

Central Crew Club



Information Packet May 2005

Central Crew Club

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Program Overview

Introduction

Crew is a co-educational club sport at Central High School. The program's mission is to facilitate a competitive, co-educational rowing program for the students at Central High School. Although not formally a varsity sport our athletes participate in the Sports Award night and are eligible for Little Green Awards.

Operation of the Club is the responsibility of the parents of students actively participating in the program. It is our responsibility to organize all aspects of the program including hiring coaches, sourcing equipment and administering the day to day issues. Parents are expected to volunteer. If we don't, it doesn't happen.

To facilitate this effort the Club formally organized itself as Central Crew Club, a NH not-for-profit corporation and was subsequently granted tax exempt status as a 501 © 3 corporation.. The Members of the Corporation are the parents of students currently participating in the Club's activities. The parent members elect a Board of Directors and slate of Officers annually to administer the Club's mission.

As a Club sport, the program receives no financial support from Central High School or the Manchester School district. The Club charges each rower \$250 per season to participate. This fee covers operating expenses such as coach's salaries, boat storage and insurance. Money for equipment such as boats comes from fundraising activities. Equipment is expensive and students are required to participate in the Club's fundraising activities to enable us to add to and update our equipment.

Interest in the Club has been very strong outpacing the Club's resources forcing us to limit participation. Athletes row in the Club's boats which now include four "8's" and two "4's". In addition over the past two years Central has enjoyed an informal affiliation with So. NH University where we have been able to share equipment, augmenting both programs.

The Club rows from the Amoskeag Rowing Club boathouse in Hooksett. This facility supports programs from Central, Concord, and Derryfield and in the mornings Southern NH University. For directions visit the Amoskeag Rowing Club website.

For additional information please see the Central Crew website at www.centralcrew.org. The site includes the names and phone numbers of parent liaisons who you may contact if you have questions.

History of Central Crew

Central Crew Club was founded in the fall of 2001 through the efforts of Kathy Bartels and a small group of interested parents to provide the students at Manchester Central High School an opportunity to participate in the sport of rowing. Kathy's advocacy for crew was rooted in her son Jack's interest in the sport and frustration that despite the proximity of the Merrimack River and genuine interest within the student body, the Manchester School system simply lacked the resources to establish and maintain a rowing program. Kathy recruited Randy Ford to coach the team and with a dozen or so kids the program was launched in a borrowed boat. The following spring Central Crew was able to acquire three used racing shells from Notre Dame College and had 20 kids rowing on the Merrimack.

In 2003 the Club took a major step forward, organizing as a New Hampshire not-for-profit corporation and receiving tax-exempt status. A Board of Directors and slate of officers was elected and the Club hired Ed McCormick as the Head Coach. Since then the Club has grown rapidly and with approximately 75 kids is now one of the largest programs at Central.

In response to the growing roster the Club has been actively adding to and upgrading the quality of our equipment to make Central a competitive program. Over the last two years we have acquired five used but contemporary racing shells, five sets of oars and two motorized launches. And, under the guidance of a great coaching staff lead by Coach McCormick and Coach Ford, the team has begun to win races.



2004 Crimson Cup winners

In the fall of 2004 Central Crew stepped out onto the big stage by entering a boat in the Head of the Charles. This was the first time a public school from New Hampshire had ever done so. The effort was publicized by John Clayton in the Union Leader and subsequently picked up by ESPN who is currently doing a piece on Central Crew to be broadcast later this spring.

Club Calendar

Crew is a two-season sport at Central, operating on the water for 8–10 weeks in both the fall and the spring. The team will practice on the water six days a week and compete in both local and out-of-town regattas. Most athletes participate in both seasons; however, this is not required as students may have other interests.

Fall Competitive Season (late August to late October)

The fall season begins in late August about a week before the start of the school year and runs through late October (weather permitting). It is during the fall season that the Club takes on most of the novice rowers we will accept for the year and much of the first couple of weeks is spent covering the basics. The Club will compete in two or three “Head” races typically in October.

Planning for the fall season begins in early July and a calendar will be posted on the Club’s website as soon as it is finalized. Participation is limited so we encourage interested athletes to registration as soon as possible to insure a spot on the roster. Once the season gets underway and we have established our roster the Club will hold a Parent’s Information Night at Central High School to answer questions.

Spring Competitive Season (mid March to early June)

The Club’s spring season begins in mid March with land training at Central High School utilizing the Club’s erg machines. Weather permitting the team will move out to the boathouse in Hooksett in early-April and begin practice on the water as soon as conditions permit. The spring rowing season is more competitive with six or more regattas, some after school on weekdays and others on weekends. In the spring, races are typically contested head to head, Olympic style, over a 2,000-meter course.

Planning for the spring season begins in late January. Once the season gets underway and we have established our roster the Club will hold a Parent’s Information Night at Central High School to answer questions.

Annual Meeting (early June)

The Club’s Annual meeting is held in early June and all parents are asked to attend. At the meeting the Board of Directors will discuss the past years activities, provide a preliminary financial report (FYE 6/30) and discuss our goals for the next school year. Parents will have an opportunity to ask questions, propose ideas and volunteer their talents. The parents will also be asked to elect a slate of Officers and Directors for the coming year.

Learn to Row Day (October and again in May)

The Crew Club typically conducts two “Learn to Row Days”, one each season to introduce interested students (and their parents) to rowing at Central. This is free and is open to any Central student. Dates for the events will be posted in the Club’s website as soon as they are scheduled. During these sessions we make every effort to get all interested students and as time permits their parents in a boat.

The Basics - Things an Athlete/parent needs to know about crew at Central

Registration and Orientation

All athletes must complete the Club's registration package each season in full or they will not be allowed to participate. The package is lengthy and somewhat redundant but there does exist a specific purpose for each form. Also, consistent with School policy, all athletes must provide evidence of a medical exam within the last year (365 days), clearing them for sports. We have no latitude in this matter so please do not ask. The School system does provide free physicals every June at the Healthsouth facility on Kosziusko Street. We encourage our athletes to take advantage of this offer.

Safety

Safety is of paramount importance. In this regard the Club follows the safety guidelines established by the U S Rowing Association (see their website for more information). Appropriate safety training videos are provided each season. All rowing is done under the supervision of a qualified coach with one or more motorized safety launches on the water any time a shell is out. Each launch carries recommended safety equipment including life jackets. In addition all our athletes are required to pass a swim test at least once annually. The latter is administered by the YMCA.

Practices

Crew typically practices six days a week, after school and on Saturdays. Since time is limited, it is essential that every rower be punctual. Central runs double sessions with the first group going out on the water immediately after school as close to 3:00 as possible. The second session is expected to arrive at the boathouse by 4:00 and be ready to switch off in the boats when the first group comes in around 4:30. The coach decides the times for Saturday's practice.

Transportation

Transportation to and from the boathouse is the responsibility of the student and his parents. The Club does not provide transportation and car-pooling is encouraged as there is limited parking at the boathouse. The Club will provide busing for the team to away regattas. Please note it is against Club and School policy for students to transport themselves to away regattas.

Insurance

Central Crew is an organizational member of U S Rowing and we participate in their insurance programs. This includes general liability insurance for the Club and the athletes. We also carry separate policies for equipment and Directors & Officers liability insurance. For policy details please consult the U S Rowing website.

To participate in Crew, every athlete is required to have health insurance. If you do not have insurance please let the coach know and we will assist in making the appropriate arrangements through the school system.

Absences

The Coaches expect every rower to participate every day. If an absence is unavoidable, the athlete should let the coach know ahead of time. Please remember that a boat requires an exact number of athletes to row and one person's absence may create logistical problems. It is also important to begin to develop chemistry within a boat crew and this can only be accomplished when everybody is out there consistently.

Clothing

The best clothing for rowing and land workouts is soft, stretchy and fairly form fitting. Fabrics such as polypro and coolmax are excellent because they keep the rower relatively warm even when wet and they dry quickly. A sweat shirt and light, water repellent, breathable windbreaker is also important. Loose clothing, especially baggy shorts, is not acceptable, as they will foul the slides. Athletes will need to carry the boats into the water so sandals or flops are recommended. When in the boat rowers are advised to have a dry pair of socks. Running shoes and socks are needed for land workouts. Parents should discuss the subject with the coaching staff or other parents before purchasing anything.

The Club is evaluating team uniforms including splash jackets, long and short sleeve rowing shirts and rowing pants for races.

Drinking Water

It is important that the rower bring a full water bottle to practice. Please note, there is no source of drinking water at the boathouse (sometimes the Hooksett courthouse is open).

Regattas

Regattas are scheduled during the course of the rowing season. In the fall season these are on the weekends, usually during the month of October. During the spring season we will have both after school races and Saturday events. Athletes need to be at the course often very early in the morning to attend to equipment, stretch and for the coxswains to attend meetings.

Typically the larger weekend regattas are all day affairs and involve a unique effort by parents. The Club sets up a screened tent for the team to provide shelter and refreshments. Parents will be asked to participate and are urged to bring folding chairs and binoculars to view the races.

Fundraising

Fundraising is a critical function for Crew and every athlete is required to participate. It is how we fund our equipment. The Club's Resource Development Committee directs this effort which historically has included candy sales, cash calendars, raffles and other activities. In addition the Club is looking to source grants and larger individual or corporate gifts.

Volunteering

Central Crew would not be able to operate without the help of many parent volunteers. It is also one of the best ways to quickly understand the unique sport and culture that is crew. This will give you an opportunity to meet other parents, chat with coaches, get a grip on rowing vocabulary and see your child in action. Please do not wait to be asked. Seek out a Board member and ask what you can do. The rewards when our athletes succeed are immense.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Rowing as a Sport

Rowing is a total body workout involving all of the body's major muscle groups. It demands endurance, strength, balance, mental discipline and the ability to continue on when your body is asking you to stop. When done well it looks graceful, elegant and sometimes effortless.

What is crew?

Crew is the sport of rowing. In crew, an oarsman propels a shell across a defined distance, using only an oar for propulsion.

Why do people row?

For the exercise, teamwork, camaraderie or simply enjoying the peace, tranquility and beauty of the river. The experience has been described as *"the synchronous motion over water, the harmonic flexing of wood and muscle, where each piece of equipment and every oarsman is both essential to, and the limit of motion itself."*

- The Shell Game (Stephen Kiesling)

What's rowing all about?

Rowing is an exciting competitive sport involving skill, teamwork, strength and stamina. There are teams for men and women, organized by skill, and in some cases age and weight. Crews are identified by the number of rowers in a shell, or boat. Central rows 8-person and 4-person shells, led by a coxswain.

Can crew help my son/daughter get into college?

Possibly, but students should participate in crew because they enjoy it, not as a guaranteed passport to college. Colleges view crew as an extremely important high-school activity, given the level of commitment and fitness it requires. Further, many colleges have crew teams of their own, and they are looking for good rowers to be in their boats. Our coaches are well-connected in the rowing community and have always done a good job of working with seniors who want to continue rowing in college.

What's the difference between the fall season and the spring season?

During the fall Central Crew takes on a large group of novice rowers and the first few weeks of the season are spent on basics. We do limited racing, two or three Head races, focusing instead on getting the team up to speed. Head races are contested over 3+ mile courses, much like cross-country. During the spring the team takes on only a few novices and more time is spent focused on competition, racing six to eight times. Like track, races are head to head and competed over a 1,500 to 2,000-meter course.

Athletes – Rowers and Coxswains

Do you have to be big to do crew?

You do not have to be big to do crew. Any body type will do, although taller rowers tend to have an easier time managing the oars and are able to use more leverage. The training emphasis is on building strength, endurance, and flexibility for all sizes and shapes. Central is more interested in the enthusiasm of the athlete than their physical metrics. Coxswains tend to be smaller.

Who makes the ideal rower?

From a physical standpoint, height is an advantage. Strength and endurance are needed to be successful at rowing. If you don't have strength and endurance coming in you can develop it. Probably the most important quality is to be tenacious, hardworking and determined to give it your best and success will follow. If you are just beginning, keep in mind that none of your teammates began rowing before high school. Other athletic experiences will be to your advantage, especially to the extent that you are in shape and understand the importance of technique to any sport.

What are the coaches looking for in a rower?

First and foremost, coaches look for commitment. Rowing is a demanding sport, and like most sports, demands a day-in, day-out commitment to practice and improvement. Second, coaches look for physical ability. It is important to note that, with regular practice and conditioning, virtually every student can develop his or her physical ability to the point where they can row competitively. Finally, coaches look for a positive attitude toward the program, the sport, and toward their fellow rowers. Crew is a team sport, where boats succeed as a result of each rower playing his or her role. Mutual support and encouragement is vital to a team's success.

What is a coxswain?

He or she is the person in charge of the shell. They execute the practice and race regimens as decided upon by the coach. On the water a coxswain is responsible for steering the boat, incorporating the race strategy agreed upon in practice, and motivating the rowers. They also are responsible for ensuring the shells are carried back to the boathouse, cleaned, and stored properly.

How does my child become a coxswain?

Generally, coxswains are the smallest and lightest of the team members, and Central coaches will help guide appropriate athletes in that direction.

Who makes the best coxswain?

From a physical standpoint we value coxswains most for what's in their head and how they use it. Ideally they are lightweight, which usually means much shorter than the rowers. Although the coxswain does steer and shout commands, the position is as important as a quarterback is in a football game. The ability to motivate, coach during a race, and to think fast is what makes a coxswain successful. Finally, the willingness of the coxswain to participate in physical training activities is critical in building the bonds between the rowers and the coxswain.

Are there any classifications in crew?

Central will group athletes for practice, as the coach deems appropriate. This is typically by gender and experience. In race formats athletes may be classified in a variety of ways to insure balanced competition. Generally this means by gender, experience and occasionally by weight. Typically Central does not differentiate by weight except at certain regattas.

What are the weight classifications in crew?

There are generally two weight classes for rowers---heavyweight (HWT) and lightweight (LWT).

Men (M): For team LWT boats, there is a 160 lbs individual maximum, and the boat must average no more than 155 lbs.

Women (W): The individual maximum for team LWT boats is 130 lbs, and the boat must average no more than 125 lbs.

Equipment

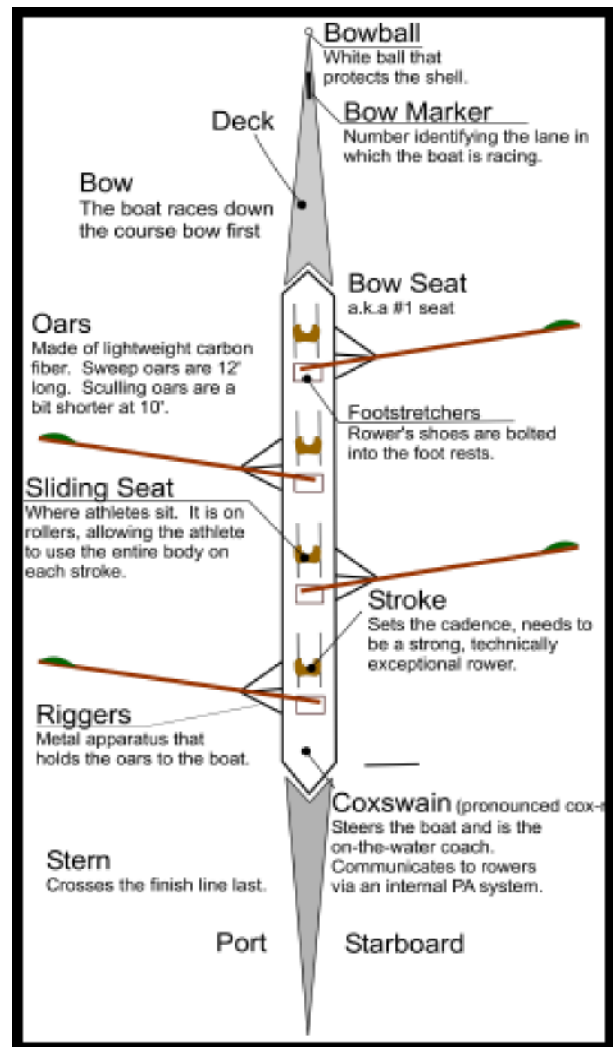
What do they row in?

Athletes' row in racing shells classified according to the number of rowers in the shell, either "4's" or "8's" owned by Central Crew Club. The word shell is often used in reference to the boats used because the hull is only about 1/8" to 1/4" thick to make it as light as possible. These shells are also rather long and racing shells are as narrow as possible. Most shells today are made of composite materials such as carbon fiber, fiberglass, or Kevlar. A few manufacturers still build wooden boats.

What kinds of boats are used?

In rowing there are basically of two types of boats and reflect the two forms of rowing, sweep rowing and sculling. Central only offers sweep rowing.

Each rower has his back to the direction the shell is moving and power is generated using a blended sequence of the rower's legs, back and arms. The rower sits on a sliding seat with wheels on a track called the slide. Each oar is held in a U-shaped swivel (oarlock) mounted on a metal pin at the end of a rigger. The rigger is an assembly of tubes that is tightly bolted to the body of the shell.



What are sweep boats?

In sweep rowing each rower handles a **single** oar (about 12.5 ft or 3.9 m long). All of Central's shells include a coxswain---a person who steers the shell (using a rudder) and urges the rowers on. Central's program is focused on 8's and we use 4's for competitive purposes and flexibility.

Coxed Four (4+): Four sweep rowers with a coxswain.

Coxed Eight (8+): Eight sweep rowers with a coxswain. Eights are 56+ ft long and weigh about 225 pounds.

Are boats built differently for boys and girls?

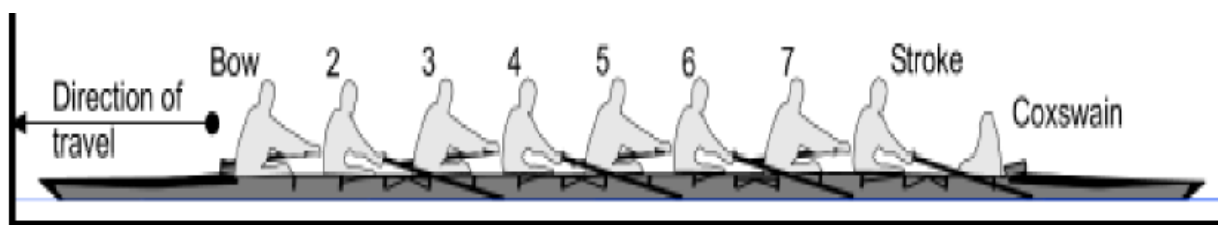
A rowing shell is usually built to accommodate a particular weight class of rower.

What are sculling boats?

In sculling, a rower uses two oars, or sculls, (each about 9.5 ft or 3 m long). Only in rare cases do these boats have a coxswain. Steering is generally accomplished by applying more power or pressure to the oar(s) on one side of the shell. Most typically sculling is competed as a Single (1x) or a Double (2x). Occasionally a Quad (4x) or Octuple (8x) boat will be rigged and raced. Central does not currently offer a sculling program.

What are the different seats in the boat?

Seats are numbered, with the "bow" seat or #1 nearest the front of the boat, and the "stroke" seat or #8 nearest the back of the boat. Seats between the bow and stroke are numbered accordingly. There are two variables in assigning seats: which side a rower sweeps, "Port" (left) or "Starboard" (right) and where, relative to the front of the boat, a rower sits. Typically, the stronger rowers sit in the middle (or engine room), and the rowers with strong sense of timing and/or form sit on the ends.



Seat assignments in an eight.

What leads coaches to assign a rower to a specific seat?

Many different factors including erg score, rowing technique, attitude, and overall athleticism.

Where does the Coxswain sit?

The coxswain is the only person in the boat facing the direction of travel. In an "8" the coxswain sits in the back of the boat. In a "4" the coxswain may sit in the back (stern loader) or the front (bow loader).

How does the coxswain communicate with the rowers?

The coxswain uses what is known as a cox box, which is an electronic device wired into the boat. This includes an amplification system connected to a series of speakers that run the length of the shell. In addition, the cox box provides the coxswain with critical information including timing and stroke rate.

What is the difference between the first, second..... boats?

The first boat represents the coach's best team. Many factors go into assembling a boat, and a boat's composition can change over the course of a season. The 2nd boat would be comprised of athletes 9-16 on the team. All boats are important to the over all competitiveness of the team.

What is the difference between the left and right sides of the boats?

There is no real difference, except that some rowers become accustomed to or prefer one or the other. At Central we expect our rowers to be comfortable from either side but an athlete will typically focus on either "port" or "starboard".

Who pays for the boats used by Central?

Unlike other high school sports, Central Crew receives no public funding. The boats are purchased by Central Crew Club from proceeds of our fundraising efforts. Racing shells cost anywhere from \$5,000 for a well used boat to \$24,000 for a new boat.

Practice

What are the transportation arrangements for practices?

Athletes are responsible for their own transportation to and from practices. Parents should look to coordinate car-pooling arrangements.

How often does the team practice?

In season the team practices six days a week, after school and on Saturdays. Please note however that the physical demands of the sport generally require that rowers stay in shape year-round. Rowers should be prepared to commit themselves to attending team practices and remaining in shape for the off-season through individual conditioning.

When and where are practices?

Practices are held at the Amoskeag Rowing Club in Hooksett, located near the Hooksett courthouse. Detailed directions to the boathouse are available on the Amoskeag Rowing website, www.amoskeagrowing.com. In the event of inclement weather or unsafe water conditions, the coaches will conduct a land practice at the boathouse. Unless specifically told otherwise you should assume there will be practice at the boathouse. If there is a change to that it will be announced on the Central PA system. In addition the Club is developing a voice mail broadcast system to listed cell phones.

Does everyone practice together?

Sometimes, but not all the time. Everyone is on one team but due to equipment and facilities constraints, may be divided to workout in shifts or on rotation basis. However, we compete as a team.

What should a rower wear/bring for practice?

Bring a water bottle. Wear running shoes and be prepared to run on any given day. Dress for a strenuous workout; coxswains, dress for warmth according to the weather. Don't forget to apply sunscreen.

Does the team practice in inclement weather?

Yes, at the Coaches discretion, the team will practice on the water in light rain or light wind. Where there is any threat of lightning or more serious weather conditions the team will conduct land based training at the boathouse. Safety is never compromised.

What if a rower has to miss a practice?

Rowers should make every effort to attend each practice. Crew is a team sport, and the absence of a rower can materially disrupt a boat's ability to develop the close-knit harmony and teamwork that is required for success. However, if a rower needs to miss a practice, they should contact the coach prior to the practice, to allow the coach time to adjust his/her practice regimen. Failure to notify a coach will influence the coach's decision on which rowers sit in which seats and in which boats.

What kind of in-season and off-season conditioning will make a rower stronger?

The coaches will give advice and instructions to the rowers on conditioning. A common piece of conditioning equipment is the erg. Some athletes try to play other winter sports as a substitute, but there are very few programs that the crew coaches believe to be an acceptable substitute to "erging." While in season, the coaches will assign conditioning workouts that typically include stretching, running, weightlifting, and "erging." When out of season, the best way to stay in shape is to row for a summer club. Other than that, "erging" and running are always a good idea. Athletes who are interested may investigate some standard workout regimes and compare their results with peers by visiting the Concept2 website.

What is an ERG?

An erg, or ergometer, is an indoor rowing machine designed to simulate the movements a rower makes on the water. They are used extensively for conditioning and also for gauging the strength and fitness of each rower.

What is a good time on the Erg machine?

That depends on the height, weight, age, and sex of the rower. For 2000 meters, the top time for a male Central varsity rower last year was around 6 minutes, 50 seconds. The top Central varsity female time was 7 minutes, 55 seconds. The Concept2 website provides extensive data to allow an athlete to compare their scores relative to their peers nationally.

What happens when there are more rowers than boat seats? Do all rowers get to row?

Central typically has more athletes than boat seats. To accommodate this we run split practices in an effort to get every rower in a boat daily. However, the finite number of seats in a boat (4 or 8) will occasionally result in an odd man out situation. In this case spares will typically accompany the coach in the launch and will be rotated in splitting seat time with another rower.

Regattas

What is the format of a typical regatta?

During the spring season, regattas generally have two or more boats per heat, with each boat racing side-by-side down a 1500-2,000 meter course. Heats will generally have boats of similar experience and gender racing against each other. That is, there may be freshman-only heats, junior varsity heats and varsity heats.

What is a “head race?”

These races, which are generally held in the fall, are about 2.5 - 4 miles long and the boats are started in their respective divisions separately at approximately 10-second intervals. These races are usually conducted on a river with an assortment of bridges and turns that can make passing quite interesting. Winners are determined based on elapsed time.

Where is the best place to watch a race?

Most parents find that the area around the finish line provides the best vantage point. In addition, most parents find that bringing a chair and a pair of binoculars increases their enjoyment of the regatta. When watching a race, look for a continuous, fluid, synchronized motion from the rowers with clean catches (i.e. oars entering the water simultaneously with little splash).

When are the regattas, how long are they and how do I find information about them?**Does the Club provide directions?**

In the fall, regattas generally take up the entire day on Saturdays or Sundays. In the spring dual meets may be scheduled after school, larger regattas with multiple schools are generally contested on the weekends and will typically begin early in the morning and may take most of the day. The team will travel to away regattas by bus. The home regattas take place at Amoskeag Rowing Club and rowers are responsible for their own transportation. Crew is a team sport and we ask that all athletes wait until all the races are completed and equipment put away before leaving. Information about a regatta and directions will be posted on the Club's website. At most regattas, Central will set up a tent where both parents and rowers will congregate.

What are the usual racing distances and divisions?

Races have separate divisions---Men's (M), Women's (W), heavyweight (HWT) or open, lightweight (LWT) etc., then divided up into 8+'s, 4+'s, (1x's, 2x's) and so on. There may be separate heavyweight and lightweight divisions that would require a weigh-in for the lightweights some time before the start of the regatta. You may also see divisions according to experience (novice, varsity), age (junior and masters), and skill level (senior A, B, Elite, etc.) NOTE: Central typically only differentiates by gender and experience. However, at larger regional regattas we may organize boats by weight class. Typically this is only done to insure everybody gets to row competitively.

What is the standard international racing distance?

With the exception of head races, the standard international racing distance is 2000 meters (preferably straight) and the course usually has up to six shells racing against each other in their separate designated lanes, which may or may not be marked by buoys. These races can take anywhere from 5 1/2 to 8 1/2 minutes depending on boat class, weather conditions, water current and the physical condition and experience of the rowers. Occasionally shorter races of 1,000 to 1,500-meters may be organized for the junior age division (high school).

What is the starting procedure for regattas?

Crews are expected to be at their starting stations two minutes before the scheduled time of the race. Once the boats are locked on, the Judge at start will supervise the alignment process. When all crews are level, the Starter will then poll the crews by calling their name. When all crews have been polled, the Starter raises a red flag, and says, "Attention!" After a clear pause the starter shall give the start by dropping the red flag quickly to one side and simultaneously saying, "GO". In windy conditions, the Starter may dispense with polling the crews and use a "quick start".

What about false starts?

Crews can be assessed a warning for a false start, for being late to the start, or for a traffic rule violation. A crew that receives two warnings in the same race is excluded from the event.

What about equipment problems during a race?

If a crew breaks equipment, or incurs a serious crab in the first 100 meters of the race, it should stop rowing and signal to the umpire, who will then stop and restart the race.

What about fouls, obstacles and protests?

Once the race has begun, the Referee follows in a launch. He/she will instruct a crew only to avoid a foul or safety hazard. If a crew is about to interfere with another crew, the umpire will raise a white flag, call the crew's name, and drop the flag in the direction where the crew should move. If a crew is about to hit a known obstruction (such as a bridge abutment) the umpire will raise a white flag, call the crew, and yell "Obstacle!" or simply "Stop!" If the umpire needs to stop the entire race, he will ring a bell or sound a horn, wave a red flag, and call out "Stop!" if necessary. A crew that wishes to protest the race must raise a hand after it crosses the finish line and lodge the protest with the umpire.

What schools do we compete against?

In NH, Central, Concord and Hanover are the only public schools currently operating a crew program. Private schools such as Derryfield, St. Paul's and Phillips Exeter have strong programs. As Central's program has matured we are now reaching out to compete against Massachusetts and Connecticut based schools as well. In addition, at regional or national regattas we will compete against many of the top teams in the country.

How many regattas are there?

In the fall Central typically competes in two or three regattas, including the Textile Regatta in Lowell and the NH Championships in Pembroke. We are also beginning to consider larger regional events that may require overnight stays. In spring the Club competes in about six or eight regattas, mostly local although we are considering participating in regional or national events such as the Scholastic National Championships which may require an overnight stay. In situations where we travel overnight, for logistical reasons the Club may limit the number of athletes who can participate.

What are the transportation arrangements for regattas?

Rowers normally travel by bus to out-of-town regattas. Arrangements for these regattas are typically finalized a week or so prior to the regatta. Please check with your rower or the crew website for updated information.

Will my child have to miss school?

As a general rule, no. However, in spring there may be an occasional out-of-town regatta that will require an early release from school. The Club will clear this ahead of time with Central High School administration. We also make every attempt to schedule these events on designated early release dates.

Does everybody get to race?

Yes, usually. The coaching staff will make every effort to juggle line-ups and boats to allow every athlete to race.

Safety

Is rowing safe?

Yes – if conducted in a way consistent with coaching and official direction. U S Rowing has an established set of safety guidelines, which the Club has adopted. This includes a specially produced safety training video which we require the students to watch. Our coaching staff takes safety seriously and is vigilant at all times. However, ultimately the athlete must do their part by following the guidelines, training properly, following boat and oar handling directions, and remaining attentive to the river, other boats and their fellow rowers.

What kinds of injuries can occur in crew?

With proper technique and conditioning, injuries are rare. Obviously, injuries can and do occur, and can typically be attributed to inadequate conditioning or to lack of attention. Calluses and sore arms and legs are common – especially at the outset of a season. Rowers that experience unusual soreness or pain are encouraged to consult their coach and physician. Typically more serious injuries are the result of not paying attention.

Do rowers need to know how to swim?

Rowers are required to pass a swimming test, and are instructed in the proper safety steps to take in the unlikely event a shell capsizes.

Do they wear life jackets?

Rowers do not wear life jackets on the water.

Are the kids ever out on the water alone?

No, boats are not launched unless a coach is present. Any time a shell is on the water a coach in a motorized launch is supervising them. The launches are equipped with U S Rowing recommended safety equipment including life jackets.

Who supervises the kids?

Once delivered to the practice or regatta, the rowers are supervised by the coaches. However, we expect parents to assist the coaches in this process, usually on land during normal practices and at regattas.

Coaching

Who picks the coaches?

The head coach is selected by the Club's Board of Directors and in turn, with consultation from the Board, will select the assistant coaches. Every Coach is required to submit to a fingerprinting and criminal record check which, is administered by the Manchester school system. Central makes every effort to have a minimum of two coaches on the water whenever kids are rowing.

Can I talk to the coaches about my rower's performance?

Yes. The best way to talk to a coach about your child's performance is to schedule a time that is convenient for both of you. Typically, coaches are very busy prior to, during, and after practices, and this is especially true with regattas. Coaches frequently have "day" jobs, and their availability can be limited during the season.

How does the coach determine the seats in a boat?

Each seat in a boat has a specific role and responsibility. During practice the coaches look for different combinations of commitment, power, technique and teamwork to put together the group of 8 rowers who work best together.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Blades: The wide flat section of the oar at the head of the shaft, also known as the spoon. This term is often used when referring to the entire oar.

Bow: The forward end of the shell. Also used as the name of the person sitting nearest to the bow. The bow seat is also referred to as the #1 seat.

Bow Ball: A small rubber ball mounted on the bow of the boat designed to prevent injury.

Bow Loader: This refers to a racing shell where the coxswain is seated in the bow section of the boat. This is most typically seen in "4's".

Bucket rigging: The rigging of an eight or a four so that riggers 2 and 3 are on the same side.

Button (or collar): A plastic or metal fitting tightened on the oar to keep the oar from slipping through the oarlock.

Catch: The point of the rowing cycle at which the blade enters the water at the end of the recovery and is accomplished by an upward motion of the arms and hands only. The blade of the oar must be fully squared at the catch.

Check: Any abrupt deceleration of the shell caused by some uncontrolled motion within the shell. The coxswain is probably the most acutely aware of this abrupt deceleration and it has been known to cause whiplash in some extreme cases.

Coxswain: The person who steers the shell and urges the rowers on during practices and in a race. A knowledgeable coxswain will also serve as a coach for the rowers and can be the difference between winning and losing a race.

Cox Box: An electronic amplification system with a timer and stroke meter. The system includes a series of speakers mounted the length of the shell. This allows the coxswain to be heard all along the boat and provides important information to the coxswain to manage a race.

Crab: A problem encountered by a rower when his or her oar gets 'stuck' in the water, usually right after the catch or just before the release, and is caused by improper squaring or feathering. The momentum of the shell can overcome the rower's control of the oar. In extreme cases the rower can actually be ejected from the shell by the oar.

Drive: That part of the rowing cycle when the rower applies power to the oar. This is a blended sequence of applying power primarily with a leg drive, then the back and finally the arms.

Ergometer (Erg): The rowing machine used to train and test fitness and power generated by a rower. (On the water, this force coupled with the distance from catch to release determines an athlete's power value to the boat.)

Feathering: The act of turning the oar blade from a position perpendicular to the surface of the water to a position parallel to the water. This is done in conjunction with the release.

Finish: The last part of the drive before the release where the power is mainly coming from the back and arms.

Foot Stretcher: An adjustable bracket in a shell to which the rower's feet are secured in some sort of shoe or clog.

Hatchets (a.k.a. big blades): The most prevalent design of oar blades and are what the names indicate---oar blades that have a bigger surface area than the older "spoon" blades and have a hatchet shape.

Head Races: Races rowed in the fall season between 2.5 and 4.0 miles in length. The race has a staggered start with boats going off +/- 15 seconds apart. The Boats compete based on time.

Jumping the slide: A problem encountered by a rower when the seat becomes derailed from the track during the rowing cycle.

Keel: Technically, the structural member running the length of the boat at the bottom of the hull. Today, most shells are built without this member so the term often refers to the center line of the shell.

Layback: The amount of backward lean of the rower's body at the end of the finish.

Lightweight: Category of rowers who meet a maximum weight requirement, typically 130 lb. for girls and 155 lb. for boys. The weights may vary depending upon the regatta and the season.

Line-ups: The order the athletes sit in the boat. The Coach determines the seat position based on a variety of factors including erg scores and technique.

Missing water: The rower starts the drive before the catch has been completed (or even started in some cases). This is also referred to as rowing into the catch.

Oarlock: A U-shaped swivel, which holds the oar in place. It's mounted at the end of the rigger and rotates around a metal pin. A gate closes across the top to keep the oar in.

Outside Hand: The hand at the end of the handle (left for ports, right for starboards). This hand dominates the pulling and controls the level of the oar through the stroke.

Pitch: The angle between the blade (on the drive when the blade is `squared') and a line perpendicular to the water's surface.

Port: The left side of the boat when facing the bow.

Power Ten (or Twenty): The ten (or twenty) most powerful strokes a crew can produce. Called for by the coxswain during a race, this must be used strategically and not over used.

Rate: The number of strokes per minute. Also known as stroke rating.

Ratio: The ratio of the recovery time to the drive time. The recovery time should always be longer than the drive time. The idea is to move the boat on the pull (or drive) and take a ride (i.e. relax) on the recovery without sacrificing speed.

Recovery: Part of the rowing cycle from the release up to and including where the oar blade enters the water.

Release: A sharp downward (and away) motion of the hand which serves to remove the oar blade from the water and start the rowing cycle.

Rigger: The device that connects the oarlock to the shell and is bolted to the body of the shell. On sweep boats, riggers are typically alternating from side to the other on adjacent seats, but it is not uncommon to see two adjacent riggers on the same side. This is referred to as "tandem rigging".

Rigging: The adjustment and alteration of accessories (riggers, foot-stretchers, oar, etc.) in and on the shell. Examples of rigging adjustments that can be made are the height of the rigger, location of the foot-stretchers, location and height of the oarlocks, location of the button (or collar) on the oar and the pitch of the blade of the oar.

Rowing cycle: The process of a complete stroke, from release to feather, to recovery, to square, to catch, to drive, to finish and the layback. The cycle starts with the rower at 'rest' and legs fully extended with the oar blades immersed in the water perpendicular to the water's surface.

Rudder: Steering device at the stern. The rudder in turn is connected to some cables (tiller ropes) that the coxswain can use to steer the shell. Older shells have short wooden handles (knockers) on the tiller ropes. These knockers are used by the coxswain not only to steer the shell, but also to rap out the cadence of the stroke rate on the gunwale.

Run: The boat's response to the send generated by the propulsion phase of the stroke. This is what the rowers feel and the boat glides underneath them on the way to the catch.

Rushing: Athletes who pull themselves up the slide to the catch position faster than the drive of the oar in the water are "rushing the slide". This slows the boat down.

Sculling: This refers to rowing with two oars (smaller than the sweep oar). This term is used interchangeably when referring to one of the oars used in a sculling shell, the shell itself or to the act of rowing a sculling shell.

Seat: The sliding seat that the rower sits on. The term "seat" also refers to the rowers place in the boat; the convention is to number the seats from bow to stern, i.e. the rower closest to the front of the boat is "1-seat" the next, "2-seat", etc. The 1-seat is also commonly referred to as "bow seat" or just "bow" while the stern most (rear) seat is referred to as "stroke seat" or just "stroke".

Set (set of a boat): This refers to the carriage of the shell and the rowers, i.e. a level, stable, balanced shell that will provide the basis for that symphony of motion which is critical to attaining speed. Items that can affect the set of the boat are the rower's posture, hand levels, rigging, timing at the catch and release, and outside conditions such as the wind. It is not unusual for rowers within a shell not to agree on what needs to be done to establish a good set.

Slide (or track): The track on which the seat moves.

Skeg (or Fin): A small fin located along the stern section of the hull. This helps to stabilize the shell in holding a true course when rowing. All racing shells have a skeg. The skeg should not be confused with the rudder.

Skying: The fault of carrying the hands too low during the recovery especially when a rower dips his or her hands just prior to the catch (i.e. a sort of winding up). This usually results in the blade being too high off the water's surface.

Slings (or boat slings, or trestles): Collapsible/portable frames with straps upon which a shell can be placed temporarily.

Squaring: A gradual rolling of the oar blade from a position parallel to the water to a position (almost) perpendicular to the surface of the water. This is accomplished during the recovery portion of the rowing cycle and is done in preparation for the catch.

Starboard: The right side of the shell when facing the bow (or the direction the boat would travel).

Stern: The trailing end of the shell where the fin and rudder are located.

Stroke: The rower sitting nearest the stern. The stroke is responsible for setting the stroke length and cadence (with the coxswain's gentle advice).

Sweep: When the rower has only one oar.

Tandem rigging: Variations of rigging of sweep boats with adjacent riggers being on the same side of the boat.

Washing out: The fault of rowing the oar out of the water, i.e. the blade comes out of the water before the drive is finished.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

(Not guaranteed to be current)

Locally

Amoskeag Rowing Club

<http://www.amoskeagrowing.org>

The Amoskeag Rowing Club maintains the boathouse in Hooksett from which Central rows as a satellite organization. Other satellite programs rowing from ARC include Derryfield School, Concord HS and So. New Hampshire University. The Club offers a variety of learn to row and competitive programs during the summer.

Books, Magazines and Websites

Books

Assault On Lake Casitas by Brad Lewis.

The Shell Game by Steve Kiesling.

The Amateurs by David Halberstam.

The Nuts and Bolts Guide to Rigging by Mike Davenport.

The Complete Steve Fairbairn on Rowing by Steve Fairbairn.

Complete Book of Rowing by Steven Redgrave.

High Performance Rowing by John McArthur.

Rowing Against the Current: On Learning to Scull at Forty by Barry S. Strauss.

Mind over Water: Lessons on Life from the Art of Rowing by Craig Lambert;

The Book of Rowing by D. C. Churbuck

Thomas Eakins: The Rowing Pictures by Helen A. Cooper

Rowing: The Skills of the Game by Rosie Mayglothing

Rowing Fundamentals by John A. Ferriss

Magazines

US Rowing Magazine

201 S. Capitol Ave., Suite 400

Indianapolis, IN 46225

Independent Rowing News

PO Box 831, 4 West Wheelock St.

Hanover, NH 03755

Fax (603) 643-0606

Email: info@rowingnews.com

Websites

Row2k www.row2k.com

One of the premier sources of rowing and sculling news, rowing results, rowing information, photos, interviews, and general information ...

USRowing www.usrowing.org

Governing body for rowing in the United States. Central Crew Club is a member organization. Provides information about recreational and competitive rowing, coaching, and refereeing.

Coxie.com www.coxie.com

An online community for coxswains and rowers with articles, hints and tips, and rowing news. Optional registration for advanced features.

JL Racing www.jlracing.com

Manufactures specialty clothing for rowers.

Sports Graphics www.sport-graphics.com

Specializes in photographing sporting events including regattas. Central Crew Club photos can be found for the 2003 and 2004 Textile Regatta where we are listed as "Manchester Central HS". For 2004 Head of the Charles we are listed as "Central Crew Club".

Governing Organizations

Associations

United States Rowing Association (USRA)

201 S. Capitol Ave.

Suite 400

Indianapolis, IN 46225

Ph: (317) 237-5656

E-mail:members@usrowing.org

Masters Rowing Association

4 Kelly Drive

Boathouse Row

Philadelphia, PA 19130

877-769-4644

(FAX) 215-232-4778

E-mail:mra@mastersrowing.org

DIRECTIONS

Amoskeag Rowing Club, Hooksett, NH is about 15 minutes north of Manchester. Take I 93 to exit 11 (pay toll). Turn left onto Hackett Hill Rd. and left again at the bottom of the hill (the river will be visible straight ahead) onto SR-3A, W. River Road. In about ½ mile turn right at traffic light onto Main Street. Cross over the bridge and immediately turn left onto Merrimack Street. Follow (river on your left) approximately 1 mile to Hooksett District Court on your left. Turn left into the Court House driveway and follow to boat house at the end. See the ARC website for details including a map at: (<http://www.amoskeagrowing.org/maps/boathouse.html>).

St. Pauls is in Concord, NH about 25 minutes from Manchester. Follow I-93 North to I-89, just south of Concord. Follow I-89 North to Exit 2, Clinton Street. At the end of the ramp turn left onto Clinton Street. At the next intersection (yellow blinking light) turn right onto Silk Farm Road. Continue straight until the road ends at a T-junction marked by a stop sign. Go left to the boat houses.

Phillips Exeter Academy is in Exeter, NH about 45 minutes from Manchester. Take Rte 101 east and use Exit 10, Newfields Road. Go right towards Exeter. As you get close you will begin to see the race course on the left. Newfields Road will split, stay left onto the Swazey Parkway and follow to the end. The boat house will be right in front of you.

New Hampshire Championships in Pembroke, NH is about 20 minutes north of Manchester. Take I 93 to exit 11 (pay toll). Turn left onto Hackett Hill Rd. and left again at the bottom of the hill (the river will be visible straight ahead) onto SR-3A, W. River Road. In about ½ mile turn right at traffic light onto Main Street. Cross over the bridge and immediately turn left onto Merrimack St. Follow to the end and bear left (North) onto Pleasant St., continue straight onto Main St. to Pembroke Center. Cross the bridge and turn left onto Front Street, then bear right at the bottom onto Exchange Street. Turn left into Memorial Park just past Town Garage. See the ARC website for details and a map at: (<http://www.amoskeagrowing.org/maps/nhchamp.html>).

Textile Regatta in Lowell, MA.

Head of the Charles in Boston, MA.