

ETHS



EST. 2022

ROWING



**NEW ROWER HANDBOOK
SPRING 2025**



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OUR MISSION, VISION, AND GOALS:

Welcome to the ETHS Rowing program, where our core mission is to enhance diversity, equity, and access in the sport. Rowing has long been exclusive, even within our local community, but we are determined to break down barriers and provide opportunities for student-athletes of all backgrounds to feel welcomed and able to succeed in our sport. Our ETHS Rowing Family is committed to challenging the historical inequities of rowing, creating an inclusive team that reflects the Evanston population, and giving youth in the community a place in this sport regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, or ability to pay.

Our ultimate goal is to give athletes the opportunity to cultivate lifelong skills in a safe, fun, and competitive setting. Rowing and coxing require athletes to lead, cooperate, persevere, and to push themselves and each other to meet a collective goal. Rowing has no star players: everyone in the boat is equally important and must work together as one unit. Each athlete is paramount to the success of the collective group. In this dynamic, athletes learn, grow, and develop as both individuals and as teammates. Rowing is a challenging yet fun and rewarding sport you can do for a lifetime!

If this all speaks to you, "hands on!" We are very happy to have you aboard.

Go Kits!

Luciana Ruiz
Head Coach
Club Girls
RuizL@eths202.org

Evan Miller
Assistant Coach, Club Boys

Jake LaPres
Assistant Coach, Varsity Boys

Jackson Lifford
Assistant Coach, Varsity Girls

Alexander Jimenez
Assistant Coach, Varsity Boys & Girls

Henry Roberts
Assistant Coach, Club Boys & Girls



ETHS ROWING OVERVIEW

TEAM AND SEASONS

The sport of rowing has two broad classifications: sculling boats and sweep boats. In sculling boats, each rower has two oars, and boats can be 1, 2, or 4 rowers. In sweep boats, each rower has one larger oar, half on the left/port side, half on right/starboard. At the juniors (high school) level, sweep boats are most commonly coxed with 4 rowers (4+) or 8 rowers (8+). **Our team is made up entirely of sweep rowing in 4's and 8's.**

ROWERS are the athletes in the boats with oars in their hands, naturally.

The **COXSWAIN** (pronounced "coxen") is the non-rowing member of a boat who is responsible for steering, commanding, and communicating with the boat's rowers. They are as important to the team as the rowers.

Our primary racing season is spring, where we compete in high energy, side-by-side sprint races. While full year participation is not required, all spring athletes must complete either fall season or pre-season winter training.

The ETHS Rowing Club is open to all genders, with student-athletes split between girl's and boy's teams and by experience level. The Club is comprised of four total teams - girl's club, boy's club, girl's varsity, and boy's varsity. Teams may practice together throughout the week, and training plans are tailored by their respective coaches. Athletes with questions on which team to tryout for should reach out to Head Coach.

TRYOUTS

Fall tryouts are hosted in August and are aligned with the IHSA Fall Sports' start dates. Spring Varsity tryouts will be held from March 11th-15th. Full attendance for tryouts is required to be considered for a varsity roster spot.

Note that tryouts are only held for the varsity level - the club level is no-cut and does not have a tryout.

To row in the Spring at any level, either Fall rowing or Winter training experience is required to join for Spring season.

As a requirement of participation, all Rowing Club student-athletes are evaluated on their swimming abilities in the Water Safety Test during tryout period before going on the water to ensure they can safely participate with their current swim skills.



ETHS ROWING OVERVIEW

CONTINUED

PRACTICES

ETHS Rowing practices 5-6 days per week, 2 hours per day, and take place at ETHS in the rowing room (N218), and the Dammich Rowing Center Boathouse (3220 Oakton St, Skokie). *See more on page 10.*

REGATTAS

The regattas, or races, are a culmination of our hard work and teamwork. USRowing race divisions are separated into mens/womens, rowing level (e.g., novice, junior, varsity), and number of athletes in the boat (e.g., 4+, 8+). There are two types of races:

Head Races typically occur during the fall season. They are longer endurance races — 4000-6000m (about 2.5 to 3.75 miles) — and 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 racing line the coxswain takes. In a head race regatta, teams will row the course just once.

Sprint Races typically occur during the spring season and are 1500m - 2000m long (1600m = 1 mile). The race course will be a straight line divided into 6 to 8 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. In sprint regattas, teams will often have time trials in order to move forward, and there are leveled tiers in the finals. *See more about races on page 12.*



COMMITMENT

Student-athletes who make the Rowing Club teams are expected to prioritize rowing as their primary in-season sport. Given the physically demanding nature of the sport we recommend student-athletes do not participate in other in-season sports.

- ▶ Athletes rowing at a varsity level are expected to attend all assigned practices, club athletes have slightly more flexibility depending on other conflicts but are beholden to the same communication expectations outlined below
- ▶ TEAM first. Always communicate with head coach
- ▶ All expected absences must be communicated to a coach via email at least 24 hours in advance
 - >>> Unexpected absences impact the boat's ability to go out
 - >>> All expected absences must be communicated to a coach via email at least 24 hours in advance
- ▶ Unexcused absence at school = ineligible to practice
- ▶ Phones should be away during practice and are not allowed on the water

ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

ETHS requires all active athletes to be in good academic standing in order to participate. ETHS Rowing not only follows that lead, but is a club that believes strongly in a holistic approach to wellbeing, including athletes' school responsibilities:

- ▶ Passing 5 classes from previous semester is requirement for eligibility
- ▶ GPA drops below 2.0, student on Academic Watchlist
 - >>> Athlete is required to go to Monday morning academic support
- ▶ Study Table is eligibility warning (Monday – Saturday, reported Friday)
 - >>> C- or below in two classes
 - >>> Require 3 academic supports for following week
 - >>> Miss the 3 academic supports during the week, ineligible for following week
- ▶ Students on Detention Probation are not allowed to participate in sports until detentions are cleared
 - >>> Clearing tardy detentions: <https://tinyurl.com/3yh9kbtF>
 - >>> Academic Resources can be found here: <https://www.eths.k12.il.us/Page/1102>
 - >>> Consistently academic ineligibility without proper attendance at academic supports may impact boating decisions at any level



ETHS ROWING

PARTICIPATION CONTINUED

SAFETY

Naturally safety is the highest priority, and we follow the same safety policies as Northwestern Crew; ETHS Rowing expectations include:

- ▶ Every rower completes a swim test annually, to be recorded via writing and certified by a lifeguard.
- ▶ All new team members must watch the USRowing Safety Video and pass the brief safety exam before going on the water
- ▶ Coaches bring at least one life jacket per athlete, plus a bag of safety equipment (bailer, space blankets, tools for rapid shell repair) in the coaching launch, and wear kill switches when operating a motor launch
- ▶ No rowing when outdoor conditions are unsafe (lightning, wind speed above 23mph, water temperature below 35F)

WATER SAFETY TEST

- ▶ **100 meter swim and 10 minutes of treading water** is the Benchmark indicates that an athlete's swimming skills allows them to safely row on larger bodies of water and race at high rates and speeds
 - >>> This is an annual test
- ▶ **50 meter swim and 5 minutes of treading water** is the minimum standard is considered safe for rowers who will only row at North Channel in Skokie, IL
 - >>> These team members will be tested seasonally
 - >>> These team members must wear a low profile life jacket for all competitions
 - >>> These team members are encouraged to meet the team Benchmark within 1 year
- ▶ Athletes who do not pass the swim minimum must wear a low profile life jacket for all practices and any competitions. Athletes will be re-tested each season
- ▶ Athletes who do not respect safety protocols will be dismissed



ETHS ROWING

PARTICIPATION

CONTINUED

PARENTS-ATHLETE-COACH RELATIONSHIP

ETHS Rowing is a safe space for the athletes to reach their potential, become empowered through hard work and effort, and have a real feeling of family. Communication is important.

- ▶ We encourage self-advocacy by asking that athletes come to coach first with questions or concerns.

- ▶ There will be hard days. Families, encourage your student to keep coming and keep trying.
 - >>> Learning to take feedback and constructive criticism
 - >>> The importance of showing up for yourself and your team
 - >>> Pushing through difficult conditions (hard workouts, unpleasant weather, being tired)

- ▶ Parents and guardians, please know you can come to your child's primary coach with questions. We welcome you to communicate with their respective coach on how our coaching staff can better support your student.



EQUIPMENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Rowing equipment looks sturdy, but carbon fiber is very fragile and easy to break. As we are a new club, we are presently borrowing all of our equipment, and an 8+ shell is \$35,000 to \$55,000, a pair of oars is \$500. Needless to say, we absolutely can not be lax in our treatment of this equipment. A coach will supervise all equipment movements (boats, launches, oars), even if a coxswain is directing the movement.

Equipment negligence has consequences. If a Coach sees willful negligence with any equipment, the coach reserves the right to pull the athlete from water practice for a week. Negligence includes:

- ▶ Dropping a boat
- ▶ Dropping a launch
- ▶ Hitting a boat on another boat's riggers
- ▶ Stepping over the seat

The whole boat does 100 jumpees if a Coach sees inattentive negligence including:

- ▶ Stepping over the deck
- ▶ Dropping oars
- ▶ Talking while carrying the boat



ETHS ROWING TRAINING

TIMES AND LOCATIONS

ETHS Rowing practices 5-6 days per week, 2 hours per day, and take place at ETHS in the rowing room (N218), and the Dammrich Rowing Center Boathouse (3220 Oakton St, Skokie). The schedule can fluctuate from season to season; the Head Coach will be very clear at the beginning of the season about which days and times practice will take place.

TRAINING

ON THE WATER PRACTICE means the team will be fetching the equipment from the boathouse and bringing it down to the dock to row in the channel parallel to McCormick Blvd. After practice the team then takes everything back up to the boathouse and puts it away. When on the water, the coaches glide alongside the team's rowing shell in a motorized boat or "launch."

Water practice runs rain or shine, and no matter the temperature — the only weather elements that impede going on the water are lightning, low temperatures, and high winds for the safety of our student-athletes. Be sure to come to practice prepared in/with proper dress and/or layers. **Do not wear loose-fitting clothing as it will get caught up in the oar and/or seat slide track.**

If something has changed with your schedule and you will be late or absent, contact the coach as soon as possible; boats can be delayed or not be able to go out at all due to an unexpected absence. **The Team relies on everyone's clear and prompt communication. Sustained absences will impact an athlete's placement in the boat.**

DRY LAND PRACTICE includes stretching, using the indoor rowers (also known as ergometer/"ergs"), weight training, and running. Some of these training elements are on set days, some vary dependent on the coaches training plan.



ETHS ROWING

PRACTICES

CONTINUED

EXPECTATIONS

Rowing is physically and mentally demanding; make sure to be well-rested, and try to eat a healthy diet of more proteins and less fats. Also:

- ▶ Be on time
- ▶ Bring water (when on the water, if your bottle is metal, put it in a sock so you don't scratch the boat)
- ▶ Dress for the weather if you are going to be on the water
- ▶ Whether you are on the water or on the ergs, do not wear loose-fitting clothing, as it will get stuck in the seat slides

Again, some days, practice will be tough. The team still requires your focus, good attitude, and fortitude. Your hard work and effort will always pay off in the big picture. Again, there are no star players in rowing and no one can "phone it in;" the team needs everyone to be fully present.



ETHS ROWING

REGATTAS

Each fall and spring season we participate in several scrimmages (small, friendly, local race competitions that are not part of USRowing schedule) and regattas. The Varsity squads can expect to compete in at least 2 or more regattas each season, the Club squads' number of regattas is dependent on the dedication and consistency of attendance of the club athletes.

Some regattas are close enough to drive to and return from on the same day. Others races require travel with hotel stays. It is ETHS Rowing's mission to keep our club accessible to all by not putting racing expenses (uniforms, food, and travel) on the rowing families, relying on fundraising rather than financial gatekeeping.

The regattas are an exciting and fun culmination of the team's hard work, and they are special times to relish together. The night before regattas, ETHS Rowing has a tradition of spaghetti dinner (team and coaches only), followed by the team traveling to the regatta together the next day.

EXPECTATIONS

ROWERS

The ETHS Handbook/Code of Conduct policies are in effect for race trips. Please read and be familiar with it. There is zero tolerance for swearing and unsportsmanlike conduct. Race organizers reserve the right to exclude and/or disqualify any crew who demonstrates inappropriate behavior. Let's make a good name for ourselves in the rowing community.

When the team travels, there will be strict evening curfews and wake up times, which the coaches enforce personally.

Like practice, races run rain or shine, and no matter the temperature. The only weather elements that can impede a race from happening are related to safety concerns — lightning and high winds — so be sure to be prepared while packing. Here is a general packing list for regattas:

- ▶ A cooperative team-centric attitude
- ▶ Uniform
- ▶ STUDENT ID (or printed copy; NO digital copies)
- ▶ Water bottle



ETHS ROWING

REGATTAS

CONTINUED

- ▶ Spending money for merch, snacks
- ▶ Blanket and/or Pillow and/or Sleeping bag (all optional)
- ▶ Long sleeves
- ▶ Coat or sweatshirt
- ▶ Raingear
- ▶ Hat
- ▶ Underwear
- ▶ Sunglasses
- ▶ Toiletries
- ▶ Shoes that slip off easy (when getting on and off the boat at the dock)
- ▶ Gym shoes
- ▶ Socks, extra socks
- ▶ Preferred snacks
- ▶ EpiPens if you need them, Medications, Tylenol/Advil
- ▶ Phone chargers
- ▶ Stuff to do in between races: Books, Bracelet-making supplies, Drawing supplies, Any other supplies for any other hobbies you have

PARENTS

Most regattas are away from Evanston making it difficult for the ETHS community to support the team, so rowing families' support is that much more important. Additionally, there are many elements to cover during regattas — setting up the team's hospitality tent, having supplies on hand, food procurement and setup for the team, subsequent clean up, etc — all of which we rely on parent volunteers, not coaches. And believe it or not, it's fun! Not to mention a great way to meet other parents in the ETHS Rowing family. Reach out to us at ethsrowingparents@gmail.com.



ETHS ROWING

REGATTAS

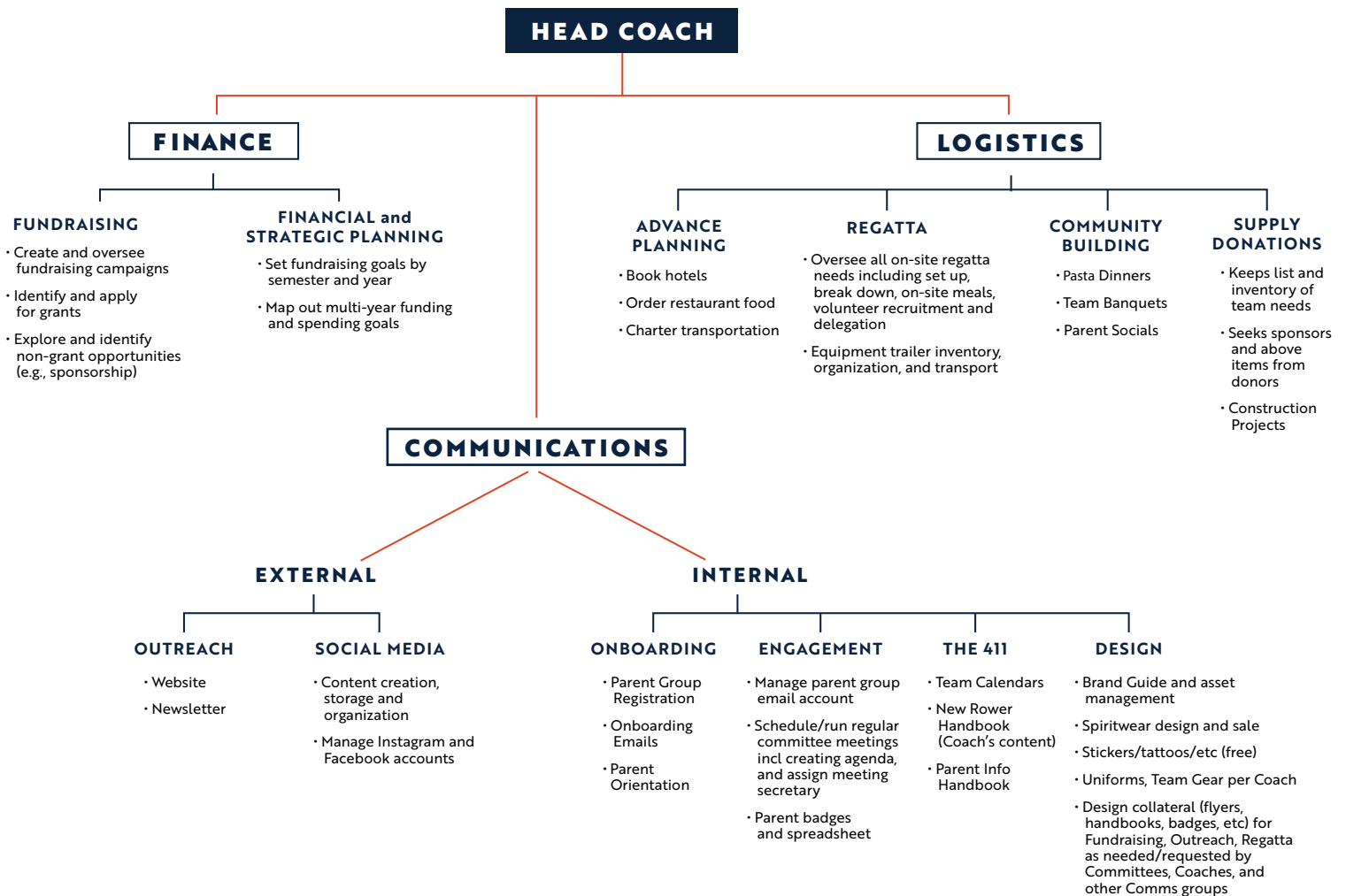
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- ▶ Prior to a race, rowers are getting themselves mentally prepared for the physical effort required of rowing. Please try not to disrupt their concentration during this time. If you would like to have rowers pose for a picture, please do so after the race. Please do not attend coaches' meetings with the team unless you have been invited by the coach.
- ▶ No parent should be anywhere near the trailer or the team prior to a race or immediately afterward without the permission of the Head Coach. The trailer area should be considered the team's locker room, and access outside of the team is discouraged.
- ▶ Unless there are specific reasons requiring early departure which have been approved by the coach in advance of the regatta, all rowers are expected to stay to support all boats throughout the regatta, and assist with trailering boats and equipment after all team races conclude.



SUPPORTING THE CLUB PARENT COMMITTEES

As a new club, there is much to get up and running. By taking every task except for coaching off the plates of our coaches, they are able to focus on the kids and building the team. Below are the committees we have developed to help out our coaches; please know that being on a committee doesn't mean you are expected to do all the work for that category — we are all here to help — committees are simply the leads, coming up with ideas, ensuring that category gets addressed and done. There's plenty to do! So we encourage parents to please pitch in. You can reach out to our Parent Group at ethsrowingparents@gmail.com to join any of these teams.





ROWING BASICS

TERMINOLOGY | CALLS + PHRASES

It is not enough that you are joining a community in which the athletes face backwards, you are also about to add a whole new world of names, words, and phrases to your vocabulary! Terms below are divided by when they may occur. Now, "one foot in..."

CALLS BY THE COXSWAIN WHILE TEAM IS MOVING THE BOAT ON LAND

"Hands on." Grab onto the boat and prepare to move it

"Up an inch. Ready. Up." Used when lifting the boat off racks or slings, or adjusting the boat's position on the trailer

"Up and over heads. Ready. Up." Used when lifting the boat off shoulder to go into the water, or off slings or water to go on shoulders

"Show 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.

"Toes to the edge." Rowers holding boat put their toe/foot to the edge of the dock in preparation to roll boat down to the water from overhead

"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 on the dock.

"Heads up!" A command given LOUDLY to alert those standing nearby to watch out. This is always used when someone might not see your shell coming at them. Can be combined with a specific alert e.g., "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 BASICS

CALLS + PHRASES CONT.

CALLS BY THE COXSWAIN WHILE THE TEAM/BOAT IS ON THE WATER

“One foot in. And in.” In preparation to get in the boat, full crew puts the foot adjacent the boat into the boat ON THE WHITE STRIPE, NOT BOTTOM OF THE SHELL at the same time, keeping the other foot on the dock, then with “And in” call, all drop into their seats at the same time, again, do not put weight into the bottom of the boat, weight on the deck.

“Count down from bow when ready.” Once in the boat, starting at bow (or 1), rowers call out their seat number when they are ready to shove off (feet secured in stretchers, etc)

“Push/Shove off in two. One, two, shove.” Full crew pushes off the dock with the dockside hand at the same time (while also holding oar steady on the water with other hand)

“Feather blades” Oar blade is oriented flat, parallel to the water surface

“Sit ready at the catch/finish/start” All rowers (or identified rowers) sitting up at the position said by the coxswain

“Square your blades.” or “Squared and buried” Oar blades “squared” perpendicular to the water surface; buried is in the water, ready to start stroke

“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 (or check) on port/starboard.” Having only one side square their oars in the water 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. Also there can be a light check

“Roll up.” Squaring of the blade during the stroke during the recovery before putting the blade in the water

“Let it run.” All rowers stop rowing and let their oars glide OFF the water in a feathered position at arms away (not the same as weigh-enough!)



ROWING BASICS

CALLS + PHRASES CONT.

“Weigh-enough.” (sounds like ‘waynuf’) All rowers stop rowing and let their oars rest on the water in a feathered position

“Back it.” 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/s takes a light ‘arms and body’ stroke

“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.” As the boat floats in to the dock, full crew leans their bodies away from the dock and lifts their blades so as to not hit equipment on 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



ROWING BASICS TERMINOLOGY | VOCABULARY

VOCAB IN THE BOAT

Blade The wide flat part of the oar that contacts the water

Bow Forward section of the shell /the part of the shell which crosses the finish line first

Collar Ring around the sleeve of the oar that is moved to adjust the load on the oar and relative length of handle; stops the oar from sliding through 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 (pronounced "gunnel")

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 to the coxswain/when looking towards the bow, right to the rowers

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

Rudder The small, movable 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; not the same as the rudder

Sleeve The plastic cover around the oar shaft that holds the collar

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/passes the finish line last; the direction the crew faces

Stretcher or Foot Stretcher Adjustable platform with shoes for rowers to place feet

Tracks The set of runners set inside the shell to accept the wheels on the bottom of each rowers seat



ROWING BASICS JARGON

ROWING JARGON

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

Bow Seat The rower in the first seat (1 Seat), farthest from the coxswain

Bow Pair The rowers in 1 and 2 Seats; this pair sets or balances the boat

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

Catching a Crab Slang for when a blade gets trapped in the water by the momentum of the shell because a rower accidentally failed to clear the water on the recovery stroke; usually from digging the oar too deeply in the water

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

Finish The end of the drive in the stroke cycle; rower is leaning back, arms are in, legs are extended

Layback The rowers' act of leaning back toward the bow during the stroke; layback should not be more than a few degrees past vertical

Middle Crew In an 8+ boat, the rowers in the 3-6 Seats, in a 4+boat, Seats 2-3; often referred to as the engine of the boat

Piece A term referring to any period of work performed in the rowing shell; might be a 10 minute piece, 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

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

Rowing it in the incorrect action of missing water when your blade isn't in the water at the end of the recovery/top of the catch

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



Rush A technical error caused by sliding too quickly and abruptly toward the stern 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

Set The balance of the boat; this is a result /indicator of good rowing technique and unity of the entire boat

Skying the incorrect action of carrying the hands/oar handle too low during 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 Rate The number of strokes per minute (also called rate)

Stroke Seat The rower who sits closest to the stern of the boat (8 Seat); stroke seat sets the rhythm for the boat, all rowers behind the stroke must follow their cadence

Stern Pair Rowers in 7 and 8 seats

Swing Occurs when the entire crew is moving perfectly in unison from the hips, and the shell seems to be moving very fast without much effort

Tap Out/tap down The hands make a small tap downwards, to lift the blades clear of the water at the finish

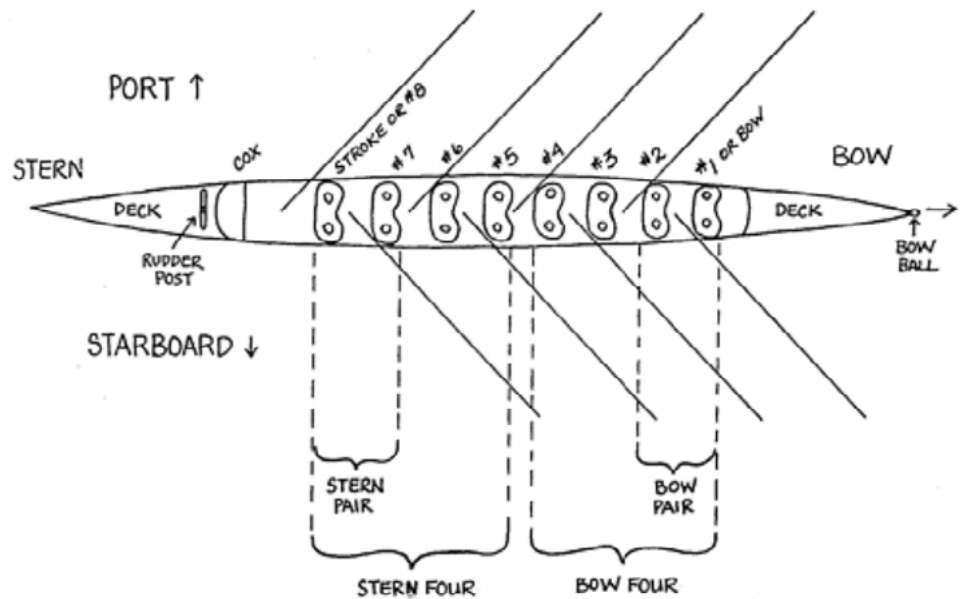
Washing out When the blade comes out of the water during the drive, creating white, foamy surface waves, losing power, and unsteading the shell



ROWING BASICS

PARTS OF THE BOAT

This is a top-view of an 8+ sweep shell. In this drawing, the boat is traveling to the right, bow first, but rowers are facing the stern on the drawing's left. The coxswain is seated in the stern facing the rowers, and Seat 8, or Stroke Seat, is setting the rowing cadence for the boat; everyone is following Stroke Seat's rowing timing.



This is a front-view of a sweep rower (like the boat shown above) detailing the parts of the oar. In this image, the rower is rowing away from you.

