



NEWPORT ROWING CLUB

New Rower Handbook

Abstract

In this manual, you will find a variety of information. Some of it is applicable to all rowers joining NRC for their first season, regardless of experience. Some of it is only relevant to athletes in their first year of rowing. Read through the sections that apply to you and keep a copy for reference throughout the season.

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Becoming a Good Rower

Be Gritty

Webster's dictionary defines grit as "firmness of mind or spirit; unyielding courage in the face of hardship or danger." Psychologist Angela Duckworth defines grit as passion and perseverance for very long term goals. Having stamina. It's sticking with your future day in and day out not just for the week but for months and years. In rowing, it is the athletes with the most grit that find success. In simple terms, this is what it takes to be a gritty rower: attention to detail during technical practices, the consistent desire to perform better than you did the day before, and resilience after a practice or race that did not go as well as you'd like. It takes a conscious effort to be a gritty athlete, but the reward extends far beyond rowing and is worth working towards.

Learn from Other Rowers

There are countless things you can learn by watching and following the lead of more experienced rowers beyond the structure of the rowing stroke. Seek out teammates who excel in the areas you struggle. Whether it's mental grit during hard workouts, staying present through steady state and drills, managing your time outside of practice, proper preparation and recovery, or anything else you may be struggling with, there is likely someone on the team who has been through the same struggle and come out the other side. Observe how they behave and be willing to ask for help.

Watch Videos of Good Rowing

It's difficult to be a good rower without a solid image in your head of what good rowing technique looks like. Developing that mental image makes it easier to self-correct errors in your technique and understand the notes you get from the coaches. Watching racing videos before regattas is also a good way to get fired up to compete.

Ask Questions to Coaches

The coaches at NRC are huge nerds for rowing and would love to talk to you about it. If you see a video you like, or one you don't, email it to us with your thoughts. If you didn't understand something a coach said during practice, ask about it. Anything and everything about rowing, nutrition, fitness, sports, sports psychology.

Do Yoga

The best thing you can do outside of practice to get faster is to attend a yoga class. Practicing yoga builds your balance, flexibility, core strength, and patience. It also builds an awareness of where your body is in space which is crucial to learning proper rowing technique.

How to Prepare for Rowing

What to Bring to Practice

You should have the following items with you every day:

- Temperature-appropriate athletic clothing and layers
 - All athletes must wear shirts during practice, regardless of the temperature.
 - Dress in layers to stay warm at the beginning of the practice and avoid overheating during workouts
 - Avoid cotton clothing during colder weather if possible. When cotton gets wet, it locks in moisture and can make you very cold on the water.
- Running Shoes
- Slides, Crocs, waterproof boots, or old shoes for on-the-water practices (There are shoes built into the boats, but you will need shoes to wear when walking the boats to the dock and putting the launches in. These shoes will get wet and muddy.)
- Reusable water bottle (if metal, put a sock around it to avoid scratching the boat)
- Rain coat (good thing to leave at the boathouse)
- Sunglasses
- Visor, baseball cap, or bucket hat (bucket hats encouraged for style)
- Socks for the boat
- Set of tools (7/16" wrench, 10mm wrench, adjustable wrench, small Phillips-head screw driver)

Fuel your body for practice!

Rowers should eat a snack rich in complex carbohydrates and protein. Good snacks to eat 1 hour before practice include fruit, pretzels, Greek yogurt, or mixed nuts. Rowers should also be aware of their hydration throughout the day. Keep a water bottle handy and consume enough fluids to "pee clear" throughout the day. Eating lunch does not count as a pre-practice snack!!

Know who is in your lineup!

Every day, you should know what seat you are in and which boat, oars, and launches you are using before running to the boat yard. Each squad (high school novice, high school varsity, and middle school) has a popsicle stick board. Line-ups and boats will be listed on the boards and the coaches will announce which oars and how many launches to take out.

Preparing During the Off-Season

New athletes often ask what they should do to condition for rowing before the season begins. The best thing you can do for your rowing development is attend regular yoga classes. Yoga improves flexibility, balance, patience, and awareness of your body in space. These are all crucial skills for success in rowing. To get the most benefit out of yoga, it should be guided by an experienced yoga teacher who is able to correct your form.

Expectations for Practice

Ask, don't assume!

If you don't understand something, ask. Coaches are happy to explain or repeat drills and workout directions or demonstrate corrections in technique. If you do not ask, coaches will assume you understand. In any learning environment, it's important to advocate for yourself. This includes being willing to ask questions and admit confusion.

Prioritize Safety

The safety of the athletes and the preservation of equipment are the most important things. There are many small ways you can promote a safe environment at NRC. When moving boats, regardless of your skill level, always use the appropriate number of people and a coxswain. Be aware of your surroundings in the boat yard and on the dock. If you notice a piece of equipment is damaged, report it immediately to a coach and record it on the maintenance log to ensure it is fixed in a timely manner.

Rowing can be a physically demanding sport. As a rower, it is important to develop an awareness for your physical health. Aches and pains are common for athletes in any sport so learning to properly recover through targeted stretches and rolling out sore muscles will allow you to remain active for the rest of your life. Every athlete is unique and therefore every athlete requires a unique plan for recovery. Use the resources available to you at the boathouse to aid in your recovery including foam rollers, stretching guides, coaches, and more experienced rowers.

Attendance

Newport Rowing Club does not have a requirement for the number of days an athlete may miss throughout a rowing season. However, you are required to let your coaches know ***as soon as you are aware you will miss a practice*** via email (newportrowingclub@gmail.com). If you are running late for practice, call or text your coach to let them know. ***Text messages should only be used for last minute delays or absences.*** While NRC does not require daily attendance at practice, like any skill, the more consistently you practice the faster you will progress. In addition, attendance may be used to determine line-ups when deciding between multiple athletes of a similar skill level and fitness.

Effort

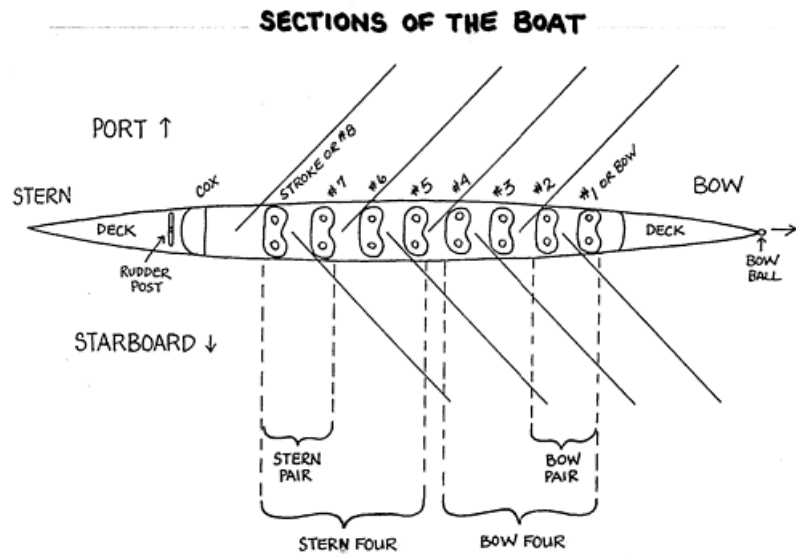
Simply put, you will get out of this sport what you put into it. Both mental and physical effort are required in every practice you attend in order to learn quickly and consistently. The coaches can provide the best possible training plan, the perfect drills, and be accessible for any questions you have, but only you can determine how quickly you progress.

Get Into It!

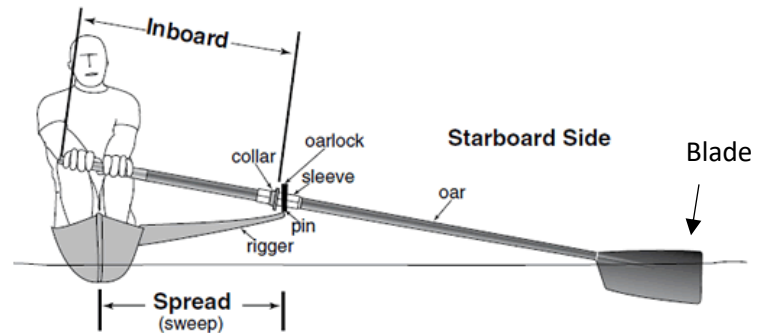
Rowing is fun! The more you apply yourself the more fun it is. Try to increase your skills every day. If you're not sure what to work on for a particular practice, ask a coach. Great rowers push themselves to excel every day. They are constantly curious about what they can do to find more speed in the boat.

Equipment & Rowing Technique

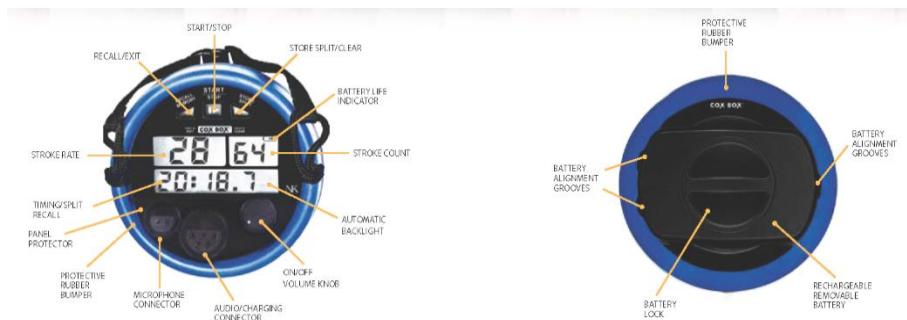
This image shows the sections of an eight (a boat with 8 rowers and 1 coxswain).



This is a front-view of a sweep rower (similar to the boat shown above) showing the parts of the oar.



This is a "Coxbox". This is the coxswains primary piece of equipment. It connects to a microphone and speakers throughout the boat and gives important data to the coxswain.



Types of Rowing Shells

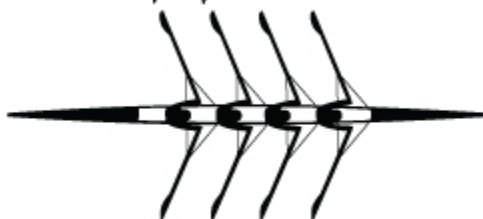


Sculling Boats

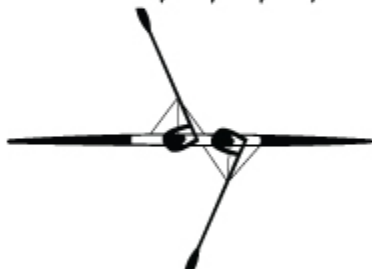
Single (1x): Approximately 26 feet long, 11 inches wide, and about 30 lbs. Rowed by one person using two oars.



Double (2x): Approximately 32 feet long, 13 inches wide, and about 60 lbs. Rowed by two people using two oars each.

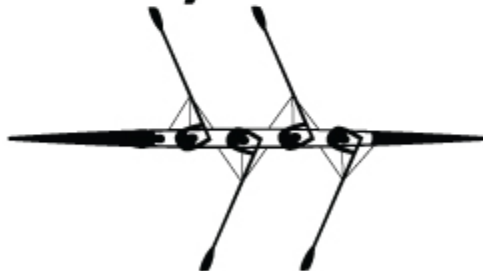


Quad (4x): Approximately 42 feet long and about 115 lbs. Rowed by four people using two oars each.



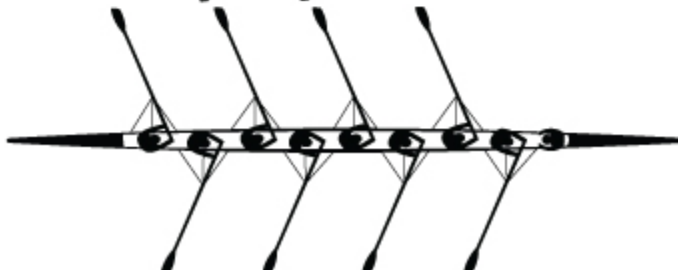
Sweep Boats

Pair (2-): Approximately 32 feet long, 13 inches wide and about 60 lbs. Rowed by two people using one oar each.



Four (4+): Approximately 42 feet long, 21 inches wide and about 112 lbs. Rowed by four people using one oar each. Coxswain can be in the bow or the stern.

A **Straight Four (4-)** is a similar boat but without a coxswain.



Eight (8): Approximately 60 feet long, 26 inches wide and about 210 lbs. Rowed by eight people using one oar each. Coxswain sits in the stern.



Natural Rowing Technique



HANDS

THE FIRST PART OF RECOVERY – "HANDS"

- The athlete sits in the finish position, relaxed with knees down.
- The blade is out of the water.
- The hands start moving away from the body to almost full-arm extension, but not locked.



BODY

BODY PREPARATION – "BODY"

- The rower straightens the arms and pivots the body forward to the full reach position.
- The hands have gone over the knees, but the knees are still down.
- Now, the athlete is ready to start his or her slide forward towards the catch.



SLIDE

LATE PART OF RECOVERY – "SLIDE"

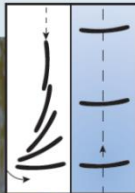
- The rower continues gliding forward to the catch, without any change to his or her body position.
- Avoid additional reaching out (diving) on the end of the slide. It slows down the boat.



CATCH

THE ENTRY OF THE BLADE INTO THE WATER – "CATCH"

- The rower arrives to the front of the slide – tall, relaxed with arms extended forward.
- The shins are almost vertical in "fully compressed" position.
- The hands (not shoulders) move up in a small motion placing the blade into the water as the seat changes direction.



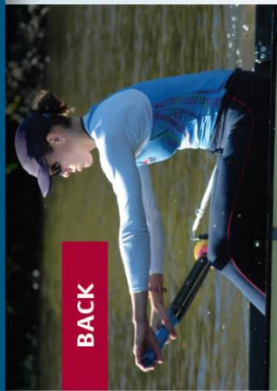
THE DRIVE SEQUENCE



LEGS

THE FIRST PART OF THE DRIVE – "LEGS"

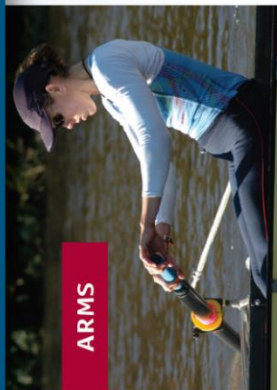
- The blade is already in the water. The legs push against the footboards and the whole body changes direction and starts moving towards the bow.
- The arms are stretched; the rower passively hangs on the oar handle.
- The body position remains unchanged for the first part of the drive.



BACK

THE MIDDLE PART OF THE DRIVE – "BACK"

- The seat is approaching the last third of the slide.
- The back extends to open (uncoils), so it appears as if the body swing takes over from the leg drive. The tall upper body is pivoting from the hips.
- The arms are still stretched and the body hangs on the oar handle.
- Mechanically, this is the most efficient part of the stroke.



ARMS

THE FINISH – "ARMS"

- The legs are flat and the rower sits back in a position of about 10 degrees past vertical.
- The head and chest are behind the oar handle without slouching.
- The arms continue the last few inches of the draw. The outside forearm is horizontal and pulling through.
- The rower continues to keep pressure on the footboards.



RELEASE

THE RELEASE

- The rower sits tall with some support against the foot stretchers. The head and chest are behind the oar handles.
- The hands make a semicircular tapping motion down, without touching the body.
- The blade comes out of the water.



Cayla Davies, Olympic Gold Medalist in '08, '12

Novice Practice Information

The warm-up below is the full race warm-up for novice athletes. Once the crew has developed enough skills, every practice will begin with this warm-up.

If you are reading this before starting the season, you are not expected to understand this yet. The exercises and syntax will be explained clearly before you need to execute it the first time. Once you're familiar with the exercises, you should memorize this warm-up.

Novice Warm-up:

- ** Pick drill w/ half crew, pauses @ release every stroke (10 strokes each exercise; full drill w/ stern half then full drill w/ bow half)
- * Pauses @ release every stroke by 6's (1 min each set, switch stroke out last)
- *** Pauses @ release full crew (2min)
- **** Continuous to the start; During the continuous rowing include the following:
 - 3 bursts of 10 strokes at full pressure, steady rowing in between
 - 1 rehearsal of start 5
 - 1 rehearsal of start 25

NOTE: In the bullet points above, more asterisks (*) mean the exercise is more important to the warm-up.

Novice Start Sequence:

- Pry
- ½
- ½
- Lengthen
- Full
- High 10 (10 strokes high rate, high pressure)
- Lengthen 10 (10 strokes to get from your sprint to your race stroke rate; shift the boat together)

Common Drills

Pick Drill

Purpose: To learn the recovery sequence (arms, body, legs) by starting with arms only rowing and building up to full strokes. Each time a piece is added in, rowers should maintain the sequencing of the stroke.

Sit ready at the release, blades out of the water. Rowers will pause every stroke at the release. Start by rowing arms only, being sure to keep the body in the release position. After number of strokes determined by the coach, progress to arms and body only, being sure to sit up and extend forward. Then progress to full strokes (arms, body, and legs).

Reverse Pick Drill

Purpose: To learn the drive sequence (legs, body, arms) by starting with legs only rowing and building up to full strokes. Each time a piece is added in, rowers should maintain the sequencing of the stroke.

Start the drill from a dead stop. Sit ready at bodies over. Start with short strokes just using the legs, pausing at the end of the drive on each stroke. Be sure rowers are hanging on the outside arm, with the inside arm relaxed, and keeping the body in the same position it is in at the catch. Only use your legs!! After a number of strokes determined by the coach, progress to legs and body, still hanging on the arms. Be sure to take the blade out before the arms bend. Then add the arms, taking full strokes.

Wide Grip

Purpose: To ensure rowers are hanging with their outside arm while relaxing the inside arm, elbow, and shoulder.

Outside hand should go at the end of the handle and inside hand should be close to the pin, on the wider black part of the oar shaft.

Outside Arm Only

Purpose: Same as Wide Grip drill.

Rowing on the square with the inside hand either in the lap or behind the back.

Cut the Cake

Purpose: To ensure rowers fully extend at bodies-over before the legs come up. To improve timing on the recovery.

Start with one full stroke. On the recovery, the rowers will stop at bodies over before returning to the release a second time (without placing the blade in the water), then continue to the catch for a full stroke. The progression of the stroke should look like this: drive, arms away, body over, return to the release, arms away, bodies over, catch, drive, repeat. Blade height should remain constant and entire crew should have the same timing. (Variation: Cupcake – like cut the cake but instead of returning to the release, return to hands away then progress through a full stroke.) This drill can also be done with pauses at bodies over and the release.

Race Day 101

What to Expect

Before each race, be sure to visit the NRC website to review the course map.

On race day, you should arrive 2-2.5 hours before your scheduled race time. Arrival times will be listed on the Newport Rowing Club website 1-2 days prior to each race. You must be at the trailer at your arrival time. Do not plan to arrive at the venue at your arrival time or you will be late getting to the trailer. If you may be late to the trailer, please contact your coach directly.

Once your entire racing line-up has arrived, take your boat off the trailer and rig it. Each rower is responsible for checking his or her own station. When your boat is rigged, you should rest until your warm-up time, being sure to stay off your feet as much as possible. Coaches will let the coxswains know what time their crew should warm up.

Around 1 hour prior to your race time, you will go through the dynamic warm-up and meet with your coach. Then the coxswain will call “hands-on” and you will walk the boat and oars down to the dock. Once you get hands-on, you are in race mode and the coxswain is in charge. A coach will follow you to the dock and stay with you until you shove off the dock. The coaches do not go on the water with you on race day.

Your coxswain will direct you through the warm-up and get you to the starting line. Then you will race and return to the dock. Be sure to congratulate the winner if it is not you, and thank your competitors for a good race.

When you return to the trailer, you will meet with your coach to discuss the race. This discussion should be led by the coxswain but each athlete is expected to participate. If your boat will not be used again later in the day, you will derig and load the boat, oars, seats, and riggers back onto the trailer. Once you have met with your coach and loaded all of your equipment onto the trailer, you will be released to the parents’ tent.

What to Bring

- Uniform (for beginning novice, your uniform will be black spandex shorts and the white NRC t-shirt until you receive an official team unisuit).
- Layers for before and after racing (bring extra dry socks for after your race)
- Snacks (you will not be able to go to the parents tent until after you race **and** all your equipment is loaded securely onto the trailer)
- Reusable water bottle (most regattas don’t have convenient places to refill water bottles so bring plenty)
- Tools for rigging
- Homework (Regattas can have quite a bit of down-time and can take up most of the day. As students first and athletes second, it’s important to prioritize your studies even on regatta days.)

Sprint Races vs Head Races

Sprint Races

These races typically occur during the spring season and are 1500m - 2000m long. The race course will be a straight line divided into 6 or 7 lanes by rows of small buoys. Each boat must stay in their own lane for the entire race, crossing the finish line in their designated lane. Some races use starting platforms, called stake boats. These platforms allow a regatta volunteer to hold the stern of the boat in place and assist in aligning crews prior to starting the race. If you have the opportunity, volunteering as a stake boat holder is a cool experience and will give you a new level of respect for the logistics of race day.

Head Races

These races typically occur during the fall season. They are longer races (4000-5000m) and will involve turns. Head races use a staggered rowing start in which boats enter the course single file and compete for the fastest total time. Depending on the skill level of the crew, head races can be heavily affected by the course the coxswain takes. Being aware of the course and possible obstacles is crucial for rowers and coxswains alike.

Vocabulary List

Moving the Boat On Land:

“Hands on” – grab onto the boat and prepare to move it. (also “all 8 hands on”)

“Up an inch. Ready. Up.” – used when lifting the boat off racks or slings, or adjusting the boat’s position on the trailer

“Up overheads. Ready. Up.” – used when lifting the boat off slings

“Call your sides” or “Show heads” – when the boat is pressed overhead, this command is used to direct rowers to indicate which side they will put the boat down on when you lower to shoulders

“Up (Down) to shoulders. Ready. Up (down).” – used to lift/lower the boat so that the gunwales (pronounced “gunnels”) are resting on the shoulders

“Down to waist. Ready. Down.” – to lower the boat to waist height so the arms are hanging straight down with the gunwales in hand. This is the easiest position to hold the boat. Rowers should be opposite each other and centered so that no one person is holding the majority of the weight.

“Roll to waist. Ready. Roll.” – from the overhead position roll the boat down to the waist position on one side. This command is most often used when preparing to lower the boat into slings or into the water while standing on the dock. If not obvious, be sure to let the crew know which direction to roll the boat.

“Heads up!” – a command given LOUDLY to alert the crew and those standing nearby to watch out. This should always be used when someone might not see your shell coming at them. Can be combined with a specific alert (i.e. “Heads up. Watch the bow.” Or “Heads up. Watch the riggers.”)

“Walk it forward.” – to walk the boat from one location to another (variation: “Walk it towards the stern/bow”, “Side-step left/right”)

“Weigh-enough!” – sounds like ‘waynuf’; calls rowers to stop walking/rowing/erging

Calling the boat from slings / racks to the water:

“Hands on.”

If on Racks: **“Up an inch. Ready. Up.”** **“Step it out.”** One at a time, get half the group on each gunwale.

“Up to shoulders. Ready. Up.”

If in Slings: **“Up to heads. Ready. Up.”** **“Call your sides / show heads.”** **“Split to shoulders slowly. Ready. Split/down.”**

“Walk it forward.” (walk boat to the dock bow first)

“Up to heads. Ready. Up.” (boat goes overheads before walking onto the dock)

“Walk it forward.”

“Toe to the edge.” (rowers put their toe/foot to the edge of the dock)

“Roll to water slowly. Ready. Roll. Push it out.” (push it out reminds the crew to push the boat out far enough that the skeg does not hit the dock)

On the Water:

“**Sit ready at the catch/release/etc.**” – all rowers (or identified rowers) sitting up at the catch/release with oars laying flat on the water

“**Square your blades.**” – blades squared in the water, ready to start a stroke; can also be called as “squared and buried”

“**Hold water.**” – rowers will stop rowing and hold their oars in the water in a squared position to stop the boat (ex. “all four/eight hold water” or “bow pair hold water”)

“**Hold on port/starboard.**” – having only one side drag their oars in the water on the square to help turn the boat; can be combined with other calls for example “port side hold/check, starboards row”

“**Check it down.**” – similar to the “hold water” command but once the boat has stopped moving, any rowers who are checking/holding can uncheck their blades and lay them flat on the water

“**Let it run.**” – all rowers stop rowing and let their oars glide OFF the water in a feathered position (not the same as weighenough!)

“**Weighenough**” – all rowers stop rowing and let their oars rest on the water in a feathered position

“**Back it down.**” – rowers place the blade in the water at the release and push the handle away from their bodies to row backwards; used to move the boat towards the stern; should be performed arms and bodies only

“**Tap it / tap it up**” – identified rower takes a light arms and bodies stroke

“**Pass it up**” – bow or 2 seat passes their oar handle to the rower ahead of them who takes short quick strokes to adjust the alignment of the boat; used while setting up at the start of a sprint so you do not pull out of the stakeboat (also called “sculling it around”)

“**Paddle**” – full crew row lightly; often used at the end of a drill or piece before coming to a complete stop

“**Sit easy**” – rowers sit in the rest position (knees bent, inside hand holding gunwale or rigger, outside hand holding oar handle, oar handle resting against legs right behind the knee)

“**Lean away**” – full crew leans their bodies away from the dock and lifts their blades as the boat floats into the dock; crew should keep mind of their riggers as they float in

“**One foot out. Up and out. Ready. Up.**” – full crew puts their dock-side foot up on the dock and gets out of the boat together on the coxswain’s call; coxswain should be out of the boat FIRST

“Square blades” – blade is oriented up-and-down, perpendicular to the water

“**Feathered blades**” – blade is oriented side-to-side, parallel to the water

“Roll up” – refers to the squaring of the blade before putting the blade in the water

Boat Parts:

Blade – the “business end” of the oar; the wide flat part that contacts the water; most of our blades are white

Bow – forward section of the shell, the part of the shell which crosses the finish line first; the name of the person sitting nearest to the bow; crew’s back is to the bow

Collar – the ring around the sleeve of the oar that is moved to adjust the load on the oar and relative length of the handle; stops the oar from sliding through the oarlock

Grip – the rubber or wooden part of the oar handle the rower holds

Gunwale – the flat edge of a boat’s side; hold this part of the boat when moving it around on land

Oar – used to propel the boat; rowers do not use paddles!

Oarlock – the device attached to the end of the rigger that holds the oar

Port – the left side of the shell when looking towards the bow; left side to the coxswain, right to the rower (trick for coxswain: “port is short is left” port is the shorter word and so is left)

Rigger – the metal or carbon-fiber arms attached to the exterior side of the shell to which the oarlocks are attached

Rudder – the small, moveable piece on the bottom of the shell in the stern by which the coxswain can steer the boat

Seat – where the rower sits; also the position or location a rower sits in the boat

Shaft – the main part of the oar between the grip and blade; usually carbon fiber

Skeg – the stationary fin located at the stern of the boat used to help stabilize the shell in maintaining a straight and true course; it is not the same as the rudder

Sleeve – the plastic cover around the oar shaft that holds the collar; the shaft is squared off to “click” into place in the squared and feathered positions when placed into the oarlock

Starboard – the right side of the shell when looking towards the bow; right side to the coxswain, left to the rower

Stern – the rear of the racing shell; crosses the finish line last; the direction the crew is facing

Stretcher or Foot Stretcher – where the rower’s feet go; the stretcher is moveable forward and backward to allow rowers of different leg lengths maximum slide range

Tracks – the set of runners set inside the shell to accept the wheels on the bottom of each rowers seat (slide)

Other Important Rowing Terms:

Backsplash – the splash produced by the blade entering the water at the catch while the blade is moving toward the bow; a splash at the catch off of the back of the blade while the blade enters the water

Catch – the part of the stroke cycle where the rower puts the blade into the water

Catching a Crab – rower slang meaning when the rower's blade enters the water at an angle instead of fully squared (perpendicular) which results in the blade getting caught under the surface of the water; most likely to occur in choppy conditions or with beginning/novice crews

Drive – the part of the stroke cycle where the rower propels the boat through the water

Layback – the rowers act of leaning back toward the bow during the stroke; layback should not be more than a few degrees past vertical (think 11:00 on an analog clock)

Piece – a term referring to any period of work performed in the rowing shell; might be a 10 minute piece or a 500 meter piece, or a 20 stroke piece

Puddles – the marks left by the blade on the water after the release; the puddles indicate the “run” of the boat by showing how far it has traveled since the previous stroke

Release – the action of removing the blade from the water

Recovery – the part of the stroke cycle where the oars are out of the water

Run – the distance the shell moves during one stroke; good spacing means the crew is letting the boat work while they are on the recovery; by rushing the recovery, the crew will make the shell surge towards the stern immediately prior to catching and shorten the run for that stroke

Rush – a technical error caused by sliding too quickly and abruptly toward the stern on the recovery

Set – the balance of the boat (this is a result of good rowing technique and should not be a goal on its own, only as an indicator of making other technical corrections)

Skying – the incorrect action of carrying the hands and oar handle too low during the recovery, especially when the rower dips his/her hands just prior to the catch; this action usually results in the blade being too high off the water's surface

Stroke Rating – the number of strokes per minute (also called rate)

Stroke Seat – the rower who sits closest to the stern of the boat; stroke seat sets the rhythm for the boat; all rowers behind the stroke must follow his/her cadence

Swing – occurs when the entire crew is moving perfectly in unison and the shell seems to be moving very fast without much effort

Washing out – when the blade comes out of the water during the drive, creating white, foamy surface waves, losing power, and unsteady the shell

Other Resources

Blogs:

Row2k

www.row2k.com

Row2k is a great resource for rowers & coxswains. You can find race photographs and results, information about the international rowing community, rowing camp listings, and much more

Regatta Central

www.regattacentral.com

This is the primary rowing regatta website. Most of the regattas NRC participates in will have pages on this website. These pages include venue information, schedules, results, and race line-ups for all race entries.

USRowing

www.usrowing.org

This is the website for the governing body of United States rowing. Their website contains many useful resources including a “Rowing 101” section and information about national teams. This is also the site used to sign and update your USRowing Waiver, a requirement for competition.

Rowing Channels on Youtube:

Decent Rowing (“decentrowingdotcom”)

Dark Horse Rowing

Instagram:

RP3 Dynamic USA (@rp3rowingusa)

Columbia Lightweight Rowing (@columbia_lightweight_rowing)

World Rowing (@worldrowingofficial)

Rowing News (@rowingnews)

Books:

“The Boys in the Boat” by Daniel James Brown

“Grit” by Angela Duckworth

“The Talent Code” by Daniel Coyle

“Outliers” by Malcolm Gladwell

Appendix:

NRC Code of Conduct

All NRC athletes are expected to have a full understanding of the Code of Conduct. It has been attached here for your convenience.

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NEWPORT ROWING CLUB

Code of Conduct

Regulations and guidelines for conduct of NRC athletes and parents/guardians.

Updated 2019-08

Mission Statement

Newport Rowing Club (NRC), Delaware's premier youth rowing club, and its staff works towards the following missions:

... to provide education, training, instruction, and participation in amateur rowing while developing the healthy minds, bodies, and character of student athletes.

... to encourage sportsmanship, teamwork, and the principals and standards expected of participants in national and international sports.

... to advance the sport and the art of rowing on the Historic Christina River in Newport, Delaware.

... to educate the public about the benefits of lifetime participation in rowing.

To achieve NRC's mission, it is essential that our student athletes train, work, compete, and represent the club positively on and off the water. NRC parents / guardians should also strive to embody the core values outlined in the mission statement above. By modeling these values, parents / guardians help to foster a healthy, happy, and fast team.

This Code of Conduct has been prepared to provide policies and guidelines for acceptable behavior for members of NRC. In addition to these guidelines, all members and families are expected to comply with USRowing rules and regulations, as well as local, state, and federal laws.

Newport Rowing Club grants the Head Coach and Executive Director, John Cohn, broad discretion in choosing and imposing disciplinary actions on athletes or members who violate the Code of Conduct. He may consider input from the coaches, board, other administrators, USRowing referees, and parents when applicable.

The NRC Team Culture

The team culture at Newport Rowing Club is centered around respect, hard work, and reliability. When the team acts and works with these values in mind, the individuals and the team excel together. When they cease to be a priority, the team suffers and the individual athlete regresses.

Respect is defined as due regard for the feelings, wishes, or traditions of others. NRC athletes should show respect to their teammates and coaches through their language and behavior within and outside-of the boathouse. On race day, respect for competitors should be upheld at all times. This includes but is not limited to creating a safe and competitive environment at the trailer that allows other teams to prepare to race, being on task and efficient getting to the start line, and congratulating teams at the finish line regardless of the race outcome. Athletes should also show respect to any equipment and facilities used by NRC, whether owned, leased, or borrowed.

Hard work is essential to success in rowing. All NRC athletes should put their best effort forward both physically and mentally at practice every day regardless of the type of workout or the proximity to race day. NRC athletes should leave the boathouse after each practice knowing they gave the best effort they could that day. Understand that your best effort may not be the same day to day but be honest about what your best effort looks like. Working hard also means taking recovery seriously by hydrating, stretching and rolling out sore muscles, icing when needed, and being open with coaching staff about atypical pain.

Reliability is the main factor that differentiates the fastest junior teams in the US. NRC athletes should strive to be reliable in all aspects of the sport including being on time to practice, attending practice regularly, and working consistently from day to day. When you make a commitment, you are not only making it to yourself, you are making it to the team. Your decision to follow up on those commitments also effects the team.

Practice Expectations for Athletes

Athletes will be prepared to begin practice promptly at the specified start time. Being prepared for practice includes the following:

- Water bottles are full and out of the locker room.
- Any clothing or layers needed for practice are out of the locker room.
- Any prehab exercises prescribed by a physical therapist or recommended by a coach have been completed.

Athletes will wear appropriate attire to every NRC practice, whether that practice takes place on the NRC campus or not. Clothing may not contain explicit language or content. All athletes must wear shirts during practice.

When practice starts, athletes should be ready to learn. For some athletes, this means building a routine at the beginning of practice to get into the right mindset. Some athletes prefer to keep a notebook or journal that they write in at the end of each practice. Rereading notes from the previous day can be a good way to prepare. If you had a particularly challenging day, mentally preparing may mean erging or biking before practice to clear your head. Before practice begins, get your head in the right space to focus and learn as much as possible.

Be coachable on and off the water. Coachable athletes advocate for themselves by speaking up and giving visual cues like head nods and hand raises when they hear and understand a comment from a coach or coxswain. They make visible changes and are willing to make mistakes. They ask for help when they don't understand and discuss their progress regularly with the coaching staff.

Athletes who are consistently unprepared for practice and by doing so interfere with the success of the team may be subject to disciplinary actions as defined at the end of this document.

Expectations of NRC Parents / Guardians

The safety and well-being of our athletes is of primary importance to the NRC coaches and staff. NRC families are expected to share in this responsibility by working cooperatively with coaches and administrators to ensure the safety and well-being of the student athletes in our mutual care. To that end, parents and family members are encouraged to bring any issues to the attention of coaches or, when appropriate, to the board of directors. However, personal verbal attacks are forbidden and may result in appropriate sanctions.

Families must comply with local laws, the regulations, codes, and programs that NRC has instituted, and USRowing, FISA, and IRA regulations to ensure the safety of our athletes. This includes and is specific to laws concerning substance abuse (alcohol and drugs) as well as illegal performance enhancing substances.

NRC expects that parents, families, and legal guardians, will use common sense and responsibility as designated chaperones during NRC events as well as at non-NRC events in which NRC athletes participate.

Drugs, Alcohol, and Illegal Performance Enhancing Substances

The use of drugs, alcohol, or illegal performance-enhancing substances by student athletes prior to, following, or while involved with any NRC-related event, practice, competition, banquet, while traveling with the team, or during any other NRC team-related activity is strictly prohibited. This includes the use of alcohol by parents at the parent tent during regattas.

Individuals acting in defiance of this policy will be subject to disciplinary actions as defined at the end of this document

Bullying, Harassment, and Hazing Policy

Bullying, harassment, and hazing (collectively referred to in the Code of Conduct as “bullying”) by student athletes, masters athletes, parents, family members, guardians, or friends associated with NRC (hereby referred to as “the NRC team”) is strictly prohibited. Bullying is defined as an act that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of an individual, with the intention to cause personal degradation or humiliation, or that damages or may damage, destroy, or remove public or private property for the purpose of initiation in, admission to, or as a condition of continued membership in NRC, a specific boat, or a squad.

Bullying activities include but are not limited to the following:

- Physical punishment, contact, exercise, or sleep deprivation that causes excessive fatigue and/or physical or psychological shock.
- Forced or coerced consumption of food, drink, alcohol, tobacco, and/or illegal drugs.
- Forced or coerced transportation of individuals.
- Public humiliation, ridicule, or indecent exposure of any kind.

- Coercing or forcing of illegal acts of any kind.
- Coercing or forcing acts that are immoral or unethical.
- Blocking an individual's academic, athletic, or personal success.
- Interfering with an individual's health.
- Personal servitude.
- Mental harassment.
- Sexual harassment.
- Using electronic media (including cell phones, the internet, social media sites, and the athlete group chats) to harass, denigrate, or otherwise comment negatively on an individual, a group of individuals, or a class of individuals.
- Deception.
- An act of, or threat of, social exclusion.
- Conduct that is deliberately detrimental to team morale or cohesiveness.

If a person engages in any of the acts below, he or she shall have committed the act of Bullying:

- Engaging directly in bullying.
- Soliciting, encouraging, directing, aiding, or attempting to aid another person in bullying activities.
- Intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly permitting bullying to occur.
- Having first-hand knowledge of the planning or execution of an incident or event of bullying and failing to report the incident or event to NRC administrators or coaches.

Individuals involved in any form of bullying will be held accountable for their actions and will be subject to disciplinary actions as stated at the end of this document.

Social Media

No member of NRC will use any social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.) as a venue to denigrate, harass, or bully any teammate, competitor, coach, administrator, board member, parent, or other member of the NRC family. See the section above for a detailed definition of bullying.

No member of NRC will use any social media to post content which negatively reflects on an individual's or group's race, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Information placed on social networking sites may become available to coaches, parents, family, administrators, college admissions offices, or future employers. The image you present on the internet must reflect the values stated in this Code of Conduct as well as the values of inclusion, respect, and civility.

Inappropriate postings on any social networking site may result in any disciplinary actions as stated at the end of this document.

Regattas and Travel

Participation in regattas is an earned privilege. While at regattas, members of NRC are expected to conduct themselves with proper decorum, to act courteously, and to use good judgement. Each member must accept responsibility of their own actions and actively encourage their teammates to do the same. The actions of the individual reflect on the entire NRC organization.

While at regattas, the following expectations are to be upheld by the individual and insisted upon by the team:

- Appropriate NRC uniforms are to be worn while at the regatta venue. Appropriate uniforms include the NRC unisuit pulled all the way up. Unisuit straps must stay on until the athlete leaves the regatta. Outside layers should contain the NRC logo.
- Members of NRC are expected to observe all USRowing rules and regulations.
- Race officials, regatta volunteers, coaches, and members of other rowing programs will be treated with respect and courtesy at all times.
- Crews must be on time for their events, including arrival time at the trailer, pre-scheduled weigh-ins, boat preparation, or other pre-race activities. It is the responsibility of the individual members of the crew to assure that all race requirements have been met.
- It is up to the individual members of the crew to assure their boat is properly rigged and ready to race.
- Crews, with proper instruction from the coaches, are expected to de-rig each boat they race in and load all equipment onto the boat trailer in preparation for the return trip to the boathouse. Any equipment not stored or secured properly in the trailer or left at the venue is the responsibility of all the athletes who used that equipment.
- All members of the NRC team (athletes, parents, family members, and legal guardians) will act in a sportsman-like manner. Sportsman-like conduct includes but is not limited to the following scenarios:
 - The outcome of regattas and rulings of race officials will be accepted graciously.
 - Protests, if required will be coordinated between the crew, their coach, and the Head Coach as appropriate. (NOTE: Parents, guardians, family members, and friends are not permitted to participate in the protest process of any regatta event in which an NRC boat participates.)
 - Athletes, parents, guardians, and family members will speak about and to other teams with respect regardless of race results, the actions of other teams, and any other factors.
- When traveling to and from regattas, athletes are expected to conduct themselves with proper decorum, to act courteously, and to use good judgement. While at overnight accommodations, athletes will follow the direction and instruction of their coaches.

NRC Equipment & Facilities

The use of NRC equipment and the NRC facilities is a privilege, not a right. Each member of the NRC team recognizes that the success of the team is dependent on well maintained, properly

functioning equipment. The following expectations must be upheld by all individuals on the NRC team and enforced not only by the coaches, but by the athletes as well:

- Treat all equipment with care.
- All malfunctions recognized by NRC athletes while on the water should be reported to a coach immediately upon returning to the boathouse and before the end of practice. Repairs can be made quickly when coaches are informed in a timely manner.
- Any minor repairs (re-attaching a shoe or footboard, tightening bolts, replacing spacers, etc.) should be done by the athletes before getting on the water. Athletes should feel free to seek guidance from any NRC coaches if they are unsure how to make these repairs.
- NRC equipment including but not limited to boats, oars, cox boxes, and speed coaches are not to be removed from NRC grounds without express permission from a coach.
- Any equipment that is willfully or negligently damaged or lost will be paid for by the individual(s) responsible.
- Any property owned or leased by NRC that is willfully or negligently damaged will be paid for or repaired by the individual(s) responsible.

Reporting Violations of the Code of Conduct

Any athlete, parent, guardian, family member, or friend may file a grievance or report any violations of the NRC Code of Conduct through the process stated below. The rights of the individual reporting a violation must be respected. All information shall be kept confidential to the extent reasonably possible to handle the issue in question. If witnesses are to be interviewed, they will be informed of the confidential nature of the issue and instructed not to discuss the matter with others. Such discussion would also be considered a breach of the NRC Code of Conduct.

How to Report a Violation

- 1) **Contact a Coach** – An athlete’s coach should be the first point of contact. The coach may choose to resolve the issue or escalate it to the next level of action.
- 2) **Contact the Head Coach / Executive Director** – The Head Coach may be approached directly or through another member of the staff. The Head Coach may choose to resolve the issue directly, work with another coach to resolve the issue, or raise the issue to the next level of action.
- 3) **Contact the Board of Directors** – The board is the highest level of review for any infractions of the NRC Code of Conduct or grievances that cannot be resolved through direct contact with a coach. The board, working with the Head Coach when appropriate, may ask for additional information and interview athletes, parents, or any NRC staff members in trying to resolve the issue.
- 4) **Code of Conduct Disciplinary Board** – If required, a coach, the Head Coach, or the Board of Directors may request an *ad hoc* Disciplinary Board to review an infraction of the Code of Conduct or a disciplinary ruling. The Disciplinary Board shall at a minimum include the Head Coach and one member of the Board of Directors. Additional members may be asked to serve on the Disciplinary Board as required. If called, the Disciplinary Board must report its findings in writing to the Board of Directors.

- 5) **Contact the Appropriate Legal Authorities** – If a law is broken, it is the right of the coaches and staff to reach out to the appropriate legal authorities. The disciplinary actions of the local authorities will be placed in addition to any disciplinary actions agreed to by the board, coaches, and staff.

Retaliation

Individuals who become aware of a violation to the NRC Code of Conduct are encouraged to report that matter to the NRC coaches or staff. It is a violation of the NRC Code of Conduct to engage in retaliation for such reporting.

Wrongful Accusation

Any individual accused of violating the NRC Code of Conduct has the right to challenge that accusation by following the same procedures listed above to appeal the accusation to their coach, the Head Coach / Executive Director, or the Board of Directors. No individual shall be considered in violation of the NRC Code of Conduct without due process.

Attendance

The attendance of each individual athlete can have a large impact on the success of the team. The following attendance policy must be adhered to:

- 1) Each athlete is permitted 5 absences per season.
- 2) Athletes with more than 5 absences in a single season may be considered a “spare” for regatta line-ups. If the number of NRC athletes or the regatta schedule do not allow every athlete to race, the “spares” may be removed from race line-ups before athletes with better attendance.
- 3) Athletes who miss practice during the week of a regatta may be removed from their racing line-up. This will also be taken into consideration for future race line-ups.
- 4) Special considerations will be made for family emergencies (i.e. death in the family, hospitalization, etc.) on a case-to-case basis. If an athlete believes special considerations should be made for their absence, the athlete should speak to their coach either in person or via email within 2 days of the absence.
- 5) If there is a chance an athlete will be tardy (i.e. not present and ready to begin practice promptly at the appointed start time) the athlete will contact their coach directly prior to the start of practice. Athletes who do not notify their coach prior to the start of practice will be removed from their practice line-up. Repeated tardiness without notice may result in further disciplinary actions including but not limited to removal from a race line-up.
- 6) If an athlete is tardy without providing notice as stated above, the athlete will spend 1 practice on land.
- 7) If an athlete is absent without providing notice as stated above, the athlete will spend 2 practices on land.

Disciplinary Actions

Student athletes and members of NRC who fail to adhere to the Code of Conduct will be subject to disciplinary actions. Depending on the severity of the violation, disciplinary actions may include, but are not limited to:

- A verbal or written warning of the offense.
- Discussion of the infraction with the offender and parental guardian.
- Temporary suspension from the NRC team.
- Temporary or permanent loss of eligibility to participate in practices and/or regattas.
- Dismissal from the NRC team without refund.
- Reporting to local, state, or federal authorities when appropriate.
- For offenses relating to drugs, alcohol, and illegal performance enhancing substances, required chemical dependency assessment and/or treatment program.

Athlete / Parent Acknowledgement:

I have read the Newport Rowing Club Code of Conduct and agree to act in a manner consistent with its policies and requirements.

Print Athlete's Name

Athlete Signature

Date

Parent / Guardian Signature

Date