



Nashville Juniors Rowing

New Family Guidebook



Welcome to the world of rowing! This quick guide is designed for the novice rower's parent and is meant to complement the www.nashvillerowing.org website. The website should be the first source of current information including calendars, fees, club contacts, and other valuable information.

Practices

Location

Fall/Spring: Practices are usually held at Hamilton Creek Marina off Bell Road (GoogleMap "Nashville Rowing" to get the accurate location). Rowers are encouraged to arrive at least 15 minutes early to help set up. This allows for maximum time on the water.

When weather does not permit (significant rain, wind, lightning), practice will be held at Harpeth Hall erg room or other alternate locations that the coaches communicate. The RainedOut text messaging system is used to alert rowers and parents to schedule changes. A link to this messaging system will be provided by the coaches. Information will also come via Twitter, Facebook and email notifications. Rower safety is of primary importance and any practice change reflects this concern. This call will be communicated by 12:30pm on the day of practice for weekdays, and before 8am on the weekends.

Winter: There will be a team email about Winter Training details in October - please wait until after that point to ask questions. Practices will be held in the erg room and, at times, the weight room at Harpeth Hall, as well as the weight room in St. Cecilia Academy. Winter training usually begins after Thanksgiving and lasts until late February/early March. If weather permits, the more experienced boats may get on the water on the weekends during the winter months.

Summer: There will be a team email about summer plans in February and/or March - please wait until after that point to ask questions. Every summer, a variety of programs are offered for junior athletes who are middle school or high school aged. These programs range from learn-to-row camps for novice rowers,

to small boats camps for competitive/experienced rowers, and elite training programs for the athletes who aspire to compete on the national/international level. Complete new athletes train at Hamilton Creek Marina. Athletes coming out of their Novice or Varsity years will train both on the water at Hamilton Creek Marina and in the weight/erg room at the St. Cecilia Academy.

Attendance

Rowing is a team sport requiring significant interdependence between boat mates. Accordingly, individual attendance is highly critical to team success. An entire crew of competitive rowers who has one teammate missing from a practice has, in effect, lost one day of practice. Minimizing missed practice days is of primary importance to team success.

If a rower must miss a practice, coaches must be contacted (by the athlete, not parent, unless they are too sick) by text or e-mail no later than 12 hours prior to practice unless the situation does not allow (i.e. illness). Appropriate notifications allow the coaches time to reevaluate all the boat line-ups and make switches in the most effective way for all boats. Remember that pulling one person from a boat to fill the absent boater's spot has a trickle down effect on the remaining boats within the program.

Spring Break: Nashville Rowing accommodates all the Spring break weeks of the counties (Davidson, Williamson, Sumner, etc) and private schools by having smaller morning practices for those on Spring break and then the regular time practices in the afternoon for everyone on the team. Most High School clubs go on Spring Break training trips but since we have so many different breaks, we have the two-a-days for those on break in order to expedite learning curves. If you miss more than half of your Spring Break practices, then your coach reserves the right to hold you out of the following regatta in order to accommodate those that are there for training and learning. This is not a punishment, but rather a consequence of missing time that others are not missing. The ability to earn back a seat is always available after the race.

Homework: We acknowledge that all of our rowers have school as a priority and all rowers have excessive amounts of homework. We encourage athletes to learn to manage time early on so as to be able to maintain a strong grade point average while participating in rowing. This is a life lesson, and one of many that will be taught through rowing. While we understand the strenuous scholastic schedule our athletes keep, we also know that teachers usually do not assign tests or projects with only 24 hours notice; therefore, skipping practice to study for a test or to complete a project will not be viewed as an excused absence. Learning to balance workload is a life skill that we expect from our athletes.

Timing

In the fall, practice for all high school rowers is from 4-6:30pm Monday thru Friday and 9:00-11:30 am on Saturdays. Coaches make every effort to return the rowers to the dock in a timely manner, but weather or other situations may result in later dismissal times. Also, after the end of practice “cheer” is complete, some athletes have a habit of waiting to shake their coach’s hand, ask questions, or speak with friends. If your athlete needs to leave promptly, please communicate with them to not stick around after the cheer.

Expect the practice session on the day before leaving for a regatta to be extended (1+ hour). On these days, rowers will have a short practice and then load the boat trailers. This is a time-consuming process but must be done in a safe and effective manner. This allows for safety of the rowers, the equipment, the towing vehicles and everyone on the highway! Every rower participates in regatta preparation.

Our last days of fall practice on the lake are vital to the program and may coincide with daylight saving time changes. Please know that every effort is taken to ensure the safety of our athletes and we will have lights on the boat. Your athlete can help by wearing reflective/high visibility clothing as the days get shorter. While every effort is made to get athletes to shore in a timely manner, there will be days when wind or other factors on the lake will produce delays. Please understand that our goal is always to end practice as close to the appointed time as possible, but exceptions will occur.

Winter practices are held during the same times as the fall schedule with some boats getting on the water on the weekends.

In the spring, the program is split into two groups: Developmental and Competitive. The Developmental group practices up to 5 days/week and the Competitive group continues at 6 days/week. The practice times remain the same as in the fall, and the coaches may allow athletes to schedule additional practices for those boats that would benefit from additional coaching, or which have earned additional competitive opportunities (regional/national competitions, etc.). Saturday Development practices are occasionally cancelled during racing season when the coaches are traveling with the Competitive team to the regattas.

Attire

Nashville Rowing now has required gear packs for both Competitive and Development athletes. Mandatory gear packs allow us to outfit the athletes in high quality, rowing-specific gear for a reasonable cost. For example, the Fall gear pack will cost the same amount as one Gore Tex jacket from the past season and the gear pack will outfit the rower for the season. Additional practice shirts may be purchased at the seasonal online store.

For general purposes, clothing for rowing should be synthetic, quick dry, and close fitting. Loose or baggy clothing can catch in the equipment. Spandex shorts are suggested for warm weather rowing and tights are recommended for cooler weather. Appropriate attire can be found at sporting good stores such as Dick's and The Academy as well as online. Socks should be worn at all times and synthetic and inexpensive is suggested as athletes will wear-out many pairs during their training. Supportive running shoes are required for pre-practice sprints. Sunglasses along with sunscreen are **STRONGLY** suggested. A towel with change of clothing is advised in case of unexpected swims!

Uniforms: The spandex unisuit, or "uni" in rowing slang, is the standard rowing uniform and will be included in the gear pack. As these are custom orders, please triple check the sizing. We will be measuring the athletes, but please double check the measurements! These orders **CAN NOT** be returned.

Gear pack and online orders will be delivered to the athlete at practice. Every effort will be made to make sure the athlete receives his/her order. If the athlete leaves Nashville Rowing and does not return to pick up the order, the order will be turned over to the Nashville Rowing Club after 30 days and the clothing then becomes the property of Nashville Rowing.

Preparation

Nutrition

Rowing is an intensive sport and solid sport nutrition is essential for the athlete. In the same vein as swimming and running, rowing is a "transportation" sport that uses your entire body each stroke. A varsity athlete could take 3,000+ full-body strokes each practice. This necessitates a consistent diet. Coaches encourage athletes to eat within 2 hours before practice, and immediately after practice while en route home to dinner (getting sustenance within 30 minutes of exercise is crucial and sometimes dinner is outside that window).

Hydration

Hydration with water is critical. Sports drinks are necessary during extensive training times or excessive temperatures, but in general, water should be the rower's mainstay.

Injuries

Like all competitive sports, injuries occur. Blisters on the hands are the norm, and these areas will eventually form protective calluses. Until this happens, blistered hands are painful. Keep the area clean with soap and water to prevent infection. Athletic tape may be used temporarily as a protective covering over the blisters. There are daily conditioning workouts so the usual issues with running (shin splints, blisters) should be considered. Overuse tendonitis is also possible as with any repetitive motion sports. The rower should always consult with coaches on any injuries. Communication between athletes and coaches is always important!

Regattas

Fall Rowing vs. Spring Rowing

Fall is an excellent time to begin as a novice rower as the focus is on learning the basic skills and refining these in the longer fall regattas. Races are 5,000m to 6,000m in distance and competing boats do not launch at the same time. Boats are timed from start to finish to determine racing results.

Our EARLY fall line-ups will have a primary focus on scholastic boats as the fall is considered our scholastic season. For races such as Music City Head Race, the Chattanooga Head Race, and Secret City Head Race our scholastic athletes will race for their schools, while the athletes that sign up individually will race for Nashville Juniors. This enables us to provide every athlete with the dream of rowing the ability to do it, as opposed to having athletes sit out due to lineup constraints. We are working to establish a late-October Tennessee State Scholastic Championship in rowing.

Our LATE fall line-ups will have a primary focus on club boats at the Head of the Charles Regatta in Boston and the Head of the Hooch in Chattanooga. Both of these races are select crews only as they are qualifying regattas for following years.

Spring begins the more intense competitive season with increased racing on weekends. Boat placement moves from a focus on scholastic teams to all

athletes participating as Nashville Rowing athletes. Spring races are shorter in distance (2,000m) and boats begin the heats together at the starting line, so spectators can gain a more accurate picture of racing results as the first to cross the finish line wins the heat. Spring racing season culminates with the USRowing Southeast Regional Championships for the team. The top boats then have the ability to qualify to compete in the Youth National Championships. It is a very exciting time for Nashville Rowing!

Boat Placement

Regattas are the competitive races held in Spring (2,000m) and Fall (5,000-6,000m). Regattas are an exciting time for the rowers. The line-up for each boat and each division is usually announced at the beginning of the week of the regatta. Rower placement within a boat is determined by a number of attributes including (but not in order):

1. Technical ability
2. Coachability
3. Attitude
4. Overall physical fitness
5. Instinct and intelligence
6. Quickness, agility, and balance
7. Height, weight, and speed
8. Strength and explosion
9. Character
10. Leadership and communication skills

All of these factors play a role in determining boat placement. The coaches invest in the rowers and parents are to trust their decision making process.

Middle schoolers are encouraged to participate in the indoor erg competition during winter training. Any exhibitions or other racing situations appropriate for the middle school team will be communicated by the coaches.

Transportation and Overnight Stays

Transportation to regattas is provided usually by chartered bus. Occasionally, return transport will be by carpool or parents and in this situation, the coaches will give parents/rowers advance notice. Transportation to Winter erg races are not provided by the team, as the coaches want to allow families the ability to arrive for their specific race and leave afterwards in order to not take over everyone's entire Saturday schedule. Erg races are staggered throughout the day and

coaches want to allow families the ability to arrive for a specific race and leave afterwards.

For most regattas, the crew will arrive the day before the regatta in order to have practice, hold boat meetings, enjoy team building situations and a good night of sleep. Hotel accommodations are provided by the club and room assignments will be made by the coaching staff. The athlete is expected to abide by the rules set by coaches and chaperones as per the behavior policy signed at the beginning of the season. If an individual chooses to break these rules, the coach has the right to pull the individual from the regatta.

Athletes will depart from and return to the Hamilton Sailboat Marina unless otherwise notified. Rowers are responsible for communicating with school officials/teachers as instructed by each school district regarding early dismissal or full day absence for regattas.

Typically, rower's meals and snacks will be provided once the rower has departed for the regatta and continue until regatta completion. Meals on the way home from the regatta will likely be at the rower's expense. Athletes will have a food tent and warm up area separate from the parents.

Unless there is a significant event, rowers should stay until all teammates have completed racing and the boat trailers are fully loaded. Rowers should let the Head Coach and Team Captains know if they are not riding the bus home. If a rower needs to leave prior to loading the trailers, this must be discussed and approved by the Head Coach.

An "arrival alert" will be communicated to athletes prior to return so that parents can have adequate time to meet the bus at the marina.

Athlete Packing List

- Uni (standard rower's uniform, required and sold by club)
- Long-sleeve compression shirt (required and sold by club)
- Running shoes
- Practice gear
- Clothing layers to stay warm and dry
- Rain jacket & pants (can be purchased through club)
- Water bottle
- Travel polo (required item, purchased through club)
- Extra socks
- Any specific food items not covered by Rowers Nutrition Committee

Parent Packing List

- Binoculars
- Chair or blanket
- Layered clothing
- Raingear
- Sunscreen
- Water and healthy snacks
- Racing sheet (provided by coaches via email)

Communication During Regatta

Give the coaches plenty of space. This is “game day” for them, and their focus is on your athlete's' success, not the athletes' families. Although it may not be readily apparent to an onlooker, the coaches have MANY factors to balance during a regatta. So, please be aware that this is not the time for lengthy questions and long discussions. Athletes will have limited time with parents during the day. You will hear all about the regatta when your athlete returns home!

Above all, support your athlete and enjoy the season!

Bow: The forward section of the boat. The first part of the boat to cross the finish line. The person in the seat closest to the bow, who crosses the finish line first.

Bow coxed boat: A shell in which the coxswain is near the bow instead of the stern. It's hard to see the coxswain in this type of boat, because only his head is visible. Having the coxswain virtually lying down in the bow reduces wind resistance, and the weight distribution is better.

Button: A wide collar on the oar that keeps it from slipping through the oarlock.

Coxswain: Person who steers the shell and is the on-the-water coach for the crew.

Deck: The part of the shell at the bow and stern that is covered with fiberglass cloth or a thin plastic.

Ergometer: Rowers call it an "erg." It's a rowing machine that closely approximates the actual rowing motion. The rowers' choice is the Concept II, which utilizes a flywheel and a digital readout so that the rower can measure his "strokes per minute" and the distance covered.

FISA: Short for Federation Internationale des Societes d'Aviron. The international governing body for the sport of rowing in the world, established in 1892.

Gate: The bar across the oarlock that keeps the oar in place.

German rigging: A different way of setting up which side of the boat the oars are on in a sweep boat. Instead of alternating from side to side all the way down, in a German rigged boat, two consecutive rowers have oars on the same side.

Lightweight: Refers to the rowers, not the boats; there is a maximum weight for each rower in a lightweight event as well as a boat average.

Oar: Used to drive the boat forward: rowers do not use paddles.

Port: Left side of the boat, while facing forward, in the direction of the movement.

Power 10: A call for rowers to do 10 of their best, most powerful strokes. It's a strategy used to pull ahead of a competitor.

Repechage: The second-chance race which ensures that everyone has two chances to advance from preliminary races since there is no seeding in the heats.

Rigger: The triangular shaped metal device that is bolted onto the side of the boat and holds the oars.

Run: The run is the distance the shell moves during one stroke. You can figure it by looking for the distance between the puddles made by the same oar.

Sweep: One of the two disciplines of rowing – the one where rowers use only one oar. Pairs (for two people), fours (for four people) and the eight are sweep boats. Pairs and fours may or may not have a coxswain. Eights always have a coxswain.

Sculling: One of the two disciplines of rowing – the one where a rower uses two oars instead of one. Singles, Doubles, Quads, and Octuples are sculling boats.

Shell: Can be used interchangeably with boat.

Slide: The set of runners for the wheels of each seat in the boat.

Starboard: Right side of the boat, while facing forward, in the direction of movement.

Stern: The rear of the boat; the direction the rowers are facing.

Straight: Refers to a shell without a coxswain i.e. a straight four or straight pair.

Stretcher or Footstretcher: Where the rower's feet go. The stretcher consists of two inclined footrests that hold the rower's shoes. The rower's shoes are bolted into the footrests.

Stroke: The rower who sits closest to the stern. The stroke sets the rhythm for the boat; others behind him must follow his cadence.

StrokeCoach: A small electronic display that rowers attach in the boat to show the important race information like stroke rate and elapsed time.