rowing Australia, 2018 Handicap and Age Grade Revision, 1,000m Prognostic Speeds for Masters by Boat and Gender - m/sec)

Category	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Age	27+	36+	43+	50+	55+	60+	65+
Mix 4x-(m/s)	5.262	5.277	5.146	5.047	4.943	4.815	4.653

Category	H	I	J	K	L	M
Age	70+	75+	80+	83+	86+	89+
Mix 4x-(m/s)	4.445	4.173	3.897	3.647	3.354	3.012

Golden Oar: Master's Category - Worked Example

This worked example shows how Masters crews are ranked for the sprint final based on their performance in the 1500 m and 3000 m races, and how their 350 m sprint handicaps are calculated using standard age-based prognostic speeds.

Crew Details & Inputs

Prognostic speeds from: Rowing Australia – RA Masters Prognostic (see table below)

Golden Coasters (Masters B):

- 1500 m results = 5 minutes 45 seconds (345 seconds)
- 3000 m results = 12 minutes 00 seconds (720 seconds)
- Total time = 17 minutes 45 seconds (1065 seconds)
- Standard Prognostic speed for Masters B Mixed 4x-: 5.277 metres/second

Golden Slippers (Masters E):

- 1500 m results = 6:00 (360 s)
- 3000 m results = 12:30 (750 s)
- Total time = 18:30 (1110 s)
- Standard Prognostic speed for Masters E Mixed 4x-: 4.943 m/s

Step A – Ranking for the Sprint Final

1. Calculate average speed over 4500 m:

- Golden Coasters (B): $4500\text{m} / 1065\text{ s} = 4.225\text{ m/s}$
- Golden Slippers (E): $4500\text{m} / 1110\text{ s} = 4.054\text{ m/s}$

2. Calculate prognostic % performance:

- Golden Coasters (B): $4.225 / 5.277 \times 100 = 80.06\%$
- Golden Slippers (E): $4.054 / 4.943 \times 100 = 82.02\%$

Ranking outcome: Golden Slippers (E) rank higher (82.02%) than Golden Coasters (B) (80.06%).

Note: in this Worked Example, ranking is not relevant since there are only two crews, however during regatta conditions rankings are used to allocate crews into six lanes finals, i.e. crews ranked 1 to 6 are allocated into the A final; 7 to 12 into the B final; 13 to 18 into the C final, etc.

Step B – 350 m Sprint Handicap

1. Expected 350 m time from age-based prognostic speed:

- Golden Coasters (B): $350\text{m} / 5.277\text{ m/s} = 66.33\text{ s}$
- Golden Slippers (E): $350\text{m} / 4.943\text{ m/s} = 70.81\text{ s}$

2. Handicap calculation:

- Golden Coasters is a Category B crew with an aged-based prognostic time for 350m of 66.33 s.
- Golden Slippers is a Category E crew with an age-based prognostic time for 350m of 70.81 s.

Handicap = $70.81\text{ s} - 66.33\text{ s} = 4.48\text{ s} \rightarrow 4\text{ s}$ (* official rounding)

Sprint starting order:

- Golden Slippers (E) – Start 0 s (first)
- Golden Coasters (B) – Start +4 s (last)

**Note:* Handicap times are rounded to the nearest second by the Official Race Umpire.

The winner of each final will be the first boat to cross the line.

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