



Excellence in Motion

BHRA HANDBOOK

Updated March 2020

WELCOME TO THE BURNT HILLS ROWING ASSOCIATION

The Purpose of the Association:

To stimulate and foster interest in the sport of rowing. To publicize the manifold advantages of rowing as a means of health and physical development. To uphold the principles and standards of amateur rule. To promote interest through competition and the holding of regattas. To use every reasonable endeavor for the advancement and up-building of amateur rowing in accordance with the best traditions of sportsmanship.

Whether you are a new or returning member to our association, we welcome you and hope this handbook will give you the necessary information to get you started. Very few athletes discover and develop a passion for this unique sport. Rowing will benefit your child well beyond their middle and high school years!

Crew is a highly competitive, true team sport requiring groups of two, four or eight rowers, and a coxswain, to work together in unison to achieve success. Given the wide variety of classes of competitive rowing, there is a place for everyone in our sport. We are proud to have dozens of members of all abilities and ages participating in our association. Rowing is also one of the few sports that allows kids to start later at a later stage. (We have yet to meet any rower that started at four years old!)

Rowers have important attributes and are some of the world's best athletes. Self-discipline and perseverance, physical and mental toughness, balance and endurance are all requirements of the rower. Although it appears to be an upper body sport, it actually is demanding of virtually all of the body's muscle groups. When done well, rowing looks graceful and effortless.

As a member of BHRA, rowers will develop positive character traits through many activities. Rowers will work as a group to care for racing shells while moving them from their racks to the water, preparing boats for transport, then loading them on the trailer and preparing them for racing. They will learn to prepare themselves physically for competition by understanding proper nutrition, stretching, and exercise techniques. They will understand that they are one part of a group that depends on each other to achieve a goal and they will develop relationships through BHRA social events that will bind them as a team.

Crew is a year-round sport, and although we are associated with the Burnt Hills - Ballston Lake School District, we are only partially funded by the school district for grades 7 through 12, and only during the spring season. We are considered a club the remainder of the year. As you will learn, this creates some unique policies, dependent on the season. For instance, we have no bus

transportation in the fall season, so we rely on parents to “taxi” the students to the boat house for practice. (More on this in the practice section)

At BHRA we have a strong sense of community because we take the idea of teamwork seriously. Without the support of parents and families, this would not be possible. **BHRA is dependent on volunteers all year long** so parents are asked to assist in association operations. Volunteer opportunities are available for everyone.

As we welcome you to our association, we want to remind you that if you have questions at any time, please feel free to ask a fellow parent, a returning rower, or a member of our board.

Monthly association meetings of the board take place on the second Tuesday of the month at the boathouse at 7PM. Parents and athletes are welcome to attend and may request time to speak through the President in advance.

Happy rowing!

GENERAL BHRA INFORMATION AND OUR SEASONS

BHRA is a non-profit, tax exempt organization that provides year-round rowing opportunities to BHBL students and adults in the local community. There are no “try-outs” and everyone participates. Further, BHRA is a member of the United States Rowing Association (USRowing) and maintains liability and excess medical insurance. The association is overseen by elected Officers and a Board of Directors. USRowing is a nonprofit membership organization recognized by the United States Olympic Committee as the national governing body for the sport of rowing in the United States

It is the duty of the Officers and Board of Directors to oversee the daily operations of the club and ensure it is being run in accordance with the Bylaws, oversee funds and make financial decisions; hiring and overseeing coaching staff, and attend monthly meetings. The Board is made up of executive officers, a President Emeritus, and Directors. Directors can be current or former rowing parents, or athletes themselves. The offices of President, Vice-Presidents, Treasurer and Secretary, who are current parents, are held for one year and are elected at the annual meeting in February. Director positions are held for a term of three years and are also voted on at the annual meeting. BHRA also has a Masters Coordinator, who is considered a voting member of the board.

At BHRA we have two youth teams, Modified and Varsity; and we also have a Masters Program for adults. Our Modified team is for students in 6th - 8th grades and our Varsity team is for 9th - 12th grades. Occasionally an athlete will “row up” a year, so a Modified 8th grader may row with Varsity. This is at the coach’s discretion and is always discussed with parents.

We break down the year into two racing seasons and four training seasons:

Fall Racing: This season begins in August for Varsity and September for Modified. We are a **club sport** and have no official affiliation with the school district. This season consists of longer races, approximately 3 miles, which concentrate on endurance. These are generally “head” races, designated by their starting method. Crews will row to the starting area and wait for their turn to pass through the starting “gate”. Each boat is timed from start to finish, so a winner is not decided until all boats in a race have finished. Think of it as a time trial.

Spring Racing: This season begins in March for both Modified and Varsity, and is the main “championship” season of rowing. Spring races are “sprint” races meaning, boats line up at a starting block and race side by side in lanes. The races are generally 1,500 to 2,000 meters long. When the season begins we are not able to practice on water (think ice and freezing temps) so the athletes have land practice in the boathouse. Our docks typically go in the water when river and weather conditions are favorable. This typically happens at the end of March into the month of April. We are a scholastic sport for spring. This means we must abide by school district policies regarding student and coach conduct. The school district hires and pays the Varsity coaching staff. They also provide transportation to the boathouse for practices, as well as to and from regattas.

Winter: Beginning in mid-November, there is an organized winter practice consisting of conditioning and weight lifting, which takes place in the boathouse facility. The Modified team participates in conditioning exercises and erging (indoor rowing machines) but does not use the weight equipment. The ergometers are computerized, displaying their time, stroke rate and speed among other things and rowers can “race” each other on these machines.

Summer: We offer “learn to row” sessions for new rowers, and continued training sessions for both Modified and Varsity rowers. This is a great time for other students to try out the sport as well as provide extra practice opportunities for our current rowers. Practice times vary depending on coaching availability. High school students who are brand new to the sport may start with Modified rowers until their skills are where they are able to work with “seasoned” Varsity rowers. Often this does not take long!

MASTERS PROGRAM

BHRA is proud to offer a program for adult rowers, either experienced or novice. The program is overseen by a Masters Coordinator. USRowing defines a Master rower as 21 years old or older. The term Master refers only to age not rowing experience or ability. Our Masters program welcomes anyone 18 or older. Masters are eligible to race in regattas and have been known to bring home their own medals! Currently the program runs spring through fall. When available there is an indoor training program during winter. This is a great way for adults to introduce themselves to the world of rowing or continue with their passion!

REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INVESTMENT

Depending on the season we have different registration methods:

SPRING: All athletes must be registered with USRowing to be eligible for racing. Athletes **must also have a physical form on file with the school district and bring the “yellow” slip (given by the nurse) to the coach on the first day of practice to be eligible to practice.** Other forms you will print out and hand in: USRowing waiver, authorization for medical treatment of minors, acknowledgment of parent/rower conduct policies.

We understand the cost of rowing can have a “sticker shock” to many families and we are here to help! Payment plans can be arranged through the treasurer and are taken advantage of by many families. We further understand the cost of rowing may be prohibitive for some families. We would hate to turn a potential rower away for this reason. We do have a limited number of scholarships available. Please reach out to the BHRA President to discuss if this is an option for you. Fees cover items such as insurance, regatta entry fees, coaching costs, trailering of boats to and from regattas, and food tent supplies. **Please note: membership fees must be paid in full at the beginning of the season, unless arrangements have been made with the treasurer, in order for your child to participate. Failure to do either of these or not hand in the required paperwork will result in your child not being able to practice until the requirements are met.**

A note about the spring season:

Because we are school affiliated for the spring season, it is necessary to follow the chain of command with regards to who to contact. All questions, concerns etc. are to be addressed with the coach first. From there if you are not satisfied you are to go to the Athletic Director for the Burnt Hills - Ballston Lake School District. The principal of your child’s school is the next point of contact, lastly the Board of Education. During the spring season the BHRA Board cannot be a part of any concerns, discipline issues, or other problems. This is unique to the spring season Only.

FALL: Athletes must register with USRowing if they did not row in the spring. Any new athletes (meaning they did not participate in the spring season of the current calendar year) must hand in the paperwork required in the spring session. Full payment, or payment arrangements are made at the time of registration.

WINTER AND SUMMER: Registration is done through a Google form available on our website. Because these programs do not consist of races, and we pay for fewer coaches, we are able to offer programs at a reduced cost. Payment for these sessions is made by cash or check through the treasurer.

Uniforms: Varsity rowers are required to wear a BHRA unisuit (uni) for all regattas. Rowers are allowed to wear tight fitting leggings, or shirts under their uni. Unis are available for purchase at

the beginning of each season for \$100. Modified rowers will purchase BHRA tanks at the beginning of the season for \$25 that they will wear for all regattas with matching shorts, tight pants/leggings, and shirts. Specific clothing requirements will be addressed by the coaches.

FUNDRAISING

Fundraising is an integral part of our organization. All equipment purchases come from fundraising. Everyone is asked to participate in any way they can. Currently we have a major fundraiser for fall and spring, with a few smaller ones held throughout the year.

Fall: For this season, one of our major fundraisers is our **Marathon Row!** Held in the beginning of September, this is a fun and exciting event for all who participate!! Varsity rowers are expected to collect “pledges” for their 26 mile (yes, 26 miles!) row from the Schoharie Creek back to the boathouse. They stop for lunch along the way and make a couple of “pit stops” when needed. Parents are encouraged to follow the team from lock to lock. At each lock it is a fun tradition to throw food and drinks to the athletes! This event kicks off early in the morning and ends late in the afternoon. At the completion of the row all of the families enjoy a potluck dinner at the boat house. Modified athletes will also collect “pledges” for their row up to Lock 7 or 8 (decision is made close to or on marathon day how far they will row) to meet the Varsity rowers and row back to the boathouse with them.

Spring:

Plant Sale

Various Smaller Events

Ongoing fundraising opportunities:

- Shop through our Amazon Smile link every time you make a purchase!
- Sneaker collection at the boathouse. Donate your used sneakers, yes even the torn up stinky ones, and help the association! Sneakers are sent to a company that recycles the rubber for use in other products. You get rid of the stink, maybe feel a tad less guilty about tossing them and help the association. It's a win - win!

WE NEED VOLUNTEERS!

Keeping the Burnt Hills Rowing Association running well requires many hours of volunteer work. We have an elected position of Vice President of Volunteers whose job it is to fill volunteer spots for varying events. There are many areas in which a parent may volunteer according to his/her talents. If you have a special talent, a useful piece of equipment, or just some extra time, please let our volunteer coordinator know and your efforts will be greatly appreciated. Please do what you can to make the VP of Volunteer's job easy.

Some volunteer opportunities:

- Docks in and out: cleaning boathouse, cleaning boats and equipment, helping with docks going in and out.

- Food tent coordinator and helpers
- Spring and Fall Banquet Coordinator(s)
- Organize Marathon Row with a committee for breakfast, packing lunches and family potluck
- Towel washing
- Mohawk Fall Classic Regatta organizing committee and help setting up, running and taking down regatta
- Fundraising team
- Maintaining docks, grounds, and launches
- Hauling of boat trailer and food truck to and from regattas

Information regarding what you are interested in volunteering for is gathered during the registration process. Also look for information sent through emails, Facebook and Twitter posts.

MOHAWK FALL CLASSIC

Taking place in October, the Mohawk Fall Classic is our home regatta on the Mohawk River at Jumpin' Jacks Restaurant and boat launch. The Fall Classic is one of the only races with a fantastic view of the finish line!! BHRA is proud to offer a regatta open to teams from all over the Northeast region. The Fall Classic is another one of our MAJOR FUNDRAISERS. Money brought in from the Classic helps pay for equipment, repairs, boats and more.

To make this regatta happen, BRHA has a Local Organizing Committee (LOC) who begins planning the regatta in January. The LOC is open to current and former parents, board and community members. It takes months of planning and fundraising to make this event happen.

Parents and rowers are asked to help procure sponsorship for the regatta. There are several sponsorship opportunities available with a variety of incentives and advertising opportunities.

Come regatta time we need parent and rower volunteers to set up, run and take down the regatta. Information regarding the regatta comes out closer to the actual date.

COMMUNICATION AND WHO TO CONTACT

Please plan on attending all parent/rower meetings at the beginning of the spring and fall seasons. Mandatory parent meetings will be held within the first two weeks of the season for both Varsity and Modified parents. It is important to make every effort to attend these meetings as the coaches go over a lot of important information you will need for the season.

A second parent meeting is held at the start of the fall season at the boathouse. Again, all parents and athletes are encouraged to attend. This is another chance to meet coaches, board members, as well as other parents. Similar to the spring meeting we go over volunteer opportunities,

fundraising information, important dates and more. It is also your chance to ask questions of the coaches and board members who are present.

Annual meeting in February - All athletes and parents are encouraged to attend our Annual Meeting, held in the first two weeks of February at the Ballston Town Hall. Here we present the budget for the upcoming year, budget reports from the previous year; discuss goals and initiatives for the coming year both from coaching and the association as a whole. This is also the time for elections of board members and directors. This is another opportunity to learn all about the organization and help determine the direction of BHRA .

General information on the association and its programs can be found at www.burnthillsrowing.com or www.bhrow.com

On Facebook and Twitter @bhrowing

Join TeamSnap! This is a new communication tool for us! In an effort to keep parents and rowers as up to date as possible we are asking everyone to join TeamSnap. An app which can be downloaded to your devices, where parents can send messages to each other, get information from coaches about practices and regattas.

Who do you contact?

Questions on your child, practice, or racing	Coach
Questions on fees, payments	Treasurer treasurer@bhrow.com
Questions on volunteering	VP of Volunteers volunteers@bhrow.com
Questions on the association	President president@bhrow.com
Questions on meetings	Secretary secretary@bhrow.com
Questions on fundraising	VP of Fundraising fundraising@bhrow.com

Other parents are often your best resources of general questions regarding practices, regattas and an overall “how do things work”. Coaches will send home information by paper and email in the week prior to regattas. They will have racing times and venue information.

LET THE PRACTICE BEGIN!

So, when are practices anyway?

Practice takes place from 3:30PM to 6:00PM at our boathouse and on the Mohawk River five days per week. Weather permitting, practice will always be on the water to best prepare for competition. During winter and early spring months, and during dangerous weather conditions, athletes will train indoors in our training facility. We are fortunate to have an amazing weight room, a mezzanine with Concept 2 Ergometers (rowing machines) known as “ergs,” and both boys and girls locker rooms as well.

****** A note about practice in the spring!! Because we hold land practices for the first few weeks we have to split practice times between varsity and modified. Varsity will practice from 3:30pm-5:30pm and take the bus from the high school. Modified will practice 5:30pm - 7:00pm and must provide their own transportation. Once we are on water BOTH teams will practice from 3:30pm - 6:00pm and will BOTH be able to take the bus to the boathouse from the high school. Modified athletes take the sports transfer bus to the high school at the end of their day. From there they will wait with the other athletes at the back entrance of the high school.

Do you cancel practice?

Practice is very rarely cancelled. Inclement weather does not prevent practice from being on the water. Athletes must be prepared to be on the water at all times. Safety is our utmost concern, so when there is dangerous wind, water conditions, or lightning practice will move indoors.

How serious are you about rowers attending every practice?

Participation in all practices is required. Further, attendance for high school athletes is mandatory at all races. If an athlete is not present it affects the rest of their boat members or “crew” negatively.

Why am I waiting after the end of practice for my athlete?

Sometimes your child’s coach needs to talk to the athlete after practice to discuss issues, go over recommendations, or prepare them for something they have upcoming. It could be your child has an issue that s/he wants to talk to their coach about. Any time practice is on water any number of things can delay a boat - unexpected trouble launching or docking, maybe they were held up by another boat on the water. Coaches do everything they can to get the athletes out on time.

My athlete needs to miss a practice, is this a big deal?

To be frank, yes. Obviously when children have fevers, are vomiting, cannot stop coughing, and are downright miserable, they should not be at practice. That being said, many of our athletes are learning this sport for the first time. They are learning the basics of the sport, and how to be competitive at regattas. Any practice time missed is detrimental to their growth. When we are practicing on water, an athletes' absence not only impacts them, but impacts an entire boat. Coaches make line up and practice plans ahead of time. If an athlete is missing it may cause an entire boat to be kept off water for that day (this makes other kids really ANGRY). **It is your**

athletes' responsibility to contact their coach as soon as they know they will not make a practice.

How will my child get to practice?

This depends on the season.

Spring - a bus is provided by the district to transport athletes from the high school to the boathouse. Middle school athletes will take the sports transfer bus to the high school at the end of their day. Students wait at the gym/cafeteria entrance at the back of the high school to get the bus to the boathouse.

Fall - because we are not affiliated with the school district during fall, we must arrange for our own transportation. Traditionally we set up a "crew taxi" made up of parents who are willing and able to drive athletes to the boathouse at the end of the school day. There is a fee for this taxi that goes toward compensating the drivers at the end of the season.

Winter - we are again not affiliated with the school district however, due to lower enrollment numbers we do not put together a formal taxi for winter. Parents usually connect with each other to arrange for rides to the boathouse.

Parents are responsible for picking up their athletes at the end of practice.

Speaking of pick up, I hear I have to wait out on the road for them to contact me? Why can't I come up to the parking lot?

Our boathouse is not only home to our program, but we also lease space to the Shenendehowa rowing team. This means on any given day there are around 75 athletes that need to be picked up after practices. Additionally, the current owner of the land behind our boathouse does not allow us to use their driveway, parking spots, or turn around, therefore there is simply not enough space for every parent to come up and park. We ask that you wait in a line on the right side of the road, then have your athlete contact you when they are ready. We hope this situation changes in the future, but for now, this is what we have to do. If you can safely park your car on the side of the access road, we encourage you to walk up to the boathouse and see the activity your child is engaged with and meet other parents.

You know, my child used to have a blue sweatshirt. Have you seen it??

We have a lost and found in the boathouse. Chances are the lost item you are looking for is there! Be sure to label EVERYTHING!! Your child may not be the only one with a red sweatshirt or those fun blue shorts!

I want to talk to the coach, can I just grab them after practice when we are both there anyway?

There are many things happening at the end of practice and you may wait a long time before you are able to speak with the coach. Even then, they may or may not have much time to speak with you. It is best if you contact the coach through phone or email to set up a time when they can devote their full attention and time to you.

Further, you can ask yourself if what you want to discuss should be handled by your athlete. Give them the chance to address it before you jump in to solve something they can handle on their own. As middle and high schoolers they are working on their communication skills and independence, and this is a great opportunity for them to do that.

ALL ASHORE! WE ARE PRACTICING ON LAND

I signed my child up for rowing, why are they practicing on land?

Rowing on the water requires stamina, strength and proper technique. Weightlifting, running and rowing on ergs are all ways to build those skills. Training done on land goes a long way toward a positive experience on the water. Additionally, the land activities are where a lot of team bonding happens. Not to mention some good shenanigans!

What is this “erg” you mentioned? Why does my child refer to this as a “torture device”?

An ergometer, or “Erg”, is a rowing machine. When a rower says they are “erging”, they are working on the rowing machine. We have high tech machines that measure their time and how much power they are generating. Rowers become competitive with each other to beat erg times! When a rowers bests their “PR” personal record, they feel awesome about themselves.

If I wanted my child to row on a machine I could have joined a gym, why erg?

While the erg does not exactly replicate what a rower does on water, it does a good job helping the rower work on their technique and figure out how all the motions of rowing go together. They can start at their own pace and increase as they get better. Even better, the ergs help build that stamina and endurance they will need to race!

My child is now speaking in strings of numbers and k-somethings, and I feel so lost!

Don't worry, we didn't know what they were talking about when we first started either! Did they hop in the car and say something like, “We did 2ks and I bested my time by 8 seconds” or “Dear lord we had to do 6ks and I think I am going to die from the last 500”?

Maybe we can help you understand: If your child says a number followed by a “k” - they are rowing that number of kilometers (we measure in kilometers or meters in the rowing world). So doing a 6k means they are rowing 6 kilometers. The time they row is measured in minutes, seconds and tenths of a second. Yes, we must go that small because sometimes a race is won or lost by tenths. Just be encouraging to your rower and know they are working their tails off, even inside!

TIME TO HIT THE WATER FOR PRACTICE

Safety, both on and off the water, is stressed throughout the program. All participants must know how to swim. A swim test is administered at the high school for all athletes to assess their abilities. All rowing shells on the water are accompanied by a coach in a motor launch which contains sufficient life jackets for all participants. Rowing shells are exempt by Federal Law from requiring life jackets and other devices in the shell. Athletes are instructed what to do in the event of a boat flipping. This does not happen often, but they are taught how to handle the situation if it ever does. A First Aid Kit and AED is housed in the boathouse at all times for most minor injuries. .

Athletes should NOT drink water from the river and should refrain from touching their faces until their hands have been washed. There is running water in the boathouse to wash with.

As previously stated, spring training begins on land because it is too cold to go on water. The docks are put in the water once all ice has cleared and coaches have determined it is safe.

Athletes will arrive at the boathouse with enough time to do a warm up on land, usually consisting of a short distance run and stretching activities. From there they will bring all boats, oars and equipment down to the docks to launch on water. Some practices they are able to get out on the water earlier than others.

Practice lineups are typically determined in advance, so it is expected your child will be at practice. As mentioned before, if you know your child will not be at practice it is required for him/her to contact the coach to let them know of their absence. Excused absences include: fevers, vomiting, diarrhea, excessive cold symptoms. Boatmates depend on each other to be at every practice. Attendance requirements will be reviewed at the beginning of each season at parent and athlete meetings. Both athletes and parents are expected to sign a paper acknowledging their receipt and understanding of the attendance policy.

Inside, outside, warm days, cold days, wet days, what should my athlete wear???

Athletes work on the water in all kinds of weather. Rain, sun, sometimes some snow flies, rowers must be prepared for it all! Stock up on socks! Specifically, black socks!! Rowers walk on gravel, dirt, wet docks and inside the boat bays. They will have dirty feet!!! Be prepared with at least two pairs of socks for each practice.

Layers will be your child's friend!! For those who like to wear them, spandex shorts are perfect for the boats and indoor training. Athletes are free to wear running shorts as well, but the spandex is less likely to get caught in the seat mechanisms when they are in boats. Comfortable shirts that are not too long. Long shirts will also get caught in the boats. Also, go for dri-fit, wicking material versus cotton. Trust us, your rower will be more comfortable.

Sunny? Sunglasses (not expensive ones, in case they fall in the river) and hats or visors are recommended. Don't forget the sunscreen!

Rain? (Yes, we row in the rain!) Tighter fitting windbreakers or pullovers. Full raincoats are generally not recommended. Coats can get in the way of a good stroke and make rowing harder. Cold? Warm hats and warm layers!!!

Seasoned rowers are good sources of information on what works well for them. It may take some trial and error for your rower to find what works for them.

It's always a good idea to have a change of clothes with them for days they get wet. Getting wet in a water sport? No way!

SPECIAL EVENTS and TRADITIONS

Pasta Parties

Families are welcome to host a "pasta party" at their home for their child's team, including coaches. Modified and Varsity have their own parties. Sometimes because of numbers the Varsity team will split the girls and boys teams. Pasta parties are traditionally held the night before a race. Pasta is commonly served for dinner because it is recommended to "load up on carbs" the day before a race. This is a great time for the kids to spend time together away from the boathouse. It is expected that parties will end relatively early as the rowers need to be well-rested and up early the next day for racing. A small donation of about \$5.00 is requested to assist the host family with the cost of the meal. It may be helpful to plan hosts at the beginning of the season.

Social Team-Building Events

Teams will occasionally gather with their coaches to do something fun together such as rock climbing, laser tag and the like, particularly in the winter months.

Fall and Spring Banquets

A banquet for team members and their families is held at the end of each season. The spring banquet is more formal with presentations of awards and gifts. Both banquets have a slide show of the season's highlights.

BE REGATTA READY!

How long are regattas?

In a word, long. Regattas can be two or three days long, or as short as a day. They typically begin very early in the morning and last until the sun goes down. How long you spend at the regatta on a given day depends on if they are a Modified or Varsity rower and how many races they are entered in. Varsity rowers are expected to be at regattas all day. Modified rowers are often allowed to leave after their races are complete for the day and their equipment has been loaded.

How does my child get to the regatta?

This depends on the season. For Fall regattas it is the parent's responsibility to transport their child to and from the regatta site. Spring season we typically have a district bus to transport rowers from the high school to and from the venue for local races. The coach will tell the athletes the exact time they need to be at the school to get the bus, but it is typically between 5:30 - 6 am. When we travel out of town during spring we try to rent vans to transport as many athletes as possible. If an athlete needs to leave the regatta site earlier than the scheduled time, they must let their coach know ahead of time and the athlete must be signed out by their parent.

Because modified athletes typically do not have as many races as varsity, and because they often start later, they may be allowed to arrive at the racing venue at a different time. This does not always happen, but is a possibility.

How do I know when my child races?

Race schedules are sent out in the week prior to the event. It is not uncommon for racing schedules to change right up until the day of racing, so it is not necessarily set in stone.

Will my child always race?

It is the goal of the coaches, and the association, that every rower is able to race for regattas. There are however circumstances where this may not happen. One example is new rowers, especially Modified rowers, who may not be ready for racing. There are a number of skills they must have in order to be successful and complete a race safely, including putting the boat in the water, navigating to the starting line, steering during the race, navigating to the docks, and taking the boat out of the water. It takes weeks, and sometimes months, of on water practice to acquire those skills. **If the coach feels a racer/boat is not ready to race, or there are any safety concerns, they will not race.** This means that should weather conditions be unfavorable a newer boat may not race. We know this can be very disappointing and hard to understand, but athlete safety is always the first priority. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your athlete please set up a time to speak with their coach.

How many races will my child be entered in?

There are a wide variety of categories and boats that race all day. Sometimes we have college and masters level along with Modified and Varsity boats. Typically each rower will have two races. Sometimes they may even have only one race. Rowers must prepare to launch an hour before their scheduled race and depending on length of race and distance to the starting line, they may launch up to 45 minutes before their scheduled start time.

What is my child doing all day if they are only racing once or twice?

Athletes help each other get boats ready, carry equipment and shoes to and from the docks. Athletes are responsible for the loading and unloading of all racing shells and equipment. Come watch them load a boat trailer, it is no easy feat! There is also down time where they are encouraged to rest, especially if they have another race later in the day. Athletes can be found playing games, reading, sleeping or visiting vendors.

I heard you can buy merch at these events, is that true?

Yes! Every event has someone selling shirts, at the very least. More often than not there are many things for sale. At some of the bigger events there are many tents with merchandise unique to the event and general crew merchandise. Depending on the venue and the event there may be vendors there with food.

You said they are going to be there all day, does that mean I have to pack them a cooler of food?

NOPE! Included with your registration fee is a food tent fee. This covers the cost of purchasing food for ALL ATHLETES. Breakfast, lunch and healthy snacks are provided for both Modified and Varsity rowers on the day of the race. Occasionally the food committee will ask parents to make a dish for race day that is not easily made on site. We have griddles for breakfast sandwiches, chicken, burders, hot dogs. The menu changes depending on weather and season. Rowers should bring a water bottle, labeled! They are also welcome to bring their own meals and snacks if that is what they or you prefer. Please let the food committee know if your child has any allergies or restrictions!

How do we get results??

Every race has a results board to update coaches, athletes and parents when races are made official. Some events now have Twitter feeds and/or online links for real time racing and results coverage. That information should be available through the event's website.

How do we watch a race?

Have you heard that crew is not a great spectator sport? Well, crew is not always a great spectator sport. Depending on the venue you may or may not have access to the finish line. Further, some venues restrict access to athletes and coaches only. For that reason we highly recommend bringing a pair of binoculars and hope for the best. Sometimes venues, Saratoga being one, have a bridge where people often stand to watch the finish line. You will most likely never see the start of the race, as boats are typically launched near the finish line and must row to the starting line which can be a few miles away. What a work out!

What does one bring to a regatta?

At the end of the handbook you will find a regatta packing list for both athletes and their families. Talk to other families for "tricks" they have learned along the way. You will find what works for you after going to a few of your own. Just know, you likely will not "travel light" to any of the events! Key items: chairs, rain gear, snacks and water bottles for yourself, cowbells and noise makers to help cheer your athlete on!

You said to be prepared for all kinds of weather, how cold does it have to be to call off races? Racing conditions can be challenging at any time, but particularly at the beginning of spring and toward the end of fall. We have raced in temperatures down into the 30's with snow

falling. In those conditions rowers are required to wear multiple layers of clothing, with hats, and must have all skin covered.

Hypothermia, though rare, can happen. If an athlete gets wet, they may experience this and should get immediate attention. An EMS area is available at each regatta. Athletes and parents should familiarize themselves with the location upon arrival. Rowers should notify their coach immediately if they think they are in any danger.

NUTRITION

Rowing is very physically demanding and requires that athletes burn many calories. Rowers need to eat well to replace nutrients and fluids. They should drink water to hydrate well throughout the day and should eat a healthy lunch. After practice you may find that your athlete is “starving”. A snack of some chocolate milk provides some protein and carbohydrates that they need to function well. They should eat a dinner with healthy amounts of protein, vegetables, some fat and carbohydrates. You will probably find that their appetite increases markedly after the season starts and may abate shortly after the season is done.

HELPFUL HINTS

“Crew time” is a term that characterizes the unique way time is kept in the world of crew. Events don’t always happen when they are scheduled, or in the timeframe in which they were anticipated. This is not due to a lack of desire or responsibility on anyone’s part, but is rather part of the nature of the sport. So many events are interdependent on one another, particularly at regattas, that in order for each race to take place, many individuals have to fulfill their duties in succession. Please keep the “big picture” in mind while you patiently wait for your child’s race to begin.

REGATTA TIPS AND PACKING

The weather conditions can change abruptly and the planned racing schedule can be altered drastically as a result. Always plan for the unexpected with rain gear, extra dry clothes, socks, shoes or boots, hats, gloves, snacks, water.

At many regattas, but not all, food vendors and rowing vendor tents may be available. It is a good idea to bring cash, as some vendors do not accept credit cards. Remember, for planning and logistical reasons, the team food tent is for the athletes, not the parents or siblings. Many families pack their own meals and snacks in coolers for the day.

Feel free to encourage your athlete, but please don’t distract them just before their race or during times that they need to attend meetings. Also, try not to distract our coaches during a regatta. They are trying to keep track of a million things at once, including race schedules, boat and crew

locations, last minute race changes, safety concerns, changing weather conditions, etc. All of these things with regard to and in addition to... your athlete.

WHAT TO BRING TO A REGATTA:

ATHLETES - LABEL EVERYTHING!!! You will be surprised (or not) the number of kids who are unaware of what items they own!!

Large Reusable water bottle

Uniform

Crew Bag - investing in a water proof bag is a GREAT idea!!

Extra dry clothes and socks - insist on this one

Plastic garbage bag for muddy days (to put the crew bag in) if they do not have a waterproof bag

Plastic bag for wet clothes

Small towel to dry off with

Sunscreen

Hand wipes

Pillow and blanket to rest with

Warm clothes, gloves hat

Rain gear

Prescription medications

****Athletes are responsible for their own electronics****

PARENTS

Sunscreen

Blanket

Folding chairs

Food

Hand wipes and hand sanitizer (we are usually using port-a-potties and well, you know what they are like!)

Water

Binoculars

Camera

Layers of clothing

Rain gear - coat, poncho, hat

Hat for the sun

Sunglasses

Chapstick

BOOTS for muddy days

Extra socks in case YOUR feet get wet

Cash - Some vendors do not take credit cards

****Several families have found wagons are helpful for hauling gear from cars to our team site.**

There are many different models out there, but we recommend one that can handle mud!

