Youth Competitive Program
Spring 2016 Information Packet

Community Rowing, Inc. enriches the greater community through its comprehensive rowing opportunities by introducing avenues for athletic development and personal growth.

Community Rowing Inc.

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Photographs by Eric Cohen
Community Rowing, Inc.

Community Rowing (CRI) was founded in 1985 as a nonprofit organization dedicated to the belief that the sport of rowing provides unique abilities to promote personal and community growth through teamwork, discipline, and physical fitness. We are committed to making these opportunities available to all. CRI has become the largest rowing program in the United States with over 7,000 people rowing with us annually.

Located on the Charles River, an internationally recognized attraction for rowing and a gem within the Massachusetts park system, CRI was the first public rowing club in Boston and remains one of the largest in the United States. CRI is committed to its mission of enriching the greater community through its comprehensive rowing opportunities by introducing avenues for athletic development and personal growth.

Since its inception over twenty-five years ago, CRI has provided education and training for over 15,000 people, including:

- Youth (boys and girls) from local high schools
- Adults of all levels of ability
- Individuals with special needs such as students from Perkins School for the Blind, veterans, and others
- Olympians and National Team Rowers

A reputation for excellence and outstanding accomplishments in the sport has made CRI the place to learn to row in the Boston area and a model for similar programs nationally.

PROGRAMS AT CRI INCLUDE:

- G-Row
- Boys Row Boston
- Let’s Row Middle School Program
- Youth Learn to Row
- Crew League
- Boys’ and Girls’ Competitive Novice
- Boys’ and Girls’ Competitive Varsity
- Corporate Rowing
- Adaptive Rowing
- US Paralympic training
- Adult Learn to Row
- General Sweeps I
- General Sweeps II
- Sculling I
- Sculling II
- Sculling III
- Sculling IV
- Men’s and Women’s Competitive Team
- Veterans Rowing, supported by the US Paralympic Committee

For more information please look online: www.communityrowing.org
Overview of Competitive Youth Programs

Spring Competitive Program
The spring season is the primary racing season for scholastic competition. CRI competes against different schools and clubs from around the region with racing most weekends beginning in early/mid April. Training on the water begins in early March and runs through mid-May. Those boats that qualify for Youth Nationals continue their training and finish their season mid-June. Races range from 1,500 to 2,000 meters in distance.

Highlights include:
- Overnight trip to Saratoga Springs, NY for the Saratoga Invitational
- USRowing Northeast Junior District Championships
- USRowing Youth National Championships.
- Qualification is contingent on performance at NE Champs—there will be an additional cost for training and for travel to the regatta.

The spring season is:
- THE season for rowing. This is what the athletes train for all year long!
- High-intensity training with multiple racing opportunities throughout the season.
- Of paramount importance for athletes planning to row in college.

Summer Competitive Program
The summer season is focused on club competition. Junior rowers from across the country join the year-round team members to pull on the CRI red and black and make CRI their summer home for racing. Main competition during this season includes other composite teams from cities such as Philadelphia, Washington D.C., Buffalo and more. Two major multi-day regattas highlight the summer racing calendar: the USRowing Club National Championships in Bethel, Ohio in mid-July and the Royal Canadian Henley Regatta in St. Catharines, Ontario in early August. Practices will generally run Monday evening through Saturday morning, allowing more freedom for family time and travel.

The summer season is:
- High-intensity training, including daily double sessions for small and big boat training
- An opportunity to compete with athletes from many different rowing programs
- Highly recommended for Juniors planning to row in college

Fall Competitive Program
The fall season is the time of year for head races where boats start at timed intervals and compete against the clock in order to determine the winner. Races range from 4,000 to 6,000 meters. CRI teams compete in head races throughout New England. The most prominent is the prestigious Head of the Charles Regatta held on the 3rd weekend in October, where CRI crews compete against teams from all over the world. Not every athlete will make a boat for the Head of the Charles, but all will have the opportunity to race in other regattas such as The Rumble on the River at CRI, the Textile River Regatta, the New Hampshire Championships and the Head of the Fish.
The fall season is:
- Long-distance and high-intensity training & racing
- An opportunity for the athletes to test their ability under competitive conditions
- Highly recommended for athletes who desire to make the top boats during the spring season and those planning to row in college

**Winter Training**
The winter youth program is an opportunity for athletes who do not play a winter sport to partake in a rowing-specific training regimen. Training includes a variety of activities including ergometer training, weights, yoga, balance and medicine-ball work. Space is limited with priority given to participants in the Spring Competitive Program. The CRI adult classes are open to all ages, including youth, but the youth-only classes are preferred for junior rowers. Expected offerings include a 4-day program in addition to the 6-day program.

The winter season is:
- Long-distance volume training, moving towards sprint-style work as spring draws closer
- Important for the development of a physiological base to underpin spring success
- Very highly recommended for varsity-level athletes who desire to make the top boats during the spring season and those planning to row in college

***Athletes who don't row in the winter are very strongly encouraged to participate in a rigorous complementary sport such as swimming or cross country skiing!***

**February Training Trip**
This trip is a unique opportunity for rowers to get back on the water early in the year to work on making technical improvements to buttress the fitness gains they’ve made while not training on the water. The team has multiple practices each day, providing the opportunity for athletes to make tremendous learning and fitness improvements in a short time. Athletes are invited at the discretion of the program head coach.

Parents are encouraged (and needed!) to come along as chaperones. It is also important to sign up early to get best prices on airline tickets. This trip is first-come, first-served with priority given to those who have rowed in the CRI competitive programs.

The training trip is:
- During public school vacation week
- A chance to make big changes in a small time-frame with multiple practices per day
- Essential for athletes who desire to make the top boats during the spring season
Expectations of Athletes

Practice Attendance:
• Rowing is a team sport so attendance affects the whole boat. An athlete should only miss practice when doing so is absolutely unavoidable. Please avoid creating scheduling conflicts.
• Each coach has specific guidelines for their teams, but this serves as a general overview in order to guide your expectations.
• If an athlete must miss practice s/he should:
  o E-mail his or her coach with the details.
  o E-mail before noon on the day of practice.
  o Contact coaches by phone if not possible to e-mail or if it is after noon.
• Frequent absences or failure to notify coaches with enough warning may affect boatings.
• Rowers with illnesses “below the neck” or who are contagious should not attend practice.
• Seniors taking recruiting trips need to clear them with their head coach and also be mindful of practices missed, especially before big regattas.
*** Athletes who miss a practice are expected to make up the workout! ***

Regatta Attendance:
• All athletes must have either a CRI unisuit (available at the CRI JL online store) or a tank top ($35 at the CRI front desk) to race.
• It is imperative that rowers who commit to rowing in a regatta race in that regatta. Once the commitment has been made, the team is dependent on the athlete to be there; cancellations are not acceptable. In addition, registration fees, hotel and transportation costs are paid in advance; thus, if a rower has committed to the race, the payment (in full) for the regatta and costs of the travel will be required regardless of attendance.

Diet and Health:
• Rowers burn a lot of energy at every practice, and during periods of heavy training. They should be consuming calories throughout the day to stave off hunger.
• Rowers should eat a balanced diet at every meal, including protein, carbohydrates and healthy fats. Additionally, they need vitamins and minerals (especially iron) to benefit from their training.
• Common sense is better than fad diets.
• All athletes should come to every practice with a source of carbohydrates (energy bar, fruit, bagel, extra bottle of an electrolyte drink) to consume immediately after practice is over.
• Rowers should be drinking water throughout the day to arrive fully hydrated for practice.
• Athletes are required to bring at least a water bottle to practice every day.
  o Drinking an electrolyte drink during practices is better than just water.
  o Sharing of water bottles, even for one sip, is absolutely unacceptable.
• Athletes should get at least 8 hours of sleep a night; more is preferable.
• Sleep schedules should remain consistent throughout the week.
**Sickness & Injury:**
- Athletes are expected to be able to differentiate between soreness and injury. Consult with your coach if you need clarification.
- In case of suspected illness or injury, an athlete should contact his or her coach and consult a physician or an appropriate doctor IMMEDIATELY.
- Upon taking a sick day(s), an athlete is required to provide a doctor’s note clearing him or her to continue with practices at the appropriate recommended intensity level.
- Absence of such a note will prevent an athlete from participation in practice until cleared.

**Clothing & Gear:**
- All athletes must have a CRI unisuit (available at the CRI JL online store) or a tank top ($35 at the CRI front desk) to race.
- Practicing in a unisuit or spandex is strongly encouraged.
- Good running shoes are an important investment for healthy athletes and should be brought to practice each day.
- It is important to make sure that proper clothing is always available as conditions vary. Appropriate clothing each day should include:
  - Wicking, close-fitting athletic gear
  - Hat (white CRI Head Sweats hats are available at the CRI front desk for $30), sun block, bug spray
  - Rain gear
  - Warm/dry clothes to change into after practice
- Varsity athletes should consider getting a heart rate monitor to monitor their training.
Parental Involvement and Support

Please join CRI in respecting, supporting and celebrating the commitment your children have made to the sport and their fellow rowers. Parents are welcome (and encouraged!) to attend all races to cheer on the athletes. The athletes and coaches really need parental participation throughout the season, particularly on race day, for help with food and other logistics. Over the years, many parents have said that their involvement on race day has been great fun while also bringing them closer to their children, and has led to many new friendships with other parents.

Communication about logistics regarding your child’s rowing and racing is conducted exclusively via e-mail. **It is essential that CRI have a valid e-mail address for parents and athletes to make sure that important information gets to families in a timely manner.** Please contact CRI Program Director, Kane Larin, directly at kane@communityrowing.org or Program Coordinator, Yael Mito, at yael.mito@communityrowing.org to be added to the CRI Parents Group. This e-mail list also is used to announce any last-minute changes in race logistics or schedules, so it is vital that CRI have an e-mail address that parents regularly check on the list.

Parents new to the sport will find that rowing is a unique activity, very different from most sports in American high schools. Rowing is both an endurance sport and a full-body workout. The rowers’ need to synchronize oars with their boatmates makes rowing the ultimate team sport, participation in which requires a significant sacrifice in time and sweat. If you would like to learn more about the sport, Wikipedia is a great resource. The entry on the glossary of rowing terms has a complete listing of all rowing jargon you’re sure to hear your athlete use. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rowing_(sport)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rowing_(sport)) [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary_of_rowing_terms](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary_of_rowing_terms)

**Race Day for Athletes (Parent edition):**

- Please anticipate race day to be an all-day event for the athletes.
- Athletes will be busy with many responsibilities on race day even though their race is a relatively short portion of the long day.
- The best time for parents to catch up with their rower will usually be about a half hour after the race when rowers come over to the food tent.
- Upon arrival, boats are unloaded from the trailer and rigged for rowing.
- After the race, athletes cool down and de-rig the boats for loading onto the trailer.
- Loading the trailer requires that everyone help out. Often this means that the novices will have to wait for the varsity races to be completed (or vice versa), as the equipment has to be loaded on the trailer in a particular order. Often, patience is required in the trailer-loading process, but rest assured that everyone involved has the same goal of loading the trailer safely and efficiently.
- After all the equipment is loaded, the team will travel back home to CRI. (If rowers choose to leave a racecourse with their parents, a coach must be advised before departure from the race venue.)
- Athletes should get in the habit of bringing schoolwork for the lull between the completion of their races and loading the trailer.
- Delays in racing due to wind, rain and/or equipment problems are always a possibility.
- If a delay occurs, the priority is to adjust the racing schedule to try to allow all athletes the opportunity to race.
Race Day for Parents:

- CRI has never been able to operate its extensive youth programs without the active involvement & participation of parents.
- Parental assistance is required for at least one race per season. This assistance will include setting up the team tent and providing water, ice, electrolyte drinks and food so the athletes can perform at their peak.
- Regattas for many parents tend to be family events with younger and older siblings (many times past CRI rowers!) often attending the race. Be advised that CRI cannot be responsible for managing those not on a program roster on day or overnight trips.
- Race day for parents (when not helping in feeding the athletes) involves enjoying spending time outdoors in the company of other parents. Items to pack for regattas are:
  - Foldable chair to sit in
  - Hat, sun block, bug spray
  - Rain gear & umbrella
  - Book, magazine or newspaper to read between races
  - Water bottle & coffee mug
  - Snacks and/or lunch you enjoy
  - Loud voice to cheer on the CRI crews!
Race-Specific Information

CRI makes every effort to give parents information as soon as possible about races. As the season progresses, the race schedule is subject to change based on coach discretion. Please see below as an example of some of the races that CRI regularly attends. This is for information only and more details which include the specific schedules for different crews will be made available at the Spring Parents Meeting.

**Mercer New Jersey Scrimmage**
*Who:* Selected Varsity Athletes  
*When:* Early-April – TBD

**Saratoga Invitational**
*Who:* Selected Varsity and Novice Athletes  
*When:* Late April

**St. Paul’s Invitation**
*Who:* Varsity Boys & Girls  
*When:* Early May - TBD  
*Where:* Concord, NH

**Wayland/Weston Invite**
*Who:* Select Varsity Athletes (4’s only)  
*When:* Early May - TBD  
*Where:* Lake Cochituate, Wayland, MA

**Lowell Invitational – May Not Attend This Year**
*Who:* Varsity Boys, Varsity Girls & Novice Girls (Novice Boys are not attending)  
*When:* Mid May – TBD  
*Where:* UMass Lowell Bellegarde Boathouse in Lowell, MA

**USRowing Northeast Junior District Championships**
*Who:* All Varsity and Novice Athletes  
*When:* Mid May - TBD  
*Where:* Lake Quinsigamond in Worcester, MA

**USRowing Youth National Championships**
*Who:* Selected Varsity Athletes (based on qualification of boats at Northeast Championships)  
*When:* Flight arrangements TBA, but likely departure on Wednesday (Mid June) with return on the following Monday