

CHARGERS ROWING CLUB

Safety Plan

As a condition for membership, Syracuse Charger Rowing Club ("SCRC") members are required to read and sign an agreement electronically to abide by the rules in the Handbook, which include the following safety rules. This plan shall apply to (1) SCRC employees; (2) all athletes participating in SCRC programs or using SCRC facilities; and (3) individuals the SCRC formally authorizes, approves or appoints (a) to a position of authority over, or (b) to have frequent contact with athletes. The Program Director shall ensure that education and training concerning this safety plan is provided seasonally to such individuals.

The rules in this section are for your protection and the safety of others. Take them seriously, read them and understand them.

GENERAL RULES:

- All members should have a physical prior to rowing or have signed a medical release form. All high school program rowers will have to have a sports physical exam, as required by their schools each spring, and the exam will be kept on file at the school.
- If you have a medical condition that may affect your ability to row or train, let the coach know.
- All members must be able to swim 100 meters and tread water for two minutes. High school programs will conduct a swim test before each spring season.
- All members will have to sign a USRowing waiver each season. If under 18, a parent or guardian will need to sign it also.
- Do not use equipment that the Equipment Manager has not assigned to your program. All individuals and participants in programs should not use equipment without a coach's or Equipment Manager's permission and proper instructions on how to use it.
- Follow the coxswain's or bowman's instructions closely, especially when carrying boats, launching and landing.
- Carry oars with blades forward.
- Single scullers, bowmen, and coxswains should look where they are going frequently.
- Dress appropriately for air and water temperatures.
- Shells must have bow balls at all times.
- Never step over a boat; always walk around it.
- Gasoline tanks may not be left in the launches. All gasoline cans and tanks must be stored in the shed.

BACKGROUND CHECKS & PROHIBITED BEHAVIOR

The Program Director of the SCRC shall conduct and maintain records of criminal background checks for all individuals hired by SCRC that have a position of authority over or have frequent contact with athletes. Such background checks shall be in accordance with the guidelines set forth in SCRC policy.

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All Coaches, Administrators, and Board members must take the on-line SafeSport program found on USRowing's website.

The following types of misconduct are prohibited while participating in SCRC functions:

- **HAZING**
 - Defined as a form of harassment among athletes defined as any humiliating or dangerous activity expected of an athlete to join a group or be accepted by a formal or informal group, regardless of their willingness to participate. Hazing produces public humiliation, physical or emotional discomfort, bodily injury or public ridicule or creates a situation where public humiliation, physical or emotional discomfort, bodily injury or public ridicule is likely to occur. Hazing behaviors include, but are not limited to, the following general categories:
 - Humiliation: socially offensive, isolating or uncooperative behaviors.
 - Substance Abuse: abuse of tobacco, alcohol or illegal/legal drugs.
 - Dangerous Hazing: hurtful, aggressive, destructive, and disruptive behaviors.

- **BULLYING/HARASSMENT (including Sexual Harassment)**
 - Defined as the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or by threats, intimidation or abuse, including cyberbullying, that either has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with an individual's SCRC opportunities or benefits; or mental, emotional and/or physical well-being.

- **CYBERBULLYING**
 - Defined as harassment or bullying occurring through any form of electronic communication.

- **EMOTIONAL MISCONDUCT**
 - Defined as a pattern of deliberate, non-contact behavior that has the potential to cause emotional or psychological harm to an athlete. Noncontact behaviors may include but are not limited to:
 - Verbal Acts;
 - Physical Acts;
 - Acts that deny attention or support.
 - Emotional Misconduct may all include any act or conduct described as emotional abuse or misconduct under federal or state law (e.g. child abuse, child neglect).
 - Emotional Misconduct does not include professionally accepted coaching methods of skill enhancement, physical conditioning, team building, discipline or improving athletic performance.

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- **PHYSICAL MISCONDUCT**

- Defined as:

- Contact or non-contact conduct that results in, or reasonably threatens to, cause physical harm to an athlete or other participants; or to SCRC or others' property; or
- Any act or conduct described as physical abuse or misconduct under federal or state law (e.g. child abuse, child neglect, assault).

- Physical misconduct does not include professionally accepted coaching methods of skill enhancement, physical conditioning, team building, appropriate discipline or improving athlete performance. For example, hitting, punching and kicking are well regulated forms of contact in combat sports, but have no place in rowing.

- Examples of physical misconduct prohibited by this Policy may include, without limitation:

- Contact offenses. Behaviors may include:

- Punching, beating, biting, striking, choking or slapping an athlete; intentionally hitting an athlete with objects or sporting equipment;
- Providing alcohol to an athlete under the legal drinking age (under U.S. law, regardless of location of distribution);
- Providing illegal drugs or non-prescribed medications to any athlete;
- Encouraging or permitting an athlete to return to row prematurely following a serious injury (e.g., a concussion) and without the clearance of a medical professional;
- Prescribing dieting or other weight--control methods (e.g., weigh-ins, caliper tests) without regard for the nutritional wellbeing and health of athlete.

- Non-contact offenses. Behaviors may include:

- Isolating an athlete in a confined space (e.g., locking an athlete in a small space);
- Forcing an athlete to assume a painful stance or position for no athletic purpose (e.g. requiring an athlete to kneel on a harmful surface);
- Withholding, recommending against or denying adequate hydration, nutrition, medical attention or sleep.

- **SEXUAL MISCONDUCT (including Child Sexual Abuse);**

- Defined as:

- Any touching or non-touching sexual interaction that is (a) nonconsensual or forced, (b) coerced or manipulated, or (c) perpetrated in an aggressive, harassing, exploitative or threatening manner;

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- Any sexual interaction between an athlete and an individual with evaluative, direct or indirect authority. Such relationships involve an imbalance of power and are likely to impair judgment or be exploitative; or
- Any act or conduct described as sexual abuse or misconduct under federal or state law (e.g. sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, rape).
- Note:
 - An imbalance of power is always assumed between a coach and an athlete.
 - Minors cannot consent to sexual activity with an adult, and all sexual interaction between an adult and a minor is strictly prohibited.
 - This does not apply to a preexisting relationship between two spouses or life partners.
- Examples of sexual misconduct prohibited include, without limitation:
 - Non-touching offenses. Such behaviors may include:
 - A coach discussing his or her sex life with an athlete;
 - A coach asking an athlete about his or her sex life;
 - A coach requesting or sending a nude or partial dress photo to athlete;
 - Exposing athletes to pornographic material;
 - Sending athletes sexually explicit or suggestive electronic or written messages or photos (e.g. “sexting”);
 - Deliberately exposing an athlete to sexual acts;
 - Deliberately exposing an athlete to nudity (except in situations where locker rooms and changing areas are shared);
 - Sexual harassment; specifically, the sexual solicitation, physical advances, or verbal or nonverbal conduct that is sexual in nature, and
 - Is unwelcome, offensive or creates a hostile environment, and the offending individual knows or is told this;
 - Is sufficiently severe or intense to be harassing to a reasonable person in the context.
 - Touching offenses. Such behaviors may include:
 - Fondling an athlete’s breasts or buttocks;
 - Exchange of reward in sport (e.g., team placement, scores, feedback) for sexual favors;
 - Genital contact;
 - Sexual relations or intimacies between persons in a position of trust, authority and/or evaluative and supervisory control over athletes or other sport participants.
- Types of sexual misconduct may include:
 - Sexual Assault,

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- Sexual Harassment,
 - Sexual Abuse, or
 - Any other sexual intimacies that exploit an athlete.
- **ROMANTIC OR SEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS**
 - Which began during the sport relationship, between athletes or other participants and those individuals (a) with direct supervisory or evaluative control, or (b) are in a position of power and trust over the athlete or other participant.
 - Except in circumstances where no imbalance of power exists as determined by the Board of Directors of the SCRC. This prohibition on romantic or sexual relationships does not include those relationships where it can be demonstrated that there is no imbalance of power. For example, this prohibition does not apply to a pre-existing relationship between two spouses or life partners.

REPORTING MISCONDUCT/VIOLATIONS

The Program Director, Equipment Manager or a participant's immediate coach are the employees charged with receiving reports of misconduct or violations of this safety plan. Individuals may make an oral or written complaint. The SCRC will act to promptly investigate all complaints, verbal or written, formal or informal; and will promptly take appropriate action to respond to founded violations and incidents of misconduct.

Anyone who believes he/she has been subjected to misconduct, as well as any individual who is aware of and/or who has knowledge of, or witnesses any possible occurrence, shall immediately report same. The SCRC employee to whom the report is made shall document and take appropriate action to address the immediacy of the situation and shall promptly report in accordance with the following paragraphs:

- Upon receipt of a complaint, the employee shall promptly notify the Program Director in writing.
- After receipt of a complaint, the Program Director shall lead or supervise a thorough investigation of the alleged violation or misconduct. All complaints shall be treated as confidential and private to the extent possible within legal constraints.
- Based upon the results of this investigation, if the Program Director determines that a violation or misconduct has occurred, immediate corrective action will be taken as warranted, including preventing recurrence of the behavior.
- In the event that the Program Director is the alleged perpetrator, the report will be directed to the President of the SCRC.

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Any aggrieved person may appeal the Program Director's decisions to the SCRC Board of Directors.

ON THE WATER

ACCOMPANIMENT BY A LAUNCH:

- **ALL** junior/ high school boats must be accompanied by a launch. No exceptions!
- **ALL** recreational & instructional Syracuse Chargers programs must be accompanied by a launch.
- Competitive Master crews will occasionally go out to practice without a launch. Between November 1st and May 1st, crews going out without a launch will need to wear a life flotation device (each and every crew member). From May 1st to November 1st, it is recommended that they have one for each crew member in the shell with them.
- **4-Oared Rule (Competitive Masters)** – If the combined water/ambient air temperature does not total 90°F or greater (with water temperature at least 45°F) the boat must use at least four oars to ensure a minimum of stability in the water.

RULES OF THE RIVER

LAUNCHING & RECOVERY:

- Enter the dock from the south (lake side/left) end and exit the dock from the north (John Glenn/right) end.
- **ALL** boats shall launch from the dock with bows pointing to the north (towards the John Glenn Bridge) or away from the lake and will land from the south (as if coming off the lake).
- There is enough dock space to accommodate four 8+'s.
 - During heavy traffic times there should never be more than two outgoing shells on the dock if crews are attempting to return to the dock.
 - All outgoing crews should proceed as far north on the dock as possible and leave the southern spots for incoming crews.
- Launching is in order of lining up on the ramp.
- Launch as soon as an area opens up, preferably at the most northerly space available.
- Crew trying to land should have right of way at the south half of the dock to avoid congestion in front of the boathouse.
- Once the shell is in the water, immediately obtain oars and vacate the dock as quickly as possible. Tie-in on the water if other rowers are waiting for launch space.
 - More extensive work (such as replacing an oarlock or a broken foot stretcher) should be done with the boat in slings or on the rack.

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- Minor adjustments (such as changing foot stretcher position or oarlock height) should be made on the water, not at the dock.
- No racing or full power pieces are permitted in the launch area.
- The dock should be cleared as quickly as possible after returning from an outing.
- Oars should not be pulled in until ALL rowers have exited the boat.
- Shells and launches that will be on the water before sunrise or after dusk MUST be equipped with lights (both bow and stern). All boats must be off the water *soon* after sunset.

TRAFFIC PATTERN:

- The traffic pattern should be counter clockwise, or “right hand rule” when traveling on the river.
- It is recommended that crews stay to the right of the middle (closest to shore) with the coach’s launch positioned on the left of the crews to insure visibility and safety of all shells.
- When on the lake, it is recommended that crews should move towards the west shore (I-690 side) or the east shore (Liverpool side) depending on the expected wind pattern for the practice.

IN THE EVENT OF AN ACCIDENT:

- Stay with the boat and wait for a launch to rescue.
- Hold an oar upright in the air to attract attention.
- Make a phone call for help.
 - Have an emergency number stored in your phone.
- Oars are NOT approved personal flotation devices for rowers.
- In the absence of a launch, or if the shore is close by, rowers may swim to shore with a flotation device.
- Do not attempt to remove clothing in cold water; even wet clothing will delay the onset of hypothermia.

WEATHER CONDITION REQUIREMENTS:

- Rowing is not allowed when ice or other obstructions are floating or submerged in the water or when conditions exist (e.g., wind, strong current, waves, storm clouds, lightning, thunder, or fog) that present a potential hazard to rowers' safety.
- The Board or Program Director shall have ultimate authority to determine whether boats may or may not go on the water. In the absence of the Program Manager, the program coaches shall make the determination.
- Boats must return to the dock at the first sound of thunder, sign of lightning, or if fog sets in. If a storm is already upon you, take the boats ashore to the nearest safe point (which may be the boathouse) and wait for the storm to pass. Boats may return to the water 30

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minutes after thunder is last heard or lightning is last seen. The use of a weather application on a phone is recommended to keep coaches and athletes informed of approaching weather, good or bad.

LAUNCH OPERATION:

- Launches must only be driven by coaches or other qualified drivers, according to NYS Boating laws.
- Launch drivers should have 360° of visibility of the water; the bow must be weighed down so that vision is not impaired.
 - Please **DO NOT** use large rocks from shore and instead use provided cinderblocks, which are easier to remove if necessary.
- Launch capacities should not be exceeded.
- Launch personnel should always be ready to execute a rescue.
 - This may include a variety of duties such as assisting in the extraction of members from the water and getting them safely to shore or simply staying on site to make sure all are safe until professional personnel arrive on scene.
- Launch drivers should be careful of boats in the opposing lane of river traffic and should slow down to not wake crews heading in the opposite direction.
- All launches must be equipped with the following safety equipment, as required by NYS law.
 - PFDs for **ALL** the rowers in the shell(s) and anyone in the launch
NOTE: Everyone in the launch must wear a PFD between November 1st and May 1st per NYS law regardless of age.
 - Marine Radio/Cell Phone
 - SOS Flag
 - First Aid Kit
 - Blanket(s)
 - Anchor & Rope
 - Paddle
 - Whistle/Air Horn
 - Lights (Early Morning or Dusk)
- Use of launches outside of program hours requires the Equipment Managers approval.

NOTE: It is strongly recommended that Coaches have **CURRENT** CPR and First Aid Training, a Boating Safety Course, and USRowing Coaching Certification.

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INTERNET RESOURCE LINKS

New York State Recommended Practices for Rowing Clubs:

- <http://nysparks.com/recreation/boating/documents/RecommendedPracticesforRowingClubs.pdf>

Lightning:

- <http://www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov/more.htm>

Hypothermia:

- <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/hypothermia.html>

Boating Safety:

- <http://boatsafe.com/nauticalknowhow/regequip.htm>

