

## Veteran Crew – What to Expect

Competitive rowing with Yarmouth Crew is a fun, exhilarating and rewarding experience that requires serious commitment, focus and dedication.

Once you've learned the basic stroke, the next step is to improve your technique through drills, exercises and lots and lots and lots of practice. While rowing is a lifelong sport that anyone can learn, achieving mastery is a challenge and takes hard work. Our goal for you as a varsity rower is to help you improve your individual technique while making your boat as fast and competitive as possible.

*Parents – we are offering an adult learn-to-row and a return-to-rowing clinic in June!  
Email Chris at [chris@yarmouth-rowing.org](mailto:chris@yarmouth-rowing.org) to learn more.*

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## First Things First

It is important to note that while we share the Yarmouth High School facilities for dryland practice, erg storage and other events, **we are NOT a Yarmouth High School sport**. We do not get any funding from the school or town and have to manage all of our races, transportation, equipment, safety launches, gas, boat trailer, and coaching costs, etc. from participation fees, Booster support and fundraising events. We do our best to stretch our budget but the sport of rowing is expensive.

*While crew is expensive, it is not an elitist sport. Everyone is welcome!*

**The Yarmouth Youth Rowing Program is the youth division of the Yarmouth Rowing Club**, an independent community organization with rowers of all ages and abilities from a number of surrounding towns. <http://yarmouthrowingclub.com>.

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## Fees for Spring 2015

**Varsity: Per student total: \$525.**

*(\$310 participation fee + \$190. coaching fee + Fitness Success fee \$25.) We accept checks made payable to Friends of Yarmouth Rowing, Debit/Credit cards (MC & Visa)*

**Easy Payment Plan:** 3 payments of \$175, due Feb 23, April 1 and May 2.

**We want any student who wants to row to be able to do so regardless of the family's ability to pay. Scholarship** is available. Please submit the financial aid request form by mail to Amy Smith, 19 Kellogg St., Portland, Maine 04101 or via email to our treasurer, [AmyBWSmith@gmail.com](mailto:AmyBWSmith@gmail.com). **Postmarked by March 1, 2015.**

## Setting Expectations

**100% Attendance is expected - You are allowed 1 un-excused absence – but we hope you never need to use it. You get 1 warning. After that you will be asked to leave the crew, no fees refunded.**

Unlike track, soccer or basketball, if a rower is absent from practice, their boat CANNOT go out unless we find a sub. With a short season, extremely limited water time, a large crew and a busy boatyard, finding a sub at the last minute is disruptive to the entire crew and unfair to your boat mates.

We expect 100% attendance unless you have an EXCUSED absence.

If in doubt, email *ahead of time* to get excused. Use this and only this email!

[hscoach@yarmouth-rowing.org](mailto:hscoach@yarmouth-rowing.org)

Please email before NOON to get excused. After 12 noon, call or text your coach.

### Excused Absences (get excused first)

- Illness (out sick from school – or sent home from school) **The school does not share any info with us about kids out sick.**
- Physical Therapy or Dr. appointment (try to schedule on OFF days)
- Emergency, funeral, unavoidable family travel plans
- Make-up test, teacher conference
- College visits, interviews

### These are NOT excused absences

- Babysitting
- Your birthday
- Can't get a ride (call, text or email a coach)
- Music, dance, voice lessons or other extracurricular activity
- Work (talk to your coach about scheduling crew and work)
- Too much homework
- Didn't bring the right clothes, shoes, etc.
- Injured - you need to come anyway (within reason – check with coach)

*Bottom line - we expect full attendance at all practices, even if injured - you can always help out somewhere.*

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## The Google Doc Schedule – Check Your Email 3x a Day!

The Royal River is tidal and we must plan our practice times accordingly. A draft schedule is put together pre-season to map out which weeks we have water and which weeks we have dryland. Please print and post this so you know where to be!

**An updated weekly calendar will be posted as a google doc on Sunday.** All participants must enter YES for each and every practice they will be attending.

**If you cannot make a practice due to a valid reason (see excused absences above) you must put NO in the google doc, add a reason in the note section AND email [hscoach@yarmouth-rowing.org](mailto:hscoach@yarmouth-rowing.org). DO ALL 3! Get in the habit of checking email!!**

## **Mandatory Swim Test and Safety Video Review – Fri, April 1, 3-4:30**

All members of the crew – veteran and novice – must participate in an annual swim test and safety video review. We begin by reviewing a couple cold-water safety videos and what to do in the event of a flip. We then move to the pool where we practice what to do if a boat flips (in full rowing gear) and complete a 3-length swim test: one length in full gear and 2 lengths in a bathing suit.

**Team Captains** will also be announced at this event. (*See page 6 on how Crew Captains are chosen.*)

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## **Fitness Success**

One of the privileges of being a varsity rower with Yarmouth Crew is the unique opportunity to train with a personal trainer, Theresa Saxton, the owner of Fitness Success. [www.fitness-success.biz](http://www.fitness-success.biz). Theresa, a rower herself, guides the team through 4 weeks of pre-season training, building up core strength, flexibility and endurance. By the time we hit the water in April, the team is strong and ready to row hard. These workouts take place on Tues. and Thurs. 3-4 p.m., in lieu of erging. Please help keep her studio clean by bringing clean sneakers (*no street shoes allowed in the studio*) and a water bottle. Be sure to add your favorite music to the workout playlist! Theresa will also help the team develop good sportsmanship and leadership skills as part of their training. **No session on St. Patrick's Day! 3/17.**

**Please do NOT arrive any earlier than 2:50 pm. She has other clients in the studio and the influx of 30+ kids can be extremely disruptive! Thanks!**

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## **Novice Tanks Day – Saturday, April 4**

We will need a few veteran rowers to help us with Novice Tanks Day. If you are interested in volunteering, let Chris know in person or via email. [chris@yarmouth-rowing.org](mailto:chris@yarmouth-rowing.org).

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## **Water Practices**

The first few weeks of water practice have the novices rowing by pairs in boats with experienced rowers. As a veteran rower, you may be asked to row a few practices with the novices in addition to your veteran practice. Bring extra clothes to keep warm as there is a fair amount of sitting involved as the novices learn to row.

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## **Pre-Season and Dryland Practices at 4-5:30 pm at YHS**

**Varsity will have Pre-season dryland practice on the ergs at Yarmouth High school on Mondays and Wednesdays starting Monday, March 2 until April 6** and then whenever the tides and/or weather is unfavorable. As the temperatures rise, we may add running and other outdoor activities to build endurance, etc. Be prepared by packing your sports bag with running shoes, water bottle & a light jacket. (*see “what to pack in your sports bag”.*)

## Rowing Camp – Saturday, April 30

This is a **mandatory Saturday double-practice day** that gives us a full day on the water to get the novices up to speed, work on coxswain steering skills, learn and practice racing starts, determine boat lineups, hold seat races and generally get ready for our first race the following weekend. We set up 2 water practices and 2 off-water sessions for all crews that include videotaping and reviews, drills and techniques, advanced adjustment techniques for rigging, foot stretchers and oars and a snack break. A full day but fun!

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## The Regattas

We have 3 regattas this season: Attendance is expected at ALL regattas *even if you are not racing*. We will assign you a key support role for your crew.

**The Lowell Invitational in Lowell, Mass, Saturday May 14**

**The Moose on the Malden, in Malden, Mass, Sunday, May 22**

**MYRA (Maine Youth Rowing Association), Monday, May 30 at Waynflete (Portland)**

*We will send details about these events as we get closer.*

*For Lowell and Malden, please plan to drop off your rower at the Yarmouth Visitors' Center to meet the bus for a 6 am departure. Coxswains may depart earlier in cars.*

*After the race, we carpool over to meet the boat trailer at the boat yard, rig and put the boats away and will carpool back to the visitors center and be ready for pick up at the around 6.*

***Crew families are encouraged to attend these events and cheer on our racers! We provide a fabulous hot lunch for everyone. Bring a chair, camera and spirit!***

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## Post Season

**Fun Row & Decommissioning the Fleet** - Tues, May 31, where we mix things up a bit. Tons of fun + swimming! Then clean and put the boats away for the summer.

**Banquet**– Wed, June 1, end-of-the-season awards and recognition evening.

## What to Wear

Dressing for crew is a delicate balancing act as the temperature on the water can be significantly cooler than on dry land and can change over the course of practice as the sun gets weaker or stronger, wind picks up, etc. Once you get working, however, you need to be able to cool off. The solution is smart, hard-working **LAYERS!**

### Tops

Layer 1 – under armour or similar moisture-wicking top, short or long sleeve

Layer 2 – Performance fabric top, long-sleeve - **NO COTTON!!!**

Layer 3 – Fleece jacket or vest or similar – light but warm – **NO COTTON!!**

Layer 4 – wind breaker or light jacket

### Bottoms

Under armour or spandex – long in early season, shorts later on.

Close fitting shorts on top (optional) – **NO LONG, BAGGY SHORTS OR BULKY SWEATS!** *They can get caught in the wheels of the slide.*

### Other

Water bottle (or 2!) **MANDATORY!!** – **we don't have drinking water on site.**

Warm hat and/or ball cap, especially if sunny

Thin Gloves

Sunglasses

2-3 pairs of socks, smart wool or cotton blend

sports watch if you have one

### Shoes

Crocs, boots, sandals, slip on sneakers or other easy-to-get-on-or-off shoes. We don't wear shoes in the boats as they have them built-in already. You'll be removing your shoes on the dock into designated "shoe bins", labeled by boat. You'll retrieve them upon landing and have to be able to get them on and off **FAST**. These shoes will get wet and muddy and dusty so choose rubber, plastic, etc. You do wear socks in the boat and these will get wet too so always pack spares! Your cold feet will thank you!

### Coxswains

You need extra layers to make sure you stay warm and dry. Follow the list above but make the jacket a bit heavier and add waterproof/wind pants over the spandex. You may also want a hood, neck warmer or scarf to keep warm. You **CAN** wear shoes in the boat so sneakers or boots are fine. A jacket with zipper pockets is best.

## What to Pack in Your Sports Bag

Practice can be cold and wet – either from the weather or just from your splashing boat mates – so **ALWAYS bring a sports bag with a *complete change of clothes*.** These items **CAN** be cotton.

Pack sunscreen, bug stuff, bandaids, antibacterial gel, rowing gloves or tape for wrapping your hands, granola bars or other healthy snack that won't spoil, spare water bottle (full), cell phone, extra socks, hats, gloves and running shoes!

*If you need an inhaler or other medical item, make sure you bring that too and give it to your coach or cox to carry in the boat!*

For dry land practice, T-shirt, spandex shorts and optional top shorts (not baggy!) and running shoes will be just fine. **BUT** – *always be prepared to run outside too!*

## Choosing Captains - The Policy

Our goal with the Captain policy is to be transparent, eliminate undue peer pressure and open the selection process up to any and all interested participants, regardless of grade. We will select up to 5 captains. We are looking for a balance of boys and girls, both rowers and coxswains.

### Here's the plan...

Any veteran who is interested in being considered for a captain role will submit a brief written statement – **an open letter to the crew** - on why they feel they should be considered and detail what makes them good captain material. Please note that the content, not the writing ability, is the key here. *This is not an English assignment but a heartfelt statement to your coaches and fellow rowers/coxswains.* The crew will read the letters and vote (anonymously) for their top 5 choices. The coaches will review the results and make the final determination, which is final. Invitations will be sent to finalists and the Captains will be announced at the swim test.

### Some of the qualities we would be looking for include:

Prior leadership experience (not a requirement!)

Listening ability

Time management skills

Leading by example

Comfortable communicating with peers/coaches

Comfortable asking questions when unclear about something

Willing to assist with novice practices

Willing to teach novices or veterans how to tie down, rig, adjust, wash, wrap, etc.

Willing and able to come early, stay late and do “other duties as assigned”

Willing to coordinate car pooling efforts and shuttling (if able to drive others)

Willing to plan captains' practices & spirit days

High Team spirit

Friendly and helpful (in a quiet OR outgoing manner)

Sense of humor

Patient and kind

Healthy competitive spirit

Grace under pressure

Glass half-full attitude

Willing to help other crews as needed

Willing to row any seat, any side, any boat as needed (within reason)

Ability to diffuse tense situations with calm reasoning

Ability to minimize gossip, bullying or unsportsmanlike conduct

Open to constructive criticism, and honest feedback

Willing to get the launches set up and put away

Willing to double check tie downs, safety locker gear and boat trailer gear

We do not expect anyone to have ALL these qualities...this is just to get you started thinking. Provide examples when possible. Use your unique voice to add other qualities or skills you feel are important to being a crew captain. Good luck!

## Participant Code of Conduct

The sport of rowing is one which requires an unusual amount of close interaction and cooperation between teammates who often have varying degrees of experience and leadership skills. There are times, especially during race events, where coaches are not on site to adjudicate conflicts or referee disputes. There are instances where a parent or parents may not understand why a decision has been made. It is with these points in mind that we have put together a list of guidelines, expectations and resources for team members and parents.

### Guidelines for Yarmouth Rowing Behavior

Yarmouth Rowing is committed to helping all students succeed in becoming disciplined individuals who act with integrity and respect, and recognizes that a strong club/school/home partnership is essential in achieving this goal.

The strength and quality of the rowing program rests upon a foundation of trust, consideration, compassion, respect and personal integrity. Accordingly, all students are expected to conduct themselves in a courteous manner, whether at school, at the boatyard, on the water, at Fitness Success, at a fundraiser, at a workday, on the bus or at a regatta.

Obscene gestures, foul language and/or racist, sexist, intimidating, belittling, demeaning or other offensive comments, *even in jest*, are unacceptable and have no place on crew. Hurtful, exclusionary or demeaning speech or action can have damaging consequences for individuals and for the community, particularly when they take the form of persistent patterns of behavior such as bullying and/or harassment.

All students are expected to respect the rights and individuality of others, and to demonstrate care for themselves, for others, for the quality of their athletic endeavors, for their gear, as well as club equipment and property.

### Civil Behavior

The Yarmouth Rowing Program expects students to behave civilly toward one another. Kindness, courtesy and mutual respect should characterize behavior at all times, whether in person or online.

Students are expected to work together with captains, coaches, staff and parent volunteers to address any incident of uncivil or otherwise inappropriate behavior in a way that seeks to resolve conflict and restore trust.

Yarmouth Youth Rowing recognizes that socially responsible attitudes and disciplines are developed over time, and that young people will make mistakes along the way as they develop both understanding and self-control. We seek to create a climate in which all community members can feel safe, secure and valued, both physically and emotionally.

## Addressing Grievances

Coaches are available to hear out and moderate any disputes and to answer questions you may have. Captains will serve as go-betweens for rowers and coxswains who have grievances either with each other or with other participants. They should be the first line of complaint – they will bring issues to the coaches. Captains are available to approach coaches if an aggrieved party does not wish to approach the coach him/herself.

## Captain Coach – Needed!

In an effort to assist the captains in their role as team leaders, we have created a special position: The Captain Coach. Andrea Maker, a parent, attorney and competitive master rower with the adult group, has served as our Captain Coach in past seasons. She (or her successor) will work with the captains individually, and as a group, to help them develop leadership skills, communication techniques and conflict resolution expertise. [amaker@pierceatwood.com](mailto:amaker@pierceatwood.com), cell: 776-9500.

## Parent Liaison – Needed!

In an effort to assist the parents with issues, questions and concerns, we have created a brand new (volunteer) position: The Parent Liaison. This individual will work with parents to answer any and all questions about practice and race protocols, parking, carpooling, clothing, expectations, scheduling Dr. appointments, etc. **If you are interested in helping out in this role**, please contact Chris or one of the coaches. Coaching questions should still be addressed to an individual coach, Program Director or the coaching staff as a group.

## Guidelines

1. When you come to crew, be present and leave your outside problems at home. The river, or the gym, is NOT the place to gossip, complain about other people, whine about homework or the workout, or carry grudges. Bring a positive attitude, respect for your teammates, coaches and opponents, and a willingness to work hard.
2. Unless you are SPECIFICALLY ASKED TO CONTRIBUTE, please do not offer advice about rowing technique to your teammates (or your opponents). Coaches are hired to coach, and while a boat meeting about what is or is not working in the boat is appropriate at times, these discussions should take place with a coach present.
3. Rowing is not the place for exclusive friendships, romances, or cliques. While you are at practice or during regattas, each of you is a representative of the entire team. You must strive to make your boat as fast as it can be but also to make the team as well behaved and well meaning and seamless as you can.
4. Be flexible. Be helpful. Make an effort daily to assist other crew members with mastering crew procedures and routines such as erg storage, care of workout mats, water systems, washing boats, tie downs, safety locker key, safety gear, slings, rigging, loading and unloading the trailer, coxswain gear, cleaning up, etc.



## Choosing Varsity Boats – The Policy

*We want to provide everyone with a SAFE and valuable rowing experience. We have limited water, just 3 safety launches and 6 coaches to work with. This situation dictates how many boats we can have on the water at any time. To accommodate as many rowers as possible without making cuts, we have devised the following 3-part plan.*

We will have a maximum of 6 veteran boats or 3 novice boats on the water, in split sessions - one coach/launch for every 2 veteran crews and one coach/launch for each novice crew.

Veteran rowers/coxswains should plan to be swopped around in the weeks leading up to Camp Day so the coaches can assess ability and determine the best boating lineups. Do your best and let the coaches do their work.

G1, G2, B1 and B2 are the top race boats and, once set, will race all 3 races - subject to illness an injury as always.

The remaining rowers will make up the JV crew and will be assigned as follows. The Lowell JV, made up of one boys boat and one girls boat, will train for and race at Lowell. The Malden JV will train for and race at Malden.

When it is not their week to row/race, the “spare” JV rowers will serve as subs for other boats and will be expected to attend and help out at all practices.

Everyone will get to race at least once and we will try and race everyone at MYRA. Please note: bus space limited to 50 riders so carpooling may be necessary.

Seat racing may be done for any crew at the discretion of the coach.

All race crews will be finalized at Camp Day and announced at the next practice.

**The race crews will be determined by attendance, aptitude and attitude combined with erg scores, effort and performance on the water.**

### **Part 1 – Pre-Season**

First and foremost are the 3 A's: aptitude, attitude and attendance. These factors will be assessed by the coaches during dryland practice – both on the ergs and at Fitness Success.

We expect you to come to every practice, be on time, work hard, do your best and support your fellow crew members.

We also expect you to be smart about food/hydration, get enough rest and manage your time and school workload well so you can sustain your efforts for the full 12-week season. (Don't worry - we'll help you out with all of with this stuff.)

## **Part 2 – Water Practice**

Once we hit the water, the coaches will be mixing up crews to try and determine the best lineups they can based on size, skill, talent, balance, flexibility, ratio, strength, etc. Keep in mind that the coaches have to quickly evaluate the newest veterans and figure out how they will fit in with the more experienced veterans.

*Please be patient, flexible and open to the coach's decisions. Do not campaign for a particular seat or boat or coxswain during this time. **Note: We asked for your preferred seat/side at sign up so we have it on record.***

We expect everyone to put in their best effort everyday to ensure that whatever boat they are in has a productive practice and goes fast. Again, be patient and flexible as the coaches move people around. No seats are final or guaranteed.

## **Part 3 – Seat Racing & Final Boats**

Crew is a competitive sport and at Yarmouth Rowing, we aim to put together the fastest crews possible. That said, selecting a fast crew is as much art as science. It's hard to know what combination of rowers will be the fastest. Oddly enough, what works on paper does not always translate to the boat. Therefore, the coaches may seat race rowers to determine the fastest lineups.

### **How Seat Racing Works**

Seat racing is a series of short, head-to-head races in which a coach is evaluating 2 rowers at a time.

For example, let's say Boat A and Boat B are very competitive. The coach does a short, measured distance race with the original lineups. There is a virtual tie. He then switches the 3-seat in each boat and re-races them. Now Boat B is the clear winner. The 3-seat rower who was in the winning boat is considered to have "won" the seat race. The coach may continue to re-arrange and seat race the rowers until the fastest boats are set.

If all goes as planned (?!?), coaches will set their race lineups at the end of the All Day Rowing Camp on Saturday, May 2. We will pull from the JV boats to sub in to the top crews due to illness or injury.

*If you do not make a top boat, take it as a learning opportunity to improve your rowing. You never know when an opening will appear and you want to be ready to race on short notice! We will make every effort to make sure everyone gets to race at least once if not twice.*

***When you join the crew, you are agreeing to cooperate with this plan and abide by the coaches decisions and lineups. If you are not comfortable with this, you may want to consider another sport or rowing program.***