



ST. CATHARINES ROWING CLUB – WELCOME!!

Welcome to the St. Catharines Rowing Club. In this document, you will learn a little about the Rowing Club, rowing, regattas, and a how to get involved.

SOME HISTORY

The St. Catharines Rowing Club (SCRC) was founded in 1903 and incorporated as a Not-for-Profit organization, in 1977.

2024 marks the 121st year of consecutive rowing in St. Catharines!

The first clubhouse was built in 1904 at the south end of the course, close to where the starting gates are now located. The Island, then known as Read's Island, was purchased, and renamed Henley Island in 1955. Several other boathouses have been built, moved, relocated, and demolished over time.

SCRC shares the Island and the rowing course with Brock University Rowing and Ridley College Rowing Club/ Ridley Graduate Boat Club.

Our current 10-bay boat house was built in 1966. The smaller boathouse, home to our workshop and to Brock and Ridley was built in 1986.

WHAT IS ROWING?

The Sport of Rowing: racing long, skinny boats, sometimes called shells, using oars (never call them paddles)

There are two types of rowing:

- **Sculling** where each rower has two oars, and
- **Sweep Rowing** where each rower has just one oar.

BOATS

Boats can have as many as eight rowers and a coxswain or coxie, for a total of nine or as few as just one athlete.

Rowers sit on sliding seats which move on wheels along a 27" track. Most boats have adjustable foot stops and shoes. You will hear rowers refer to boats by their size and the number of rowers in each boat.

THE BOATS WE USE AT SCRC:

Sculling boats - two oars for each rower	
1x	Single –1 athlete
2x	Double –2 athletes
4x	Quad – 4 athletes
4x+	Coxed Quad *- 4 athletes and a coxswain

*Only sculling boat that includes a coxswain

Sweep boats – one oar for each rower	
2-	Pair - 2 athletes, no coxswain
4-	Four – 4 athletes, no coxswain
4+	Coxed 4 - 4 athletes and a coxswain
8+	Eight – 8 athletes and a coxswain

OARS

Oars - are mounted in swivel oarlocks attached to a rigger. Sweep oars are longer - 12-13 ft - and heavier than sculling oars which are 9-10 ft long.

RIGGER:

The rigger is bolted onto the side of the boat and holds the oars.

WHO IS IN THE BOAT:

COXSWAIN:

Sweep boats shown as 4+ and 8+ have coxies, sculling boats, except coxed quads and sweep boats shown as 2- and 4- do not.

Only the coxie can talk during the race.

The coxie can be the opposite sex of the crew and must weigh a minimum of 45kg. for crews aged up to 19 years and 55kg. for all others. Coxies weighing less than minimum weight must carry weight (bags of sand!) to bring their weight up to the minimum.

They may sit in the stern or in the bow depending on boat size and design and are responsible for steering the boat using cables attached to a moveable rudder located under the stern of the boat.

Coxies follow the strategy, or race plan, set by the coach and are responsible for encouraging the crew, watching for, and correcting mistakes and telling the crew what they need to do to win.

THE CREW

To determine who else is in the boat, start at the bow – where there is a little white rubberball, that rower is called Bow seat. The next rower is two-seat, and so on up the boat, until the last rower, who is called Stroke. This applies to any boat no matter how many rowers, – except of course a single where that rower does it all.

The rowers must follow Stroke who sets the pace, or stroke rate, during a race. The stroke rate can vary from over 40 strokes/minute off the start to 30--34 strokes/minute during the race. The rate may increase again as the boat approaches the finish line to WIN the race.

In boats without a coxie, rowers follow Stroke on commands from Bow seat who is also responsible for steering.

ROWERS' WEIGHT CATEGORIES – some exceptions to these limits may be requested, especially in high school events.

- **Lightweight:** Junior/Senior Men 72kg (159lbs) / Junior/Senior Women 59kg (130lbs).
- **Open weight:** Rowers who are not lightweight.

CREW SELECTION

The coach does crew selection, often in consultation with other coaches and is based on criteria that may include:

- Seat racing - allows direct comparison of the effectiveness of various combinations of rowers in the boat.
- Ergometer (Erg) scores - times scored on an indoor rowing machine over a fixed distance; typically, 2,000 metres or 6,000 metres.
- Technical ability.
- Overall fitness and attitude.
- Attendance.

SPRINT RACES

- Take place in Spring / Summer and are 2000 metres.
- Up to 6 boats per race, if there are more entrants, the race is divided into heats.
- Sprint races may take about 5-10 minutes depending on boat size and crew experience.

HEAD RACES

- Take place in the Fall and are usually 4000 to 6000 metres.
- Can take about 30 minutes and are usually on a river that may include bridges and turns. There can be up to 80 boats in a head race – fastest time wins.
- The world's largest and most prestigious head race is the **Head of the Charles** held annually in October on the Charles River in Boston MA. St Catharines' crews regularly compete very successfully at "**the Charles.**"

THE START

The starters, who are Umpires, are on a fixed platform. In Sprint races, they call the boats into the start area 5 minutes before the posted time of the race. Once all the boats are "locked on", (held by a boat holder) and aligned, the Starter will do a roll call of the boats, say "ATTENTION," and sound a horn, or (loudly) say "GO" and drop a red flag.

In Head Races, boats are called to the line individually by the starter and start at 15-30 second intervals.

THE FINISH

In most regattas, there is a sophisticated photo-finish system to ensure accuracy and that the right boat is declared the winner. The finish is staffed by umpires and tech experts. At the finish line, a horn will sound for each boat as it crosses the line.

SOME THINGS THAT CAN GO WRONG DURING A RACE

- "False start" if a boat "jumps" the start all boats will be called back, and the race re-started. A crew assessed a false start may be given a "yellow card" penalty.
- "Crab": when the blade enters the water at an angle and is stuck under the surface it may push the oar handle into the stomach of the rower – it usually means the boat has to stop rowing to recover – Rowers must remember it is an **accident**. Never intentional.
- "Jump the Slide" – a rower slides off the seat – hard to get on during a race and not a fun place to row from.
- Straying out of the boat's assigned lane and interfering with

another boat.

- Penalties (“yellow cards”) can be assessed by umpires for several reasons including being late getting to the start line, interference with another boat, ignoring the umpire’s directions and bad language. If a crew or rower is assessed two yellow cards, they will be excluded from that event – not the regatta, just that event.

COACHES

- Coaches are the unsung heroes of rowing. Our amazing coaches volunteer their time and dedicate hours to share their expert skills with our athletes.
- Coaches must be Certified by Rowing Canada Aviron and take numerous courses, on their own time, to be fully qualified to coach.
- Coaches ensure the rowers are safe and that the boats are well maintained and set for each rower. They must make decisions that are for the good of the crew and, while those decisions may not always be popular, they are fair.

UMPIRES

- Umpires (who wear blue shirts) are at all the regattas – that is a Rowing Canada Aviron rule. It is the responsibility of umpires to ensure races are **safe and fair**.
- They manage the starts and finishes and follow races down the course in a coach boat or launch to ensure the boats stay straight and do not interfere with other boats during races.

SCRC PROGRAMS – 2024. <https://www.stcatharinesrowingclub.org/>

[Youth Rowing Camp](#) (10-15 years)

[Junior Development](#) (completed grade 7 or above)

[Junior Competitive](#) (U17 & U19)

[Senior Competitive](#) (U23 and Senior)

[Masters](#) - 21 years of age to 80+. Seniors can row as Masters and Masters can row as Seniors – but not in the same regatta.

[Rowing League](#) – Recreational Rowing for Adults

SCRC CALENDAR (Regattas / important dates)

[Calendar - St. Catharines Rowing Club \(stcatharinesrowingclub.org\)](#)

NOTES ABOUT REGATTAS FOR PARENTS:

GETTING READY

Rowers will get information from their coaches about getting ready for regattas and MAY be told to stay hydrated, eat “healthy,” get lots of sleep and get to the rowing venue several hours before the start of their first race.

DAY OF THE RACE

- Plan on being at the race site for an undetermined time. Race schedules often change during the day depending on weather and various delays.
- Schedules are available online a few days before the Regatta, it can be a good idea to print your own copy. <https://www.regattacentral.com/>
- Plan to be prepared for anything and everything! The weather can change suddenly, and you can count on using rain gear and sunscreen on any given day.
- Consider bringing; folding chair, umbrella, binoculars, blanket, warm clothes, rain gear, light-weight clothing for the heat of the day, sunglasses, sunscreen, hat, camera, water, snacks, and your bike for Welland for an easy way to get from the docks to the finish line.
- Reminder - always stay clear of boats, docks (where the boats launch). This is to provide safety for yourself and for the rowers.
- Coaches know best – your suggestions and input may not be welcome.

THE RACE (what to watch for)

- Did all the rowers’ oars enter the water at the same time?
- Are the rowers swinging in unison?
- Is the boat itself moving smoothly through the water?
- Are they WINNING??

GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING ROWERS’ LANGUAGE!

Bow:	The front of the boat with the white rubber ball marker.
Stern:	Back of the boat - rowers face the stern - they travel backwards!
Blade:	The painted part of the oar.
Catch:	When the blade of the oar enters the water.
Drive:	Part of the stroke where the athlete pushes with legs and pulls on the oar handle with arms/back to lever the boat forward.

Finish:	When the blade is approaching and at the end of the stroke.
Release:	When the blade leaves the water.
Feathering the blade:	After the blade leaves the water and is turned from perpendicular to horizontal from the water's surface.
Recovery:	Part of the stroke where the rower comes back up the slide slowly towards the catch.
Run:	The distance the shell moves during one stroke cycle.
Inside Hand:	The hand that is closest to the blade (right hand for port rowers, left hand for starboard rowers). The inside hand controls the angle of the blade during the drive and recovery.
Outside Hand:	The hand at the end of the handle (left for ports, right for starboards). This hand primarily pulls (it has more leverage) and controls the level of the oar through the stroke.
"Let it run":	The command to stop rowing.
Back it:	Reverse rowing to turn or back the boat.
Stroke rate:	Number of strokes per minute – the higher the rate, the faster the boat may travel.
Squaring the blade:	Turning the blade from horizontal perpendicular to the water.
Hard/Ease on port/starboard:	Change of pulling forces to alter the direction of the boat.
Cox Box:	A small electronic device which aids the coxswain by amplifying their voice and giving them a readout of various information such as time, stroke rate and count.
Foot Stretcher:	Part of the boat where the shoes are attached.
Seat Racing:	Seat racing pits two crews to race against each other. After the first race, a rower from each crew will move into the opposing boat to race the second piece. Thus, a rower's individual contribution can be measured.
Splits:	Projected amount of time it would take to row 500 meters at this specific power at this specific pace. Calculated by erg monitors, cox boxes and coaches' rate watches.

Hard 10:	A call for rowers to do 10 of their best, most powerful strokes. It's a strategy used in a race to pull ahead of a competitor.
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LOCATIONS OF THE REGATTAS:

Henley Island

Welland - South Niagara Rowing Club: <https://www.rowsnrc.ca/contact-info/>

Buffalo - Westside Rowing Club <https://www.wsrc.org/>

Boston – Head of the Charles: <https://www.hocr.org/>

Philadelphia: Head of the Schuylkill: <https://hosr.org/>

Toronto - Dominion Day: <https://www.rowontario.ca/events/dominion-day-regatta/>

HOW TO VOLUNTEER:

Contact:

- Dave Derry - President of SCRC: derry@vaxxine.com to get involved.
- Kate Hingston - khingston@me.com to volunteer.
- Louise Hastings - muskoka@sympatico.ca to sponsor or donate to SCRC.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE:

[Canadian Tire Jumpstart](#) , [Participation](#), [RBC Learn to Play](#)

Resources For Information

[Rowing Canada, Row Ontario, US Rowing,](#)

[CSSRA \(Canadian Secondary Schools Rowing Association, Regatta Central](#)

[St. Catharines Rowing Club](#) *follow us on Facebook & Instagram

[St. Catharines Rowing Club Board of Directors](#)

Watch for details on the website <https://www.stcatharinesrowingclub.org/>

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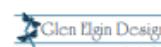
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