



DC Strokes Rowing Club

Membership Handbook 2024

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Introduction and History

This is the Membership Handbook for the DC Strokes Rowing Club. It describes the Club and the expectations, roles, and responsibilities of members and coaches. It is expected that this document will be updated annually as necessary and that it will be made available to every member at the beginning of every season.

History

DC Strokes Rowing Club (DC Strokes) is the oldest and largest LGBTQ+ rowing club in the country. The club began in 1991 with eight members of the DC Front Runners running group looking for a cross-training activity. With some old rented equipment and a lot of enthusiasm, it took only three years for the team to grow into a cohesive, independent organization that was competing regularly and ready to make the commitment to purchase racing shells and other equipment. DC Strokes had over 50 active members by 1994.

As the club grew, its mission also grew to include a commitment to bridging gaps between communities by building an inclusive environment, fostering personal growth, and promoting the true spirit of sportsmanship. DC Strokes programs offer opportunities for rowers of all experience levels regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, or income.

Originally rowing on the Potomac River, DC Strokes moved to the Anacostia River and became a proud member of the Anacostia Community Boathouse Association (ACBA) in 2004. DC Strokes is a member organization of USRowing, the national governing body for the sport of Rowing in the United States.

DC Strokes Rowing Club puts on the annual Stonewall Regatta, which is the traditional opening regatta of the Sprint Season in the Mid-Atlantic Region. The Stonewall Regatta began in 1994 during preparations for Gay Games IV in New York City. About a year before the Games, DC Strokes learned the host committee for the NYC Games was dropping rowing from the sports line-up. In honor of the 25th anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising in Greenwich Village in 1969, considered the start of the gay civil rights movement, this event was named “Stonewall Regatta.” The event was such a success that DC Strokes decided to bring it home to Washington, D.C., where it has since been held every June. The event typically coincides with DC Pride festivities.

DC Strokes is a volunteer-run, not-for-profit organization, and tax exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code. The Sponsorship Code of Conduct may be found here: [Sponsorship Code of Conduct | DC Strokes Rowing](#).

Mission Statement

Building on a legacy of inclusion as the Nation’s oldest LGBTQ+ rowing club, DC Strokes Rowing Club offers access to the competitive sport of rowing to people of all backgrounds and athletic abilities in the greater Washington, DC area at their home in the Anacostia River by:

- Providing an opportunity for all people to learn, develop, compete, and succeed in a supportive environment,
- Developing outreach programs that promote general fitness, rowing, and environmental stewardship to individuals who might otherwise not have such opportunities, and
- Empowering and raising the visibility of LGBTQ+ athletes.

DC Strokes holds fast to the conviction that LGBTQ+ rowers and scullers can be formidable athletes and competitors. Our goal is for DC Strokes to be a platform for competitive success and to increase the profile of LGBTQ+ rowers and scullers in the community while promoting a spirit of camaraderie amongst our members. Our programs are open to all participants, and we aspire foremost to create a safe and supportive environment for LGBTQ+ athletes and their allies. We are committed to bridging gaps between communities by building an inclusive environment, fostering personal growth, and promoting the true spirit of sportsmanship.

DC Strokes Rowing Club Board Members for 2024

President	Amanda Kenner president@dcstrokes.org
Secretary	David Scherzer secretary@dcstrokes.org
Treasurer	Nadege Nouviale treasurer@dcstrokes.org
Programs Director	Kevin Bazan programs@dcstrokes.org
Membership Director	Peter Viverito membership@dcstrokes.org
Development Director	Peter Heisler development@dcstrokes.org
Operations Director	Emma Steiner operations@dcstrokes.org
Outreach Programs & Social Director	Brendan Lumbrezer outreach@dcstrokes.org
Digital Operations Director	Pedro Alcocer digital@dcstrokes.org
ACBA Delegate	Mark Puskar aba@dcstrokes.org
TeamDC Representative	Rondell Milton eamdc@dcstrokes.org
Stonewall Director	Christina Dragon director@stonewallregatta.org
Advocacy Director	Vieve Fecteau advocacy@dcstrokes.org
Communications Director	Will Cyphers ommunications@dcstrokes.org

Elections Officer	Brian Fisher elections@dcstrokes.org
Uniform Director	Rodney Rudd uniforms@dcstrokes.org
Previous President	Christina Dragon pastpresident@dcstrokes.org

Expectations and Responsibilities of Membership

DC Strokes depends on member participation and commitment for its operational and programmatic success. Rowing is a collaborative sport and membership in DC Strokes requires the same spirit of camaraderie and collaboration.

In addition to the responsibilities outlined below, all members are required to familiarize themselves with the contents of this manual, and any other additional rules, safety guidelines and notices DC Strokes provides.

Safety

Safety is DC Strokes's #1 Priority. While we certainly all hope that we will not encounter any incidents, accidents can and will happen, so it is imperative that each and every member knows what to do in the case of an emergency. It is the responsibility of every member of DC Strokes to read and understand the Safety Manual.

Additionally, each member of DC Strokes, whether a coach, coxswain, or rower, is required to have watched and be familiar with the USRowing Safety Video and the DC Strokes Emergency Action Plan as well as be familiar with and follow the USRowing Safety Guidelines. URLs for these are shown below:

- USRowing Safety Video: [HERE](#)
- DC Strokes Emergency Action Plan: [HERE](#)
- USRowing Safety Guidelines: [HERE](#)

These safety policies in this handbook are intended to increase the level of safety for DC Strokes members. All DC Strokes members are responsible for knowing and adhering to these policies and the organization strives to foster a collective awareness of the priority importance of safety with regard to risks, liabilities, and the enjoyment of the sport of rowing. Knowing what to do in the case of an emergency makes the difference between an incident being minor or catastrophic. While fatalities in the rowing community are fortunately rare, don't assume something serious can't happen.

SAFETY IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY. If you see something, say something!

DC Strokes members are also encouraged to seek out Boating Safety certification from the DC Harbor Patrol. Please contact the Operations Director at operations@dcstrokes.org for more information.

Code of Conduct and Display of Good Sportsmanship

All DC Strokes members are expected to exhibit acceptable behavior at all times at the boathouse, on and off the water, and at regattas when representing DC Strokes. DC Strokes members are expected to display respect for all rowing community members regardless of race, gender identity, creed, or sexual orientation, and any other protected class.

All coaches and athletes operating out of the boathouse are representatives of DC Strokes Rowing Club and the Anacostia Community Boathouse Association and should act accordingly when on the water. Courtesy and civil language are expected at all times.

ACBA shares this stretch of the Anacostia River with other users and organizations. Coaches and crews must do everything possible to avoid interfering with other watercraft and crossing fishing lines.

If an incident occurs involving Harbor Patrol, neighboring marinas, local fishermen, or ACBA member organizations please report it immediately to a member of the DC Strokes Board. An Incident Report Form can also be found on our website under the Member Resources section.

Everyone has a responsibility to help maintain a cordial environment and to treat all members and neighbors with respect.

SafeSport Policy

In accordance with USRowing requirements and guidance, DC Strokes has established policies designed to assure athletes' safety by promoting an environment free from bullying, hazing, harassment (including sexual harassment), emotional misconduct, physical misconduct and sexual misconduct (including child sexual abuse). This is done in conjunction with the United States Olympic Committee in its SafeSport campaign aimed at raising awareness, stopping child abuse in sport and creating a safe culture in sports programs across the country. While the primary focus is to safeguard children, these policies extend to all age groups including masters rowing.

In 2017, DC Strokes Rowing Club adopted a SafeSport Policy. You can review our [SafeSport Policy](#) by logging into the DC Strokes website and clicking into Membership Resources under the Membership tab.

Statement of Inclusion and Transgender and Non-Binary Identity Policy

Building on our spirit of inclusivity, the DC Strokes Board of Directors developed this policy to ensure that

DC Strokes is on the forefront of advocacy with regards to transgender and non-binary athletes, especially with regards to the following:

- DC Strokes Rowing Club shall proactively ensure that we are welcoming and prepared to incorporate members with transgender and non-binary identities (gender-neutral, genderqueer, etc.) by ensuring that our coaches are familiar with USRowing Rules regarding participation by transgender athletes, coaches are sensitive to coaching transgender and non-binary individuals, and all teammates are welcoming and inviting of their peers.
- DC Strokes Rowing Club shall ensure that any special programs are welcoming of all individuals whose identity or expression aligns with the focus of the program (e.g. women's program).
- DC Strokes Rowing Club shall encourage the use of requested or gender neutral pronouns. To this end, we have updated our members' profiles to provide appropriate options for gender and pronouns.

If any member or coach is a victim of harassment or discrimination or is made aware of harassment or discrimination against another member or coach, it shall be immediately reported to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall promptly intervene, taking appropriate action to resolve the issue.

Ensuring that our programs are welcoming to all individuals is a core value of our organization, and DC Strokes Rowing is proud to serve, encourage, and promote the accomplishments of all athletes!

To participate in an event hosted or sanctioned by USRowing, a rower must be registered with USRowing as the sex in which the rower wants to compete; either male, female, or non-binary. A rower may always register as the rower's sex assigned at birth. DC Strokes encourages its members to carefully consider this at the time of their registration with USRowing. When forced to accommodate US Rowing policy, DC Strokes will compose mixed lineups that contain 50% rowers of any gender and 50% women rowers. Rowers who registered as non-binary should identify to their coach(es) which gender category or categories they would like to compete in (men's, women's, mixed, nonbinary). In the case of any challenges to a rower's entry into a category, the dispute will be handled by the DC Strokes Coaches or their designee and the regatta's organizers.

For DC Strokes hosted regattas our gender policy is that mixed boats are made up of more than one gender with no restrictions on number of people with a particular assigned sex at birth status.

USRowing Membership and Waivers

Before engaging in any activity with DC Strokes Rowing Club, members are required to annually sign the current USRowing Release Waiver. DC Strokes receives insurance coverage as part of membership with USRowing and the waiver and individual membership in USRowing are requirements of that membership. Non-compliance will prevent you from being boated.

As of 2023, USRowing charges \$20 for a Basic Membership for Current Members and \$25 for a Basic Membership for New Members. Links to the USRowing membership and waiver websites are given below.

- USRowing Waiver Link: <https://membership.usrowing.org/>
- USRowing Waiver Instructions: <http://www.usrowing.org/sign-a-waiver/>
- DC Strokes Club Code: **M4SX6**

DC Strokes rowers and coxswains who expect to compete in any USRowing-owned regattas (such as Masters Nationals) should purchase the Regatta Package add-on, which USRowing requires for participation at such events.

Timely Payment of Fees

DC Strokes sustains itself in large part through program fees paid by club members. Program fees pay for costs of programming including coaching, gas, use of rowing equipment, and club overhead including ACBA member fees, equipment repair and replacement, liability insurance coverage and similar. Timely payment of all fees is essential to the continued success of the rowing programs and the financial viability of the club.

Annual membership and program fees are generally due in advance of participation in club activities. Payment of all membership and program fees is handled through Boathouse Connect or in collaboration with the DC Strokes Treasurer.

Non-payment of membership, program, or regatta and trailering fees can result in a member not being boated at practice or not being allowed to re-join the club in the next season until their account is settled. More information on Regatta Fees can be found below.

Members experiencing financial hardship or other special circumstances that constrain their ability to pay are strongly encouraged to speak to the Treasurer to see if arrangements can be made.

Membership Fees

DC Strokes membership fees are renewable annually prior to March 1. Membership fees are nonrefundable and are in addition to program fees. Membership fees are required of all rowing and non-rowing DC Strokes members (e.g., coxswains).

The schedule for program-specific program fees can be found at [Join DC Strokes | DC Strokes Rowing](#).

Guest Rowers

DC Strokes seeks to create a formalized path for guest rowers to participate in on-water practices. Participation of DC Strokes rowers will be prioritized when making lineups. The guest rower will coordinate with either the morning coach or the evening coach respectively, and the Program Director, on dates the guest rower seeks to row with DC Strokes, and when the guest rower is able to tour the facilities. Prior to arriving at the boathouse, the guest rower will review the DC Strokes Membership Handbook,

(focusing on our safety protocol). Fees to guest rowers include the US Rowing Membership Fee and the DC Strokes Membership Fee.

Program Fees

Program fees are paid prior to or early on (if paying in installments) in the participation in any DC Strokes program. Payment of these fees is required for participation in any program. The schedule for program-specific program fees can be found at [Join DC Strokes | DC Strokes Rowing](#).

Student Discount

Rowers who demonstrate enrollment in a full-time degree program will receive a 50% discount on Program Fees. The rower must provide proof of full-time student status. Please contact the Treasurer to determine if you are eligible. There is no student discount on Membership Fees.

Dedicated Coxswain Discount

DC Strokes will build a robust cadre of dedicated coxswains, to this end, coxswains will not pay any fees beyond the DC Strokes Membership fee, and may be allowed to row (pending seating and cox availability) with club not to exceed four times a month, and open access to any and all on land programs. Dedicated coxswains must have rowed with any recognized USRowing team for one season. Those interested may speak to the Programs Director for more information on becoming a dedicated coxswain.

Refund and Cancellation Policies

In general, all Program and Membership Fees are non-refundable, except for specific situations detailed below. Members are responsible for notifying the Treasurer (treasurer@dcstrokes.org) to request a refund of program fees.

Refund Policy for all programs other than Learn-to-Row

Prior to the program start date, all program fees are refundable, minus the fee the Club pays to process your account credit. Once a program has started, refunds will ONLY be provided to a rower who cancels within the first two weeks of the program and will be refunded on a prorated basis.

Learn-to-Row Refund Policy

Learn-to-Row (LTR) Program Fees are refundable if participation in the LTR session is canceled at least one week prior to the session start. Within one week, LTR dues are refundable only if DC Strokes can refill the slot. No refunds will be made once the LTR session starts.

Refunds for Medical Reasons

If a rower is unable to continue participation in a program for medical reasons, a prorated refund may be possible. Such situations are handled on a case-by-case basis by the DC Strokes Treasurer in consultation

with the DC Strokes Board of Directors.

Regatta Fees

Program members who participate in regattas will be assessed a pro-rata portion of entry fees for their races plus a portion of any expenses related to transport of our fleet to and from regattas (referred to as "trailing"). For regattas deemed too distant to bring our fleet to (e.g. west coast US or overseas), the Club will rent equipment and those rental charges will also be included in Regatta Fees that participating members are responsible for. For questions about regatta fees, please contact the Regatta Director or the Programs Director.

Estimating Regatta Fees

The Club will endeavor to make an estimate of Regatta Fees known prior to each race. Estimates for total typical regatta costs can be calculated based on the menu of rough cost estimates.

Here is an example estimate for the expected regatta fees for a rower that enters four 4+ races and two 8+ races at a generic masters nationals in which we bring our own racing shells. This assumes a \$46 entry fee for a 4+, an \$85 trailing fee, and a \$31 entry fee for an 8+:

$\$85 \text{ trailing fee} + 4 \times \$46 \text{ entry fee (4+)} + 2 \times \$31 \text{ entry fee (8+)} = \mathbf{\$331 \text{ total}}$

Entry fees vary widely amongst different regattas, and trailing fees can also widely vary based on how many boats and if we share the trailer with other clubs. Actual costs could be higher, especially for more distant regattas or regattas in which DC Strokes has to rent racing shells. Therefore, the costs in the above table should be used as an estimating tool only.

Team Captains

Team captains represent the rowers in the Club and Novice programs, and a Team Captain represents the scullers in the Intermediate Scull Program and the Advanced Scull Program. Team captains are selected by the members of a program each year. All members in a program are eligible to be the team captain. Team captains must be a member in good standing of DC Strokes and an active member of the program they represent.

Each program may have up to two captains. The decision should be based on agreement between the coaches, rowers, and the scullers based on program size and composition for that season.

Responsibilities

A captain will be responsible for select responsibilities below depending on the needs of their team and DC Strokes during any given year:

At Practice/In General

- Serve as a liaison between the rowers/scullers and coach to ensure smooth team operations.
- Provide feedback from their program to the Board of Directors.
- Coordinate team social activities and assist with rower team-building (e.g., mentoring second year rowers/scullers).
- Oversee completion of monthly boathouse chores.
- Lead warm ups if assigned by a coach.
- Assist coaches in ensuring that all equipment is put away after practice.

Regattas

- Assist the Operations Director and Regatta Director in making sure all equipment is on the trailer for regattas and all equipment and trash are removed after unloading.
- Oversee team area set up and preparation: put slings out, set up tents.
- Boat rigging and derigging: ensure team members are present to rig and derig boats under the direction of a Coach, Operations Director, Regatta Director, or board member.
- Assemble team members for coaches' meetings.
- Ensure the tenting area is cleared of all equipment, personal belongings, and trash.
- Perform various activities during the Stonewall Regatta.

Additional Support

- Support for team fundraising (e.g., Novice captains help organize the novice fundraiser in accordance with Social Director with support from the Development Director).
- Assist communications to program members.
- From time to time captains will be asked by coaches or the Program or Operations Director to assist with club functions and activities, assemble groups, gather feedback, or help with various tasks to keep the program running smoothly.

Fulfillment of Coxing Responsibilities

Every DC Strokes member who rows in a sweep program is expected to serve as a coxswain, if necessary. A coxswain is the person who steers the boat and carries out the coach's practice plan. Members will receive instruction in coxing. Coxing is an excellent opportunity to better learn rowing terminology, seat positions, and perfect your own stroke by watching your teammates. While the club tries to maintain designated coxes, all members should expect to cox as the need arises.

Participation in Maintenance Days

Participation in maintenance days is required for all active DC Strokes members and may involve de-rigging, re-rigging, cleaning boats, trailering boats, adjusting oar lengths, or any other maintenance opportunity the Operations Director may see fit. Coaches should and will be taking maintenance

participation, race preparation, and unloading activity participation into account when determining boating lineups for the remainder of the season. Members are responsible for keeping up to date with the event calendar on the DC Strokes website and via Boathouse Connect regarding when Maintenance days occur. Members are encouraged to ask the Operations Director for more information about Maintenance days.

ACBA Chores

All clubs that are members of the Anacostia Community Boathouse Association are required to complete boathouse chores each month. The chores assigned to each club change from month to month. Members are expected to work with coaches and captains to ensure that boathouse chores assigned to DC Strokes are performed each practice day.

Descriptions of the ACBA Chores are given in [ACBA Chores](#).

ACBA Erg Use

The rowing ergometers (ergs) in the common room are the property of ACBA. The fleet was established with donations from Bishop Ireton High School, Capital Rowing Club, DC Strokes Rowing Club, Gonzaga High School and Wakefield High School. Please treat them with respect.

Dragging the ergs outdoors causes damage; ACBA members are encouraged to use the ergs indoors. When they must be used outdoors, the machines must be carried outside by two people. If there is any chance of rain, the ergs may not be used outdoors. Rain rusts the machine and destroys the monitor.

For more details on the ACBA Erg Policy, see [Common Erg Use](#).

Regatta Participation

Expectations on regatta participation vary from program to program. Club and Novice programs participate in a subset of the regatta calendar. While Club and Novice program athletes are strongly encouraged to participate in regattas, there is no expectation or requirement for members of those programs to do so.

Further details relating to expectations for regatta participation are given in the respective program description in Section [Program Descriptions and Expectations](#).

Regatta fees will be assessed after regattas. If a rower drops out of a race without justifiable cause, the rower will be liable for paying for their seat. Members of all programs who do chose to attend regattas have additional expectations listed in the sub-sections below:

Trailing for Away Regattas

All regatta participants are expected to participate in boat de-rigging and rigging, and trailer loading and unloading as needed to attend away regattas. While it is recognized that sometimes there may be

scheduling conflicts, particularly as these activities often take place in the early morning or in the evening and on weekends, repeated non-participation can lead to the member not being boated for races (regardless of program). To the extent possible, these activities will be held during regularly scheduled practice times.

Arrive as a Team, Depart as a Team

All DC Strokes members participating at regattas are expected to stay for the entire duration of the regatta. It is the intention that all DC Strokes participants arrive at a regatta at a time decided by the Coaching Staff and Programs Director (typically an hour before the first call for the first entered race) and depart from a regatta as a team only after the boats from the last entered race have been put away (for ACBA regattas), or de-rigged and securely emplaced on the trailer (for away regattas).

Uniforms

All members wishing to participate in regattas with DC Strokes will be required to wear an official DC Strokes uniform. There will be at least one opportunity to purchase DC Strokes uniforms during the season prior to head race season or mid-season. Announcements about when the online store opens will be made by the DC Strokes Uniform Director.

Expectations of Service

The growth, success, and spirit of DC Strokes depend in large part on the active participation of its members both on and off the water. In addition to rowing, each member is strongly encouraged to participate in as many of the following types of activities:

Fundraising Events

While membership and program fees pay for the day-to-day operation of the club, fundraising is necessary for addressing the long-term needs of the club, not the least of which is replacement of equipment. Members are expected to participate in at least two fundraisers each year.

Recruitment Events

DC Strokes runs several recruitment events throughout the year, alongside Pride events or other national (or international events). These typically include Team DC Sports Fest, Spring Rush, Capital Trans Pride, and Capital Pride Festival. Additional recruitment events may be run beyond those listed above. Members are expected to participate in recruitment events each year.

Learn to Row Program

In order to give Learn to Row (LTR) participants a good sense of the club, every member is expected to assist with at least one (1) session of the LTR program as a coxswain. Members assist the coaches and have an opportunity to meet and recruit potential DC Strokes members.

Important ACBA Policies

This is a selection of important ACBA policies. They are reproduced here (with some modification) because the DC Strokes Board considers them to be the most pertinent to most of DC Strokes Membership.

For a complete copy of all ACBA Policies and Guidelines, please contact the Membership Director or the DC Strokes ACBA representative.

Boathouse and all Equipment Security

There have been thefts at ACBA. All athletes and coaches are encouraged to leave valuables at home. Member clubs and schools may consider getting a lock box for their athletes to secure small items like keys and wallets while on the water.

Members must shut and lock all compound gates and boathouse doors at the conclusion of their practice. Even if others are around – still lock up. All groups (coaches and small boaters) should be going out on the water with a set of boathouse keys, so no one should be in jeopardy of getting locked out.

Parking

No one is permitted to use the disabled parking spots unless they display handicap tags or placards on their vehicles. ACBA has an active and growing population of adaptive rowers/scullers and this is their reserved area for parking.

Improper uses of the space include: short-term parking when you are dropping something off at the boathouse, parking for school buses, cookouts, land training, etc. Please keep the disabled parking area clear and available for the athletes and guests who are intended to use it.

Leash Policy

Any dog on the Anacostia Community Boathouse premises should be leashed at all times. In accordance with DC law, the dog must be firmly secured by a substantial leash - that does not exceed four feet - and is held by a person capable of managing the dog.

The boathouse - especially on race days - is not a good environment for dogs. If any member or guest chooses to bring a dog, the animal must be leashed or otherwise restrained at all times.

Recognizing that ACBA has an active adaptive rowing community who may use the services of a guide dog, ACBA will make all the necessary exceptions and accommodations for working animals.

Transportation to and from Boathouse

M Street is a narrow road and in many sections there is no sidewalk. Members must remind all bus drivers, parents and athletes who drive, bike or walk to practice to exercise caution along M Street. If

drivers are observed operating their vehicles in a dangerous manner, the incident should be reported to an ACBA representative immediately.

Alcohol Policy

ACBA Members, their partners, and sponsors may not store, serve or sell alcohol on the Boathouse premises. The ACBA President and Vice-President may approve an exception to this policy for private events (not to include regattas) that secure a temporary liquor license and are otherwise in compliance with and adhere to the relevant laws and regulations of the District of Columbia. The purpose of this policy is at all times to ensure that events, practices and use of the facility is consistent with the purposes of the facility and the community it serves.

Common Erg Use

The rowing ergometers (ergs) in the common room are the property of ACBA. The fleet was established with donations from Bishop Ireton High School, Capital Rowing Club, DC Strokes Rowing Club, Gonzaga High School and Wakefield High School.

The availability of the ergs is on a first come first serve basis, although we ask clubs who arrive early to be cognizant of this and perhaps make arrangements when it is known you'll need the majority of ergs. The ACBA Delegate maintains a calendar regarding when ergs are available.

ACBA ergs are not to be removed from the premises. The ACBA President or Vice President can approve the one-time, off-site use of an erg if it is determined that the event helps to advance ACBA's mission.

Each club may store additional ergs in their respective cages.

If a club has made arrangements with the ACBA Secretary to reserve the common space, the assumption is they have the ergs to use (as an example if you have the common space reserved for Learn to Row). If the event does not require ergs, please alert the ACBA Secretary.

ACBA encourages each club to work with one another when special circumstances arrive (i.e. an erg test).

All rowing clubs are annually assessed an erg fee, and the fund is used to cover the erg maintenance and replacement costs. All clubs are also asked to work with the Operations Committee to help maintain the ergs and come up with a schedule of how to handle basic maintenance.

Dragging the ergs outdoors causes damage. ACBA members are encouraged to use the ergs indoors. When they must be used outdoors, the machines must be carried outside by two people. If there is any chance of rain, the ergs may not be used outdoors. Rain rusts the machine and destroys the monitor.

From late November until late March, ACBA permits member clubs and schools to reserve the common room for training. The room is available for group workouts only. No individuals may use the common room and ergs during the winter months.

Storage of Gasoline, Oil, and Other Flammables

All gas tanks, extra fuel, engine oil, paint, and other flammables must be stored outdoors in approved fire-proof storage lockers.

Boat Lifts

Coaches must instruct all athletes on the proper operation of the boat lifts. It is recommended that coaches always supervise crews when using the lifts.

Lift operators must:

- Always use two (2) hands when cranking
- Never crank too fast, use an even rhythm
- Never “spin” the lift handle
- Never race with the lifts

Basic Site Care and Upkeep

Please always keep in mind that there are no paid employees at ACBA. We're all volunteers and the boathouse gets a lot of traffic every morning and afternoon. ACBA members are expected to pick up after themselves at the conclusion of every practice which includes water bottles, trash, clothing, equipment, etc. Trash must be thrown out and equipment stowed neatly and properly. This includes the areas of the boathouse where repairs are done, life jackets stowed, etc. Programs must turn off all facility lights, fans and heaters before leaving the site.

If members see any facility issues (leaking toilets, pools of water, broken doors, missing locks), please report it to your ACBA rep immediately.

Program Descriptions and Expectations

DC Strokes runs rowing programs for a variety of experience levels and time commitments. Each program offered by the club has a specific purpose and as such has different expectations of members. This section describes the different types of programs the Club generally offers and also the requirements for each program. Please contact the Membership Director or Programs Director for advice on which program may be the right one for you.

Winter Training Program

From December to March, DC Strokes offers a general rowing fitness program open to all club members that is designed to help keep people in shape over the winter and prepare them for the upcoming season. This program is offered on several different schedules but entails meeting four days per week and includes erg pieces, strength training, stretching, and other land-training activities. The Program has no prerequisites.

Learn to Row Program

The Learn to Row (LTR) Program provides an introduction to sweep rowing. Participants learn the basics of rowing, including rowing technique, rowing etiquette and terminology, river safety, and shell handling. It is also intended to help potential members decide if rowing is something they enjoy and want to make a further time commitment to by joining the Novice Program.

The program is typically offered during the months of April through July. Anywhere between three and four sessions are offered. Classes can range between small and large: 12 to 20 people with one or two coaches respectively. This program requires no previous experience with rowing.

Novice Sweep Program

Following the collegiate or high school rowing model, DC Strokes offers a dedicated novice season in the form of the Novice Program. Generally from May through early November, "advanced beginner" rowers hone their rowing technique, enhance their fitness, explore the sport, build team cohesiveness, and experiment with competing with at least one sprint and head-style regatta. Practices are focused on developing skill and basic conditioning, with the goal of preparing the rowers to join the club team in their second year as their interest dictates. The Novice Program meets between three (3) and four (4) evenings per week. There is no minimum participation requirement but an average of two (2) practices per week is strongly encouraged. All participants are required to have taken an introductory rowing course such as DC Strokes's Learn to Row Program or a comparable course offered by another organization. Some Novice rowers may be returning to rowing after a long break.

Club Sweep Program

The Club Program offers rowers with at least one year of experience the opportunity to row in sweep boats in an environment that is mutually supportive. One year of previous rowing experience is required.

Club Sweep Program Goals

The goal of the Club Program is to improve the rowing ability and fitness level of rowers with a wide range of technical ability and fitness levels. The focus of the Club Program is on improving its members' skill levels and physical conditioning over the duration of the season. Given that racing at regattas is an excellent way of measuring improvement over the course of the season, participation at regattas is encouraged, but not required.

Club Sweep Program Structure

The Club Program offers practices four (4) weekdays in the evenings, four (4) weekdays in the mornings, and one (1) weekend day per week. There is either on-the-water or erging practice on Sundays. Practices are focused on improving technique and building or maintaining fitness. Practice and racing line-ups are

set with an overall goal of providing equal opportunity to all program members.

While there is no minimum participation requirement, members of the Club Program are strongly encouraged to attend as many practices as possible, with a recommended minimum of on average two (2) practices per week. The consensus in the rowing community is that one only gets better at rowing by rowing regularly, and that rowers are not able to improve when attending fewer than one practice per week. However, it is recognized that all members of DC Strokes have lives outside of rowing and that work and vacation travel may preclude meeting this suggested minimum throughout the season.

What can rowers expect of the Club Program?

Given the diverse range of rowing ability and fitness level that the Club Program caters to, there is less emphasis on rowing set lineups; rather, practice lineups are favored that foster the greatest opportunity for rowers to improve. Regatta participation is encouraged to allow for both a goal to work towards and as a way of bench-marking improvements through the season. However, regatta participation is not required.

What is expected of rowers in the Club Program?

Given that the focus of the Club Program is improvement in rowing ability, Club Program rowers are strongly encouraged to satisfy certain minimum attendance standards. Those Club Program rowers who have an interest in a more moderate, less competitive rowing experience, but still wish to focus on racing in regattas and a heightened level of skill and technical proficiency are strongly encouraged to attend at least three (3) practices per week. Club Program rowers who have an interest in a flexible rowing experience, focused on rowing regularly and improving their technique, but who are not interested in being boated in racing lineups are strongly encouraged to attend at least two (2) practices per week.

While it is understood that rowers will miss practices for work-related travel, vacations, and other reasons, the Club Program coaches may use an attendance-based metric as part of their process of setting practice lineups. Similarly, Club Program coaches may use attendance-based metrics and minimums as a requirement for being placed in a lineup for a regatta. For example, in the 2017 season, the Club Program coach required attendance at 75 percent of practices of the three weeks leading up to a race with two of those practices during the week immediately preceding up to the race. Such requirements are developed by the Club Program Lead Coach in consultation with the DC Strokes Programs Director.

Sculling Program

Learn to Scull

Learn to Scull (LTS) is a four-week instructional sculling class designed for rowers who have experience rowing sweep, but do not have any sculling experience. It consists of evening and weekend sessions that occur at the above-designated dates and times over the month of May.

The purpose of LTS is to instruct new scullers on the basics of sculling. After completing the Learn to Scull program, rowers are invited to continue rowing in the Novice Sculling Program.

LTS is only open to rowers that have experience rowing sweep. Learn to Scull will be limited to 6 to 8 participants.

Novice Sculling

Novice Sculling is a coached sculling program designated for rowers that have completed a Learn to Scull program or have prior sculling experience but are not experienced enough to participate in the Advanced Sculling program. It consists of evening and Sunday sessions that occur at the above-designated dates and times throughout the rowing season. To ensure uniformity in sessions, the Head Sculling Coach will prepare lesson plans for the Novice Coaches to execute during practice. Participants are expected to sign up for Novice Sculling sessions for the upcoming week by Sunday at 12:00 pm to allow for coaches to prepare.

To participate in the Novice Sculling program, an individual must have completed a Learn to Scull program or have prior rowing experience. DC Strokes coaches have the right to advise the Programs Director on whether they believe an individual qualifies to row with Novice Sculling, or if additional classes should be required.

Novice Sculling will begin following the conclusion of LTS and will consist of those scullers who have recently completed LTS with DC Strokes or with another club or have prior sculling experience but are not advanced enough for the Advanced Sculling Program. Much like the Novice Sweep program, this program builds on the foundational work taught in LTS, and is open to external scullers who have completed LTS elsewhere. This will be limited to between 6 to 10 scullers.

Advanced Sculling

Advanced sculling is a coached sculling program designated for experienced scullers. It consists of evening and Sunday sessions that occur at the above-designated dates and times through the rowing season. Participants are expected to sign up for Advanced Sculling sessions for the upcoming week by Sunday at 12:00 pm to allow for the coach to prepare.

To participate in the Advanced Sculling Program, the participant must have prior sculling experience. DC Strokes coaches have the right to advise the Programs Director on whether they believe an individual qualifies to row in the Advanced Sculling, or if additional experience should be required.

Independent Sculling

Independent Sculling is a program that allows individuals to row independently without a coach. In order to qualify, the participant must be sculling certified and have passed a flip test. DC Strokes coaches have the right to advise the Programs Director on whether they believe an individual is qualified to participate in Independent Sculling.

Regatta Participation

Regattas are a great opportunity for rowers to use the skills they develop in their rowing programs in a competitive environment. Participation is encouraged, but not required. DC Strokes will provide rowers and coaches a planned regatta attendance schedule at the start of the season to allow for maximal flexibility in planning participation. Details regarding expectations for rowers interested in participating in regattas can be found in the Membership Handbook. Regatta fees will be assessed after regattas. If a rower drops out of a race without justifiable cause, the rower will be liable for paying for their seat.

Private Instruction

The Operations Director will approve/deny coach requests to offer private lessons using DC Strokes equipment and ensure the process below is followed for the member:

In order for a coach to offer private lessons using DC Strokes' equipment:

1. The coach and the individual must both be **DC Strokes Members** to ensure that safety, insurance, and liability requirements are met.
2. The rower must also get **USRowing Membership**, because "any person who rows out of a member organization boathouse that carries the USRowing insurance needs to have a USRowing membership to be covered."

Established programs have priority access for equipment.

The Contractor will determine the per person lesson fee for instruction. The DC Strokes organization will receive \$10 per person, per lesson (\$5 per person, if the boat is privately owned) for use of equipment and to cover overhead and liability applicable to this offering. Payments for private lessons will be made through Boathouse Connect, and Contractors will invoice the club for its fee.

DC Strokes Rowing Club Safety Manual

The first priority of every DC Strokes coach, rower, and coxswain is the safety of all persons on the water and on land. The second priority of every coach, rower, and coxswain is the safety and maintenance of all rowing equipment. All members are expected to follow all of the DC Strokes and Anacostia River rules, at all times. Carelessness and disregard for safety protocols will not be tolerated. Members who intentionally threaten the safety of anyone or anything, on or off the water, will be asked to leave the Club.

Emergency Numbers

Coaches must have the DC Harbor Patrol phone number saved in their cell phone contacts. It is recommended that athletes do the same, as well as list an emergency contact number.

1. Land emergencies: 911

2. Water emergencies - [Harbor Patrol](#): 202.727.4582
3. Their personal emergency contact.
4. Other coaches on the water.
5. Operations Director.

Chain of Command

The most senior coach present will assume command in the event of an emergency and will direct and control operations until the arrival of appropriate authorities. At that time, this coach will identify themselves to the authorities and continue to liaise with authorities and direct DC Strokes personnel accordingly. If a Head Coach has not been named, the most senior coach present will be indicated in the session workout plan. Inexperienced launch operators or improperly equipped individuals such as those without a Kippy bag and oars, will not be allowed on the water during an emergency situation.

Terminology

Before ever getting into a shell on the water, a rower must understand the following terminology and commands: bow, stern, port, starboard, “Weigh enough,” “check it down,” “check hard,” “hold water,” “Ready to row?,” “Row!,” “Port (or starboard) to row/starboard (or port) to back!,” “Tie in,” and “Untie.”

Rowers should know the seat order and the position of the stroke and bow seat rowers, which seat number and which side they personally are rowing on, and whether they are in the bow or stern pair/four.

A Glossary of Rowing Terms can be found in the [Glossary of Rowing Terms](#). These terms are not all inclusive.

Prior to Rowing

Before getting on the water,

Rowers must familiarize themselves with all the contents of this manual, and whatever additional rules, safety guidelines and notices [DC Strokes](#), [ACBA](#), or the [DC Harbor Patrol](#) makes available through their linked websites.

Rowers must follow all DC Strokes, ACBA, and DC Harbor Patrol traffic/safety rules, at all times (see Course Map at the end of this manual). Rowers are encouraged to seek certification in Boating Safety from the DC Harbor Patrol or on-line at BoatUS.com. DC Strokes will notify members when this training is available.

New members must view the USRowing safety video. This video can be found at [Safety Video - USRowing](#).

Rowers must complete and electronically sign the current USRowing Release Waiver (updated annually) and Membership Agreement. Please see Section [USRowing Membership and Waivers](#) for details.

All rowers should be able to swim and tread water. This aligns with [USRowing's swim policy](#) that requires all club members to complete an annual in-person swim test or fill out the organizational swim verification form. Where members are unable or unwilling to do so, rowers will be required to wear life jackets during all “on-water” activities.

All rowers should consult a physician before starting any form of exercise, including rowing. A rower who has a known medical condition must notify their program coach and coxswains if they have any medical condition that could impair the ability to row or that requires special attention. All members with special medical conditions should take precautionary medications in the boat with them while rowing (such as asthma inhalers).

All rowers should wear clothing appropriate to the weather conditions: warm synthetic or wool clothing, especially hats and socks are recommended in cold weather. Remember that it is always colder and windier on the water. A hat, sunscreen and water are recommended in hot weather. Inadequately prepared rowers may be left on land at the discretion of the coach.

All rowers must follow the instructions of DC Strokes coaches and coxswains. DC Strokes coaches have the final say on whether conditions are safe for rowing for all members.

Swim Test

The greatest risk in a water sport is the risk of an athlete drowning. DCSRC cares deeply about every person participating in our programs and must take reasonable measures to reduce the risk of losing an athlete to drowning. Additionally, US Rowing requires compliance with the US Rowing Safety Guidelines as a condition of membership and using US Rowing sponsored liability insurance. (Information on this requirement can be found on the US Rowing Safety Guidelines - Page 7 and the US Rowing Organizational Membership Agreement - Item 14.) DCSRC will now require all members to either pass a swim test or wear a PFD in order to row. The swim test will be offered twice a season. The purpose of the swim test is to ensure that athletes have sufficient skills to help rescue themselves in the event of an emergency. The swim test will need to be retaken every 5 years, and an attestation form will need to be completed by the currently certified lifeguard of the member’s choosing if the member does not want to partake in the group swim testing that will be offered twice each season. DCSRC will not reimburse members who choose to complete their testing on their own. **The swim test will have the participant swim 25 meters (1 lap) any stroke, tread water for ten minutes, and put on a life jacket while floating.** Coxswains that have completed a swim test do not need to wear PFDs on the water. When the swim test dates and times are scheduled, the Safety Committee under the direction of the Safety Chair will provide a way for DCSRC members to sign up for their swim test. LTR participants will not need to take a swim test to participate, and will only need to attest they know how to swim. Members should reach out to the Membership Director at membership@dcstrokes.org to resolve any questions.

NOTE: If an athlete cannot swim or does not complete the swim test by the pre-established deadline, the member must wear a PFD in the shell at all times.

Unsafe Conditions

Weather

Unless otherwise advised, all DC Strokes programs will take place as scheduled (indoors if necessary) regardless of the weather conditions outside. Because weather patterns that may affect rowing safety are unpredictable and subject to sudden change, be aware that the decision to go on the water may not be made until the actual scheduled start time of the session.

It is the responsibility of all members to be aware of weather conditions. Check for gathering clouds, changes in wind speed or direction, temperature changes, and lightning before heading out. DC Strokes does not row in high winds, in fog where visibility is less than 100 yards, or in a lightning storm.

If sudden high winds arise, return to the boathouse if the trip is safe, or take the boat to the nearest shore and wait for the winds to calm. If fog sets in while on the water, move slowly and be prepared to stop quickly. In situations of poor visibility, use a sound-making device (horn or whistle) to advise other boats of your location. When in fog do the following:

- Shells: at intervals of not more than two minutes, one prolonged blast, followed by two short blasts.
- Power launches: making way through the water one long blast at least every two minutes.
- Power launches underway, but stopped in the water: two long blasts with two seconds between blasts, every two minutes.

If you see lightning or hear thunder and you are not yet out on the water, do not attempt to row for at least 30 minutes after the last sighting or hearing. If you are on the water when you see lightning, hear thunder, or notice your hair standing on end with static electricity, head for the nearest shore. If the storm is not yet overhead, follow close to the shoreline and quickly return to the boathouse. If the storm is overhead, take your boat ashore and wait for the storm to pass.

Rowers and scullers should also be aware of the river level. Low river levels reveal submerged hazards such as sandbars. High river levels increase the speed of currents, especially near structures such as bridge abutments.

General policy is that practice will be canceled if the heat index is at or above 105 degrees F or in the event the air quality (AQI) is at or above 150. Rowing in hot weather with warm temperatures, sun exposure, or high humidity poses a challenge to your body's regulation system. If sweat is excessive and fluids are not replaced, dehydration may occur. Rowing in cold weather poses potential danger for hypothermia when the water temperature is below 80 degrees and very dangerous when below 50 degrees.

Safety Committee

The Safety Committee includes at least five members: the President, the Secretary, the Head Coach, the

ACBA delegate, and the Operations Director. The Safety Committee is responsible for the establishment, at minimum, of an annual review, updating, and enforcement of the safety policies described in this policy. Membership of the Safety Committee may be amended if any member of the Committee is involved in said safety-related misconduct, by Board approval. The Safety Committee reports to the Operations Director and the Operations Director will act as Chair. The Safety Committee can be called to meeting ad-hoc as the Board sees fit based on Membership's needs.

Low-Light Conditions

Great care should be taken when rowing in darkness or near-darkness. All rowers and coxswains should take extra care to look and listen. Minimize conversation. It is advisable for rowers to wear light colored tops or clothes with reflective strips.

Be careful not to get too close to shore or known hazards. Only row in familiar waters under low-light conditions.

Between sunset and sunrise and other periods of reduced visibility, two lights—marking the bow and stern—are necessary for the proper illumination of all shells. Two lights are required to ensure visibility by approaching crews from either direction. Lights shall be attached to the boat rather than the crew to ensure constant visibility. Shell light types and mounting positions are detailed below:

- **Stern Light:** all-round white light mounted above the stern of the boat.
- **Bow Light:** red/green (port/starboard) navigation light attached to the bow marker clip

The Operations Director attempts to ensure lights are mounted on boats at all times; coxswains should check that the lights are working before taking the boat off the rack. Spares are available in the cox box cabinet if lights are dead or for boats that are not used regularly. Report dead batteries in the equipment log.

Equipment

With the exception of our members, DC Strokes and other ACBA members' equipment is our most valuable asset, and must be treated accordingly. The Operations Director and their designees are responsible for upkeep, organization, and inventorying of all our equipment. We have boats of varying shapes and sizes, motors, paddles, oars, fuel cans, "cox boxes", megaphones, PFDs, locks, tents, etc. We also share equipment with other ACBA members. DC Strokes members play a key role in keeping our maintenance and repair expenses low by exercising extreme caution with all of our equipment, and are expected to use their best judgment and highest level of caution and awareness when handling all equipment.

Boat Lifts

As stated previously, coaches must instruct all athletes on the proper operation of the boat lifts. **It is**

recommended that coaches always supervise crews when using the lifts.

Lift operators must:

- Always use TWO hands when cranking
- Never crank too fast, use an even rhythm
- Never “spin” the lift handle
- Never race with the lifts

Rowing Shells

Rowing shells are designed to be used in protected waters under ideal conditions and under the supervision of an experienced coach. All shells should be equipped with the following:

- Bow balls
- Quick-release shoes which may have Velcro closure and heel tie-downs
- Sound making device (horns or whistles)
- Shells being rowed in the dark must be equipped with lights

Each person is fully responsible for the whole boat and for their own oar, rigging, foot stretchers, seat, and slides. All rowers should check all equipment before launching from the dock and preferably before leaving the house:

- Ensure that all nuts and bolts are in place on riggers and the rigging is not too high.
- Check hull for any cracks or leaks.
- Check that the seat fits you properly and that it is not damaged.
- Check that the slide is smooth.
- Check foot-stretcher tie-downs and ensure they are in place.

If you notice any damage to the boat, notify the coach. If boat damage occurs at any time, from the time the boat is taken off the rack, to the time it is returned to its rack, it must immediately be returned to the boathouse and put in slings or on the rack (depending on the level of damage). The responsible coach or coxswain must report the damage to the DC Strokes President (president@dcstrokes.org) or Operations Director (operations@dcstrokes.org). Damage to any other equipment must also be reported.

Boats should be wiped down thoroughly after each use, and members must participate in Boat Maintenance activities as discussed above.

Safety/Coaching Launch

The safety/coaching launch provides safety supervision when rowing and support assistance in an emergency situation.

- Shells should stay within visual and auditory distance of their safety launch.
- The number of passengers in the launch should not exceed two, including the coach. Launches are

provided for safety and coaching only. In the event of an emergency, additional passengers in the launch could represent extra shuttling time between the land and the rowers in the water.

- The launch driver has the responsibility to ensure the safe operation of this power boat in compliance with local and federal laws. When possible, use a trained person as the driver to allow the coach to focus on rowers.
- The driver must be trained in the proper use and operation of the powerboat. Classes are offered through DC Harbor Patrol and the Boat US website at www.boatus.org.
- Practice “rower overboard” rescue drills. Know how to have rowers enter the coaching launch from the water. Rowers in the water should be approached from the leeward side, keeping the outboard propeller away from any affected individuals. Turn off the engine as soon as contact is made. Avoid overloading.
- Each launch should be equipped with:
 - Lights for use before sunrise or after dark
 - Emergency blankets in a water tight container
 - Enough Coast Guard-approved Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs) for all on board and each person on the water
 - Tool kit containing wrenches, appropriate nuts, tape, washers, and other materials needed to make small repairs
 - First Aid Kit
 - Lifeline
 - Fire extinguisher
 - Flashlight
 - Bailer
 - Radio or cellular phone
 - Noise maker (whistle/air horn)
 - Towing line
- Personal belongings are left in the boathouse or cabinets at the risk of the member. DC Strokes and ACBA are not responsible for any lost or stolen articles. Leave valuables at home.
- All belongings should be placed in the cabinets, which should be locked during practice. Do not leave your car keys in plain sight, and lock your car.

Launch Wakes

The entire stretch of the Anacostia River where we row is a no-wake zone. Speeding in a no-wake zone or near docks and mooring areas is considered negligent operation, and can result in a fine from the U.S. Coast Guard or D.C. Harbor Patrol. Members must take reasonable steps to reduce wakes or risk having the authorities strictly enforce the speed and wake restrictions and constrain boathouse operations.

On both sides of the boathouse are four marinas, and at each, major boat demolition and repair work occurs regularly. This work can be tedious and dangerous. When launch drivers accidentally wake the marinas while this work is underway, it can create a safety hazard or jeopardize the projects. In addition, powerboat operators and guests must walk along their docks to access their boats, and strong wakes can create a dangerous condition for individuals on the docks, climbing in or out of their vessels. These marinas are friends of ACBA and they are pro-rowing and paddling. Many were instrumental in helping to establish rowing on the Anacostia and have a history of supporting the development of the ACBA site.

To avoid creating hazardous conditions and minimize disruptions to the marina users and operators with whom ACBA shares the river, follow these guidelines to reduce wakes:

- Rowing shells should stay at least 30 feet away from the marinas at all times.
- Coaches in skiffs should steer wide when passing the marinas.
- Keep launches closer to the middle of the river, on the port side of your crews.
- Coaches should reduce their speed when passing the marinas. Catch up to your crews once past the marinas.
- Coaches should adjust the weight distribution as best they can in their launches so as to keep the launches as level as possible. ACBA strongly discourages coaches from inviting more than one passenger in each launch. Having two people or less in a launch serves a dual purpose of minimizing wakes and — most importantly — ensuring all safety launches have the capacity they require to rescue several rowers in the event of an emergency.
- Every year, the marinas receive a calendar of all ACBA-approved regattas. They understand that referees and regatta officials will be operating in and around the race course and wakes may be unavoidable during those events.

Lights on Boats, Registrations, Launch Safety Certification, and PFDs

The D.C. Harbor Patrol polices the Anacostia River. If you are violating the laws that pertain to your coaching launches or rowing and paddling boats, the Harbor Patrol will issue a citation and send you and your crews directly back to the Boathouse. The guidelines below supplement, but do not replace, US Coast Guard Regulations for small boats.

- All launches must be registered with the DC Harbor Master and the certificate of registration must be on the boat and available for inspection by law enforcement whenever the boat is in operation.
- ACBA requires that launch affiliations be clearly marked on both boat and engine. Markings can be club or school name or blade pattern.
- Anyone operating a launch on District of Columbia waterways is required to have a Boating Safety Certificate. You should have proof of this certificate on you when driving the launch.
- The US Coast Guard requires boaters to have USCG-approved PFDs for every person on board. Each PFD must be in good condition, readily available, and the proper size for the intended wearer. ACBA strongly encourages all organizations to require their coaches to wear life jackets and

engine kill switches when operating a motorized launch. ACBA also recommends that every passenger in the launch wear a life jacket and that coaches carry PFDs for every athlete they are supervising.

- Launches are required to display navigation lights between sunset and sunrise and other periods of reduced visibility (fog, rain, haze, etc.). All launches should have a red and green navigation light affixed to the boat. In addition, launches must display an all-round white light.

Waterway Traffic Patterns

DC Strokes Rowing Club is only one club of many rowing out of the Anacostia Community Boathouse. All coxswains, coaches, and athletes must learn and follow the ACBA traffic patterns on the Anacostia River.

All members should be aware of waterways traffic patterns and take responsibility for making sure that these are obeyed. All members must also familiarize themselves with the river's landmarks and hazards, such as shallow water, stumps, rocks, buoys, and seasonal problems. Listen to coaches and coxswains, and study the Course Map at the end of this manual.

All rowers, coaches, and coxswains must:

- Shove off and approach the ACBA dock for landing with the bow pointed downstream.
- Stay clear of bridge abutments, barges and other man-made or natural obstacles.
- Keep boats to their starboard shore.
- Turn only in locations that allow good visibility in all directions; avoid turning near bridges.
- Move toward shore to stop or drill, and avoid stopping near bridges, sandbars or other trouble spots.

General Waterway Traffic Rules

The U.S. Coast Guard has developed right-of-way rules. Vessels with the least maneuverability have the right-of-way, but should always play it safe and take action to avoid all other types of boats. The maneuverability rule can be confusing. For example, a sailboat without wind has right-of-way, but a sailboat with wind must give right-of-way to a shell.

All members should familiarize themselves with the location of shallow water, sandbars, stumps, rocks, buoys, seasonal problems and landmarks. Vessels should stay clear of bridge abutments and other man-made or natural obstacles. Do not negotiate a turn near such an obstacle.

Be courteous to others on the water. Be aware of powerboats and treat them with respect.

Anacostia River Waterway Traffic Rules

General Rules:

- Stay to your starboard shore. Veer from starboard lane to avoid sandbars or other obstacles only after checking carefully for oncoming boat traffic.
- Be alert at all times for oncoming traffic that may be outside of the normal traffic pattern when avoiding sandbars or other obstacles.
- Right of way goes to less maneuverable boats; scullers must yield to eights and fours.
- Avoid turns near bridge abutments or other obstacles that block lines of sight.
- Boats shove off and approach the dock for landing while moving downstream.
- The coxswain or single sculler should make frequent checks on both sides and listen for oncoming traffic.

Launching/Landing Area:

- Before launching and after landing, place all oars clear of the dock.
- After launching, paddle downstream away from the dock before stopping to get tied in, or before executing a turn to go upstream.
- Incoming (docking) crews have right of way over launching crews.
- When launching and docking, always use the most upstream section of available dock space and walk the boat up as space opens up.
- Boats may not turn in front of the docks.
- When other crews are waiting for dock space, tie in and adjust foot stretchers on the water.

Traffic Patterns

When launching from the Anacostia Community Boathouse, you will typically cross under three bridges rowing downstream towards the Potomac, and if going upstream towards Bladensburg, there are another four bridges. These are the rules for navigating through those seven bridges for downstream and upstream traffic. Arches are numbered starting from the ACBA side of the river.

Note that heavy traffic, bad water or the presence of a launch is no excuse to use the wrong side or arch at any time. If you witness another member dangerously off-course or taking some unnecessary risks on the water, these incidents should be reported to a coach and an ACBA representative. An Incident Report Form can be found in the DC Strokes Cage at the boathouse and also on our website under the [Membership Resources Tab](#).

Details on which arches to use when traversing bridges can be found in [Anacostia River Traffic Patterns](#).

Safety in the Boat

General

- Rowers in sweep shells should always be quiet and attentive to the Coxswain or Coach, and must obey any instructions.
- Oarlocks should be kept locked until everyone is out of the shell.
- At least one hand should be kept on the oar at all times while on the water.
- Bow and stern hatches should be closed when on the water.

Coxswains

The coxswain is in command of the boat at all times, and should be given complete attention and respect. The primary job of the coxswain is to safely guide the boat by steering the boat and commanding the crew.

The coxswain is responsible for following the traffic pattern at all times. The coxswain is responsible for being aware of, and avoiding other traffic, which may or may not be following the traffic pattern.

The coxswain must always stay close to the coach.

Before new coxswains go on the river in a DC Strokes boat, they must have a conversation with the coach about traffic patterns and safety guidelines and be handed a copy of the river traffic pattern. The coach has final authority to determine whether it is appropriate and safe for a new coxswain to take a boat out on the water.

As in many clubs, rowers at DC Strokes are often needed to cox a practice. Before coxing, all rowers must become familiar with the river traffic pattern. New rowers must row with DC Strokes for three-four weeks before being asked to cox a practice, to allow time to familiarize themselves with the river.

Crews

Members of a crew should not talk while the boat is moving: it makes it harder to hear commands and distracts the coxswain from their primary job: the safety of those in the boat.

Any rower who sees a hazard that they believe the coxswain does not see should notify the coxswain immediately.

If any rower or the coxswain hears thunder they should notify the coach immediately. The sound of thunder may be masked by the noise of the engine.

Emergency Procedures

General

Stay Close to Your Coach! Your coach's launch has been outfitted with safety equipment. On the Anacostia River, rules of safety and etiquette require that coaches stop or travel slowly to avoid waking other shells and the marinas. Crews should take care to remain within sight of the coaching launch unless specifically otherwise instructed, even if this means stopping and waiting, or even turning around and finding the coach.

Never Leave the Boat! If you are close to shore and a strong swimmer, swim WITH THE BOAT to shore. Even if it is swamped or capsized, the boat will remain floating. A submerged or partially submerged boat is a hazard to other crews.

Listen! If you are told to "Hold water," immediately square the blades and drag them against the water. It does not matter who gives the command – they might see something you don't! Act first! Don't look around – hold water and then see why.

Call for Help! Yell for help, don't assume people can see you or recognize that you are in an emergency situation.

- Wave both hands in the air.
- Wave a shirt, or even an oar to signal distress.
- When possible stay within hailing distance of safety launch.
- Your coach should have a cell phone; ask them to call for help if needed.

Running Aground

If you have run aground on a sandbar, stop rowing at your coxswain's command. The coxswain should try backing out if the boat is not too far up on a sandbar. If you have become too stuck on the sandbar to back off if it, rowers/scullers will have to get out one by one on the sandbar (starting from the bow) until the boat becomes light enough to push off of the sandbar. Rowers/Scullers assisting from the water in pushing the boat off the sandbar should try to remain on shallow ground, being careful of sudden drop-offs. The rowers/scullers should then carefully get back into the shell and return the boat to the boathouse. Once back on land, the hull of the shell should be carefully checked for damage.

Lost Skeg

If a shell has lost a skeg while on the water, the rowers/scullers must return to the dock immediately. The incident must be reported to the Operations Director and President.

Broken Equipment

Rowers/Scullers must not take out any equipment that is considered broken. Any damages to equipment

should be reported immediately to the Operations Director and President.

Wakes

If approaching wakes are higher than the gunwale, the shell should be turned parallel to the wake to avoid having parts of the shell unsupported by the water. It is possible to split a shell under these conditions. Rower(s) should stop rowing and lean away from the approaching wake, with oar(s) on the wake side lifted slightly. If wakes are lower than the gunwale and widely spaced, continue to row without a course adjustment. Closely spaced wakes that are lower than the gunwale may be taken at a 90 degree angle with the bow directly toward them.

Rower Overboard

Immediately yell: “Weigh enough!”, and then when all rowers have completed their final stroke, command “Hold Water”. The most common reason to fall out of a rowing shell is as a result of a serious crab. Keep in mind that the rower may be injured from the force of the oar. They may require someone to enter the water and provide immediate assistance. If a coaching launch is nearby, hail it immediately. An oar may be used as an emergency flotation device. If possible use the rower’s oar. Remember that the oars provide stability to the shell and take care not to allow the shell to flip as you undo the oarlock. Take care not to injure the person in the water as you send the oar towards them.

Collisions

In case of collision, stop and assess: Is anyone in either boat injured? Is the boat damaged? If so, is it taking on water? If so, proceed immediately to shore or the nearest dock and call for help.

Rower Injured

Immediately command “Weigh enough!” and then when all rowers have completed their final stroke, command “Hold Water”. Signal the launch if first aid is needed.

Shell Damaged but not Sinking for Rowers

Immediately command “Weigh enough!” and then when all rowers have completed their final stroke. Make adjustments or signal launch for assistance.

Shell Swamped for Rowers

If the shell fills with water to the gunwales, the boat will still float but may break apart if the rowers remain in the shell. Take the following steps if help is not at hand or on the way:

- Yell "Weigh enough!"
- Untie your shoes.
- Rowers should buddy up. Coxswain should buddy up with the stern pair. This ensures that all rowers are in groups of two or three. This partnership provides a way to monitor each person and to support or assist one another in a time of emergency.
- One at a time, the rowers should slip into the water, keeping hold of the boat for flotation.

- Remove the oars or place them parallel to the hull. Loose oars will not only impede flipping it back over but they might become dangerous. If you take them out, be careful not to let them float away as you won't get home without them.
- Move to the ends of the boat so as to avoid falling riggers and oars when you roll the boat over.
- Roll the boat over.
- Swim the boat to shore.
- Once the boat is rolled, rowers may grasp hands across the boat. If the temperature is cold, lying across the boat out of the water as much as possible is important as body heat loss occurs 25 times faster in the water.

Shell Capsized

Capsizing is not likely in a larger boat. If these boats capsize, they should be swam to shore. Once you are in sufficiently shallow water to stand, you may right the boat and get in. In any event, **do not leave the boat!** Even when upside down or swamped, the boat will not sink.

To right a capsized boat you must:

- Immediately make sure all rowers and the coxswain are accounted for.
- Swim the boat to shallow water or shore before attempting to right the shell.
- Get control of the oars. Loose oars will not only impede flipping it back over, they might become dangerous. Either put them parallel to the hull or take them out. If you take them out, be careful not to let them float away as you won't get home without them.

Fatigue and hypothermia can set in quickly in the water. If the temperature is cold, lying across the boat out of the water as much as possible is important as body heat loss occurs 25 times faster in the water.

Re-entry from deep water is a complicated procedure that should only be tried if you are familiar with the procedure or are supervised by a coach.

Shell Broken and Sinking

Immediately command "Untie!" Get out of the boat and follow the same procedures as for a swamped shell. Do not leave the floating boat. Hold onto your oar and use it as a flotation device if the boat sinks.

Another Boat in Distress

If a distress signal is seen and insufficient assistance is near that craft, maneuver your shell to the distressed boat. Attempt to summon other launches or stable boats with distress signals. Assist in any way that does not jeopardize the lives in your boat.

Safety in Cold Weather

Hypothermia

Hypothermia occurs when the affected individual is subjected to cold temperatures, cold water, ice or

snow. Symptoms include feeling cold, turning bluish and shivering first, followed by numbness, apathy, lethargy, disorientation and loss of mental capacity.

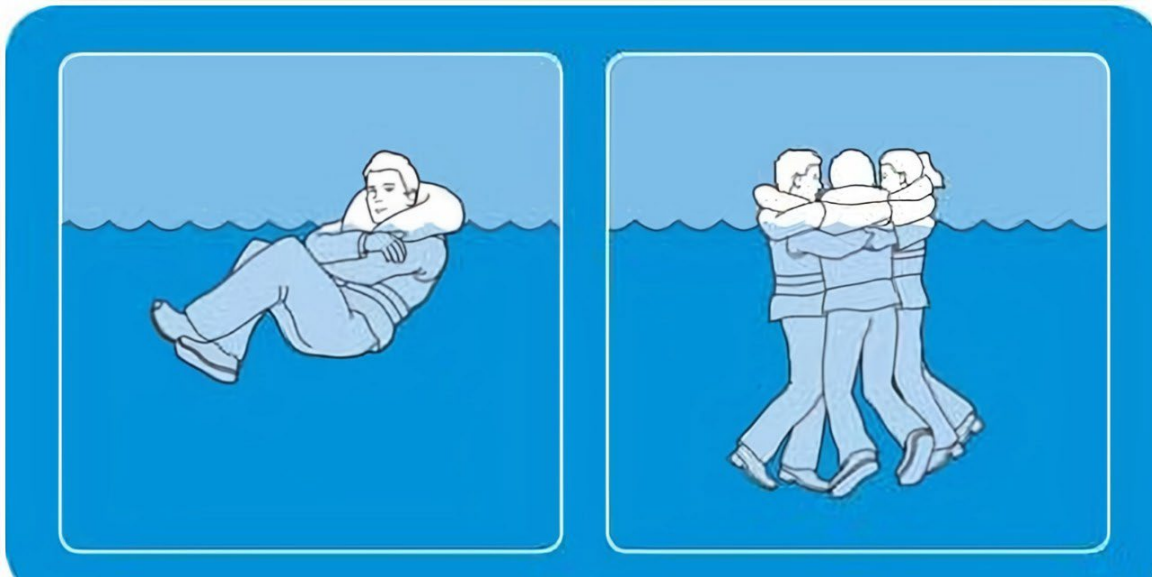
There is a potential danger for hypothermia when the water temperature is below 80 degrees F and very dangerous when below 50 degrees F. **If you suspect hypothermia, immediately call 911.** While you are waiting for EMT personnel, use the following guidelines:

- If the affected individual is conscious, warm them by removing wet clothing and wrapping in warm blankets, rubbing them, giving them warm liquids (no alcohol) unless the individual is cold and shivering, and/or using the body heat of another person. Prevent the affected individual from losing more body heat. Do not warm extremities.
- **Action if cold and shivering:** Get out of the water quickly, even on top of a capsized boat. Heat loss is 25 times greater when in the water. Huddle with others. Drown-proofing (dead man's float) is not an acceptable survival technique. Keep as much of the body as possible out of the water. Move to shelter quickly; remove wet clothing and warm body. In mild hypothermic conditions, warm in a shower, tub or with warm blankets. Do not give any liquids to drink; treat for shock. Treating for shock includes laying the person down, and elevating the feet about 12 inches, unless there is a head, neck, back, or leg injury; stopping any external bleeding and maintaining open airways; keeping the person warm and comfortable and loosening restrictive clothing; monitoring vital signs until handoff to EMT personnel. Continue to warm and always obtain medical assistance as soon as possible.
- **Action if cold and shivering has stopped:** Treat as above but **DO NOT WARM EXTREMITIES!** If the affected individual is no longer shivering, the torso must be warmed first to avoid circulating cold blood to the heart. This can kill. Wrap the affected individual in a blanket and apply heat to underarms and groin area; wrap again in a separate blanket. Wrap each arm and leg separately to prevent warming. Hot packs should not be placed directly on the affected individual. A thick layer should be used to protect the affected individual's skin from this heat source. If hot packs are not available, place the affected individual in a sleeping bag with a warm person. Administer artificial respiration and CPR if necessary. Always obtain medical assistance as soon as possible.
- **Unconscious individual, no breathing, no pulse:** If the affected individual is not breathing and there is no pulse, clear the air passage and begin mouth-to-mouth rescue breathing and (CPR) **IMMEDIATELY.** Once you begin CPR, do not stop until medical assistance is obtained. Don't give up. Drowning individuals may look dead. Their skin may be blue and cold to the touch. There may be no detectable heartbeat or breathing. The eyes may be fixed and dilated, with no other sign of life. However, if the water was cold, there is still a good chance of survival. Even in a near-drowning, individuals must always be assessed by a medical provider.

Cold Water Immersion

Be aware that in very cold water, people have survived as long as one hour under water. Recover the affected individual immediately and even though there may be no signs of life, begin CPR efforts until

medical assistance is obtained. When the air is below 40 degrees F and/or water below 50 degrees F, keep the launch within 100 yards of all shells. In these conditions, hypothermia can set in quickly. Try to keep your head out of the water. Swimmers will retain heat best if they remain huddled with others and wear a life jacket. The body cools rapidly when swimming in water <50 degrees F. Remain as motionless as possible. Stay with your boat even if land appears within easy reach; holding still in the water is preferable to swimming. Physical ability is hampered and judgment is impaired in cold water. Use the Heat Escape Lessening Position (HELP), seen in the image below. The HELP or Huddle procedure can cover areas of high heat loss and lead to increased survival time. Both methods resulted in nearly 50% increases in predicted survival time.



"Buddy up" so that all rowers are in groups of two or three. This partnership provides a way to monitor each person and to support or assist one another in a time of emergency. Get out of the water and onto an oar or overturned shell if you can.

Safety in Hot Weather

Hyperthermia

Hyperthermia occurs when there is an increase in body temperature, usually when the air temperature is above 76 degrees F, and the affected individual is exposed to sun and heat in combination with a decrease in fluids. It may occur when a) sweat cannot easily evaporate; b) the body is being heated by the environment; c) water loss from sweat and respiration is not replaced and dehydration occurs.

Dehydration

To prevent dehydration,

- Drink water before, during and after practice. During exercise, fluid intake should match fluid loss.

- Carry drinking water in the boat when rowing.
- Limit your time in the sun, wear a hat, use sunscreen, and stay in the shade when possible.
- Wear lightweight clothing.
- Plan activity level consistent with the degree of heat, amount of sun exposure or humidity.

Do not take "salt tablets". Consumption of sodium salt increases potassium loss. Moderate potassium depletion will cause weakness and fatigue while severe depletion can result in fatal heart irregularities.

Heat Exhaustion

The symptoms of heat exhaustion include: Throbbing headache, nausea, cool skin, chills, sweaty, pale, rapid pulse. Impending heat exhaustion or heat stroke may not present all of these signs. Decreased athletic performance and deterioration of muscle coordination can also be indicators.

Action: Drink water, shade from sun, and treat for shock.

Heat stroke

Heat Stroke is life threatening! The symptoms of heat stroke include: behavior changes, unconsciousness, hot but not sweaty, flushed warm skin and rapid pounding pulse.

Action: Douse the affected individual with cool water, shade from sun, fan, ensure that the airway is open, and always get medical assistance as soon as possible.

After The Row

Cool Down

Paddle-down at the end of your workout. It is important to your health that you don't race up to the dock. Once the boat and oars are stored, it is important to go through basic stretching exercises to heal any unnoticed sprains or strains that began during your row, thus eliminating soreness and unnecessary pain.

Incident/Damage Reports

Report any damage that may be required through the Report Incident function provided in Boathouse Connect (correcting maintenance issues on the spot if possible). Report any incidents that may have occurred in the Report Incident function provided in Boathouse Connect.

Last Steps

If you are the last one in the boathouse or erging room, turn off lights and close doors. After practice, it is suggested you wash your hands. The most important action you must take after practice is returning all equipment to its proper place.

Emergency Action Plan

All coaches should carry a handheld radio in their launch. If a launch observes a shell in trouble, the coach should immediately call for help from other coaches. The radios may also be used to summon help from the Coast Guard or DC Harbor Patrol.

The boathouse is equipped with a telephone line. The DC Department of Public Works offices on both sides of the Anacostia Community Boathouse also have telephones to summon emergency response. If emergency response is necessary, dial 911.

First Aid kits including emergency blankets can be found in the shed in the upstream compound and also in the boathouse bathroom.

After the emergency situation is past, report any incident to a member of the Safety Committee.

Violations of This Safety Policy

Any violations of this safety policy will be reported to the Safety Committee as soon as possible. The Safety Committee will evaluate the situation to include hearing the perspective of all persons involved and witnessed to the incident. The Safety Committee will make a recommendation to the DC Strokes Board for remediation. These remediations may include changes to DC Strokes policies, direction to coaches, club wide bulletins or training, or sanctioning of individuals who are deemed to be responsible for unsafe behaviors.

Anacostia River Traffic Patterns

When launching from the Anacostia Community Boathouse, you will typically cross under three bridges rowing downstream towards the Potomac, and if going upstream towards Bladensburg, there are another four bridges. These are the rules for navigating through those seven bridges for downstream and upstream traffic. Arches are numbered starting from the ACBA side of the river.

Note that heavy traffic, bad water or the presence of a launch is no excuse to use the wrong side or arch at any time. If you witness another member dangerously off-course or taking some unnecessary risks on the water, these incidents should be reported to a coach, to the DC Strokes Safety Committee and an ACBA representative.

Capital Rowing Club has an excellent interactive map detailing the downstream traffic pattern on the Anacostia at <https://capitalrowingblog.wordpress.com/about-2/map/>. The image below is an overview of the Anacostia River traffic patterns used for practices run downriver from the boathouse.



Details about the various bridge crossings can be found below:

Bridge Traversals Downstream from Boathouse

Details on traversing downstream bridges are found below:

John Philip Sousa Bridge (Pennsylvania Avenue)



- Downstream: Arches #2 and #3 (be careful of recreational boat docks)
- Upstream: Arches #5 and #6 (be careful of upstream sandbar)
- Do not use Arches #4 and #1.
- Note the sandbar area extending from in front of the ACBA Dock to the center arch of the Sousa Bridge.

Eleventh Street Bridges



- Downstream: Use Arch #2.
- Upstream: Arch #4 is preferred. (Arch #5 is generally very shallow,) Be sure to move towards the center of the river to avoid the sandbar (shown below).
- Do not use Arch #3 unless absolutely necessary.



Frederick Douglass Memorial Bridge (South Capitol Street)



If you witness any risky or unsportsmanlike behavior, coaches and crews should report to an ACBA Representative. If you witness dangerous boating maneuvers that could harm us or other members of the public - call Harbor Patrol (202 727-4582) immediately to report the incident and allow the police to investigate.

Anacostia Railroad Bridge

There is one passable arch through the railroad bridge.

- Exercise caution.
- Only pass under arch after checking for traffic from other direction.

Whitney Young Memorial Bridge (East Capitol Street)

- Downstream: Arch #1 and west side of Arch #2
- Upstream: East side of Arch #2 and Arch #3 (and #4 if passable)
- At low tide, Arch #2 may be the only passable arch; exercise caution.

Ethel Kennedy Bridge (Benning Road)

- Follow arches on road bridge, not metro bridge.
- Downstream: Arches #1
- Upstream: Arches #2 and #4 (and #5 and higher if water level allows)
- Be careful of docking posts and sharp turn on the upstream side of the bridge and Metro bridge pylons.

Amtrak Railroad Anacostia Bridge and New York Avenue Bridge

- Downstream: West side of Arch #2 (and #1 if passable)
- Upstream: East side of Arch #2 (and Arches #3 and #4 if passable)
- At low tide, Arch #2 may be the only passable arch; exercise caution.
- Arches #1 and #4 are often too shallow and not passable.

ACBA Chores

The boathouse, storage building, and landscaped grounds maintenance tasks are being assigned to ACBA member groups in accordance with their volume of use throughout the year. The tasks will be rotated monthly among teams active during that season.

For special events at the boathouse such as clinics or regattas, the sponsoring organization is responsible for cleaning and stocking the bathrooms prior to the event and restocking afterwards, collecting trash and recyclables after the event, and generally doing any tidying of the boathouse, storage building, docks and grounds as needed.

The Tasks/Chores are held by the ACBA Delegate and the club Secretary.

Bathrooms, Showers and Changing/Locker Trailers

The bathroom, shower and changing/locker trailers are professionally cleaned once a week from March to October and every other week from November to February. Additional supplies of toilet paper and towels are kept in the cabinets in the trailers and in the ACBA stall.

During each week, clubs assigned to bathroom/shower duty will be responsible for straightening the bathrooms/showers each day. This will involve putting trash in the trash cans, replacing the trash bags when needed, keeping the toilet paper on the holders in the stalls and wiping off the countertop when necessary. Trash bags, toilet paper and towels are stored under the sinks in each bathroom and in the cabinet in the accessible bathroom. Additional supplies are stored in the ACBA stall in the small building.

After regattas, the sponsoring organization must clean the bathrooms, including:

- Clean toilets and sinks.
- Sweep and mop the floor.
- Check supply of soap, paper towels, and toilet paper and restock as necessary.
- Empty the trash. Replacement trash bags are kept in the cabinets and with the cleaning supplies in the cabinet in the accessible bathroom.

Trash and Recycling

Waste receptacles from the buildings and the grounds should be emptied on an as-needed basis. Everybody

needs to be responsible for trash and recycling pick-up. A "take it with you" attitude and the use of refillable water bottles will reduce the rate at which trash and recycling cans fill up. The ACBA Operations Committee maintains the supply of appropriate trash bags stored inside the ACBA stall in the storage building. Tasks include:

- Empty all trash cans from inside the boathouse, storage building and on the grounds. All trash must be placed in the 8 cu. yd. dumpster near the main entrance. Do not pile any excess trash bags, signs or anything else, in front of the dumpster. The trash company will not take trash piled outside the dumpster and trash truck must have unrestricted access to pick up the dumpster.
- Recyclables should be deposited in the Recycle bins. There are six blue 90-gallon "Toters" stored near the main entrance and in the plaza between the two tents. When a toter located in the plaza is full, wheel it to the storage area and swap it for an empty toter. **Recyclables do not include coffee cups, other food containers, bananas etc. – those go in the trash.**
- Using refillable water bottles will help. Smaller bins for recyclables have been placed around the site and should be emptied into the larger Toters on Tuesdays or when full. **Remind everyone to empty their water bottles before recycling them.**
- Trash will be picked up weekly on Wednesdays or Thursdays.
- Recyclables will be picked up on Wednesdays or Thursdays.

Boathouse, Storage Building and General Site Cleaning

The boathouse, the central meeting room in the storage building, and areas surrounding the new buildings should be cleaned every week throughout the season. Tasks include:

- Sweep the interior of the boathouse, carefully sweeping under the lower boats on rollers.
- Sweep the main meeting room in the storage building. Individual organizations are responsible for cleaning their own stalls as they see fit.
- Pick up and dispose of any trash and recyclable items.
- Place left items in the Lost and Found in the main meeting room.
- Other tidying as necessary.

Dock and Ramps

The docks and ramps should be swept on an as needed basis, but at least once a week. Driftwood, sticks,

large logs, trees, etc. should NEVER be pulled up onto the docks or in the bioswale. The primary task for Docks and Ramps is sweeping goose droppings. Additionally please remove water bottles, empty them if necessary, and dispose of other trash and debris.

M Street and Bioswale Cleaning

The stretch of M Street from the DC Water station to our boathouse should be kept litter free and our neighbors at the Seafarers Marina want to help with this. Trash can be found along the roadway and bags of trash can be found near the fishing spot near the bridge. To improve the appearance of our section of the river, ACBA will join with Seafarers Yacht Club to clean up this area and keep it clean.

Removing trash from the bioswales is needed, especially after very high tides. This should be done once a week at low tide if possible. The ACBA Bioswale/Signage committee will organize monthly workdays.

First Aid

The ACBA Operations Committee maintains the first-aid supplies in the storage building and at the boat repair area in the boathouse. If you notice that first aid items need to be replaced, please advise the ACBA Operations committee or put a note on the safety cabinet. As always, in any emergency, dial 911.

Glossary of Rowing Terms

Backsplash: The water thrown towards the bow at the catch. Too little or no backsplash indicates that a rower is rowing their blade into the water. Too much backsplash will slow the boat down and cause a jerking feeling at the catch.

Backstay: Part of a rigger. The angled bar which is closest to the bow. Most backstays are adjustable to change the pitch of the oarlock.

Body angle: The term for the angle of the torso off perpendicular to the water, both at the finish, and on the recovery.

Bowball: A rubber ball attached to the tip of the bow to protect the boat and others upon impact. Bowballs are required safety equipment.

Bow Seat: The rower in the most forward seat in the boat.

Cap: The plastic cover for access holes to the stern and bow hull compartments. Caps must be secured in place during practice to prevent the compartments from filling with water. After practice, caps should be removed to air out the compartments.

Catch: The beginning of a stroke (end of the recovery) when the blade enters the water. Body lean is forward with shoulders in front of the hips, legs compressed, and arms outstretched. Opposite of the finish.

Check: A command, as in “Check it down.” Drag the blades on/in the water to slow and/or stop the boat from moving forward or backward.

Collar: A plastic fitting around the shaft of the

oar, which prevents the oar from sliding through the oarlock. Collars can be adjusted to lengthen or shorten the reach of the blade.

Cox Box: An electronic device that combines a digital stroke rate monitor, stroke count, and elapsed time readout with a headset microphone for voice amplification. The stroke rate is obtained through the use of a magnet on the bottom of the Stroke's seat and a sensor on the deck of the boat beneath the seat.

Crab: A term for a situation in which the blade is not fully squared before being released from the water, or when entering the water. This results in the blade getting stuck in the water, severely slowing down the boat and disrupting the set.

Digging: When the blade is too deep under the surface of the water throughout the drive. Optimally, the blade should be just below the surface - look to make sure the white tape on the oar shaft isn't under water.

Double (2x): A boat with two scullers, each with two oars, and no coxswains.

Drive: The phase of the stroke from the time the blade is placed in the water at the catch until the blade is released at the finish. The drive begins after the blades are buried in the water, and the movement is initiated by the legs pushing against the foot stretcher.

Eight (8+): A shell with eight sweep rowers and one coxswain.

Ergometer (erg): A rowing machine used to simulate rowing on land.

Feather: Opposite of square, referring to the rotation of the blade at the release. Feathering is the motion of turning the blade parallel to the water. Feathering is accomplished when the inside hand rolls the oar handle. The outside hand has no impact on feathering except to provide

leverage. An incomplete feather will result in wash at the finish and may result in a crab.

Finish: The end of the stroke when the blade is removed from the water. Also the end of a race.

Footstretcher: The parts which attach the shoes to the boat, including the footboard, the adjustable metal bars, and the wingnuts which secure it to the boat.

Forestay: The angled part of a rigger leading from the oarlock towards the stern of the boat where it is bolted onto the hull near that rower's feet. A forestay is not part of every rigger as some riggers only have a mainstay and backstay.

Four (4- or 4+): A shell with four sweep rowers. The two types of fours are: four with a coxswain (4+) and four without a coxswain (4-).

Gunwale: The edge of the hull.

Hull: The skin of the boat which is in direct contact with the water.

Impeller: Device on the underside of a hull that is used to give speed readings.

Launch: A motorboat used to carry the coach, spare parts, safety equipment, and spare rowers.

Lunge: A sudden lean of the upper body into the rigger or stern before the catch. A lunge will not only cause set problems, but can also cause catch timing problems.

Mainstay: The center bar(s) of a rigger.

Oar: Consists of an oar handle, a shaft, and a blade; used to power the boat.

Oarlock: The part which holds an oar in place. Oarlocks have a gate that opens to remove the oar.

Pair: A shell with two sweep rowers.

Port: The term for left (meaning the coxswain's left). Also, the term for a sweep rower whose blade and rigger are on that side of the boat. Opposite of starboard.

Port-rigged: A boat rigged with the stroke-seat rowing on port side. Opposite of starboard-rigged.

Puddle: The result of a stroke through the water. A correct stroke should create a whirling puddle with very little wash or waves when the blade is released.

Quad(ruple) (4x): A shell with four scullers in it, 4X. A few training quads have coxswains (4X+).

Rack: The storage place for boats when not in use. The boat should be stored with the bars of the rack directly beneath the ribs of the hull.

Ratio: The relationship between the speed of the drive and the speed of the recovery, usually about 1:3, which means that the length of time spent on the recovery is three times as long as the amount of time spent on the drive.

Ratio Shift: A change in ratio from something like 1:2(drive:recovery) back to 1:3. This requires more power through the drive and slowing down the recovery. This is different than a change in rating.

Reach: The distance a rower is able to extend their arm forward at the catch. Also the distance towards the bow an oar can travel at the catch.

Rigger: The metal or carbon fiber bars that extend from the hull at each seat consisting of a backstay, mainstay, and occasionally a forestay. Attached to the riggers are oarlocks, top nuts, and pins.

Rowing the blade in: To begin the leg drive before the blade is completely buried.

Rudder: A small part attached to the bottom of the hull used to turn the boat. Rudders are

typically located behind the skeg and may actually be a part of the skeg.

Rush: As a noun- the motion of arriving at the catch too early. As a verb - the act of rushing.

Scull: As a noun (called a "sculling shell" usually) - A boat which has two oars for each rower. Also an oar used in such a boat (sculling blades). As a verb - To row in a boat which is a scull.

Set: The balance of a boat. A boat that does not fall to either side is considered balanced or set. Sometimes called "on keel."

Shaft: The long pole that connects the oar handle and the blade.

Single (1x): A one-person shell in which the rower sculls with two oars.

Skeg (aka fin): A triangular or rectangular part attached to the hull near or behind the coxswain, underneath the water. It keeps the boat on a straight course when the rudder is not in use. Bent or missing skegs cause extreme steering difficulties. A skeg is easily damaged by dragging it across something in the water or hitting it on the edge of the dock.

Sky(ing): When a rower drops their hands towards the gunwale on the recovery, sending the blade too high into the air.

Square: When the blade is perpendicular to the water.

Starboard: The term for right (meaning the coxswain's right). Also the term for a sweep rower who has their blade on that side. Opposite of port.

Starboard-rigged: A shell with the stroke's rigger on starboard.

Stern: The farthest point at the back end of a boat (nearest to the coxswain).

Stroke: The motion of rowing, as in “take a stroke.”

Stroke (-seat): The rower in the stern most position. They set the pace to be followed by the crew

SpeedCoach: An electronic device that combines a digital stroke rate monitor, stroke count, and elapsed time readout. Unlike a cox box, it does not include a headset microphone for voice amplification. This device can only be used in boats with impellers.

StrokeCoach: An electronic device that combines a digital stroke rate monitor, stroke count, and elapsed time readout. This wireless device does not require a seat magnet, making use of an accelerometer and (sometimes) GPS receiver.

Stroke rate: The number of strokes rowed per minute. “Rating” and “stroke rate” are used interchangeably.

Swamping: When a boat fills with water due to waves, rain, or a leak.

Sweep: A crew in which each rower has only one blade, versus a scull.

Top nut: The nut on the top of a backstay to hold the oarlock between the mainstay and backstay.

Track: A piece of metal to keep the wheels of a seat following a straight path. Tracks must be kept clean at all times.

Wash: Water stirred up at the finish by the boat as a whole, or by an individual rower with a sloppy finish.

Washout: When a rower finishes their stroke by pulling the oar handle low into their waist (“dumping”), creating a wash.