

Lyme Old Lyme High School Crew Parent's Guide

www.oldlymerowing.org

Boathouse Phone 434-3935

Crew Coaches 2009

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Welcome to Crew!

It was suggested that experienced parents write down some useful information to facilitate organization and involvement by newcomers. So this is an attempt to sincerely welcome you, and encourage you to become involved and support this terrific sport in Old Lyme.

Old Lyme has deep roots in the sport of Rowing, thanks in a great part to Mr. Fred Emerson, a Lyme resident who enthusiastically donated many hours of his life and financial support to the Blood Street Sculls. Our current boathouse is named after him, and the original boathouse still stands on Blood Street. He is also credited with starting many other rowing programs in the United States, including, Trinity and the Coast Guard Academy.

It is not typical for a public school to have a crew team, and we are incredibly fortunate to have access to good equipment. The high school team is supported by Old Lyme Rowing Association which was created in 1983 with the primary mission of supporting junior rowers. In addition, the association, under the auspices of Old Lyme Parks and Recreation, has a summer Learn to Row program for adults and juniors and a competitive Master's (adults) level program. High school level junior rowers can participate in the summer and the fall competitively with the Blood Street Sculls. These programs have produced national champions, and enriched the lives of many.

Unlike other traditional sports, here parental involvement is not optional. It is a necessity. Understandably, some parents will have more time and resources than others, but there is an opportunity for all to help in some way.

[Here's an overview of the school year in rowing....](#)

September through October

The Old Lyme Rowing Association and Old Lyme Parks and Recreation offer rowing in the fall under the club name of Blood Street Sculls. This is not a school activity. Rowers practice after school in order to compete in various races from Boston to Philadelphia. Both sculling and sweep rowing are offered in this program. There are fees for the program, for individual race entries, and transportation of boats. Transportation and lodging at races are the rower's responsibility. More information on this program at the <http://www.oldlymerowing.org> website.

December -The Fruit SALE

This is our primary fundraiser. Each rower is given a list of people who have purchased fruit in the past. Adult rowers from the Blood Street Program participate as well. Fundraising is critical now, as it is used to purchase boats and/or new equipment for the spring season. Many townspeople count on this and look forward to purchasing fruit.

Orders go in during November and delivery is in early December.

This effort requires parent efforts and organization. Some things that need to be done are:

Data base management
Fruit Ordering
Delivery of Fruit

****This effort requires parental chairpersons to get organized EARLY.**
Each rower is given a list of previous customers to call. Competitive phoning 'parties' have made calling more fun.
Sales booths are set up in Lyme and Old Lyme.

It can be a challenge to convince new rowers to join the team and explain that they need to sell fruit even before they sit in a boat...so experienced rowers should take the lead with the fruit sale. This is a big project, but is a primary source of funding. It is close to holiday time, so getting organized early is ESSENTIAL.

Winter Training

From the end of October until the end of February, there are no organized activities offered. However, students are fortunate to have a nice weight room and an enthusiastic gym teacher available every day after school to oversee winter conditioning.

The LOLHS Season Begins...

Practice usually begins around the last week in February.

Physical forms MUST be up to date and in the school nurse's office. Do this early to avoid any hassle.

The first few weeks of practice are 'land' practices. This will be at the High School **Monday through Friday** from **2:30 to 4:00 pm**. Activities are geared toward aerobic conditioning and strength training. There will be running, circuits, and ergometer (rowing machine) training. There will be timed testing on the ergometer for experienced rowers. Running shoes and workout clothes are required.

During the last week of 'land' training (usually the middle of March), the team will be transported by bus to the Coast Guard Academy in New London to use their indoor rowing tanks. This is a terrific opportunity to practice rowing technique with a real oar and a sliding seat on a stable platform. For experienced rowers it is a great review of basics and for new rowers it is their first introduction to the complexities of using the movements they have practiced on the ergometer before they get into a real boat. At the Coast Guard Academy there will be timed testing on the ergometer for all rowers.

During this same week, rowers will go to the Aquatic Center at East Lyme High School for a yearly swim test. They will need to be able to swim 6 laps, tread water for 15 minutes, swim underwater, and put on a life jacket that is thrown to them while they are treading water. Students who do not pass this test will not be allowed to row.

It is important for all rowers to get to practice on time. When boats are going on the water, if one rower is late...the whole boat is late, or may not get on the water.

Please schedule non-essential appointments before or after crew season.

Rowing on a rowing machine or “erg” is part of practice, and each rower will be expected to put in a timed piece. Coaches may use this time as part of their decision making process as far as which rower will be in which boat...This is a complex process that parents often struggle with. Go with it and trust the coach, rowers are often switched around until boats are “set.”

Team Captains are elected or appointed depending on the coach. Traditionally, these are role model team members willing to accept responsibility. They are upper classmen.

Clothing

Rowers should always have **running shoes** and socks. They can be left at the boathouse. There will often be a run at the beginning of practice.

In the spring, conditions range from snow to warm sunshine. It is essential for rowers to **wear layers** of clothing. Pants and shirts should be close fitting as baggy clothes can get caught in the slides of the seats. **Socks** should be worn in the boats. Baseball caps are helpful. Rowing is done in the rain (and sometimes snow!), but not in high winds or when there is a possibility of a thunder storm.

Varsity rowers will be provided with a team one piece ‘unisuit’ which is the race uniform. Junior Varsity and Novice rowers row in Lyme Old Lyme Crew t-shirts provided by the school.

The school has a limited number of warm-up jackets and pants. Coaches or captains distribute these, and they need to be returned to the school at the end of the season.

This year we will have a web page on the **iTeam** section of www.regattasport.com. Team captains have chosen some items that can be ordered during an ‘ordering window’ of 2-3 weeks. These items have the school colors and “Lyme Old Lyme Rowing’ logo on them. Parents can order and pay directly to Regatta Sport. Items will be delivered in a bulk order before our first race and distributed.

Target date MARCH 23rd ON THE WATER

Practices are from **2:30-5:00PM Monday through Friday** and **7-9AM on Saturdays**. Rowers

can take the school bus which lets them off at Laysville Center.

RACE SEASON

For all races, like all other sports activities at LOLHS, participants are expected to ride the team bus to and from the event unless there are special circumstances. **If your rower needs to be excused from the bus ride, they must have a note signed by the principal to be given to the coach.**

APRIL

Saturday April 11th - [TBA](#)

April 10-19 School [Vacation](#) – There will be practices as well as.....

Wednesday April 15 - [Gunnery Race](#) – Girls Only at Gunnery

This race is during the April vacation on the same course that we will be rowing on at Founders Cup on Lake Waramaug in Washington, CT. This is a qualifying race for the New England Championships (NEIRA's at the end of May).

Wednesday April 22nd - [Chase \(Maybe A.O. Smith\)](#)- at Rogers Lake

Saturday April 25th – [Gunnery/Taft](#) Boys Only at Gunnery

MAY - This is our BIG race month

Sunday May 3rd - [Founder's Cup](#) at Lake Waramaug in Washington CT.

This is an all day event with heats and finals. Pack lunch and water for rowers. Parents usually organize a group snack/lunch. Traditionally for this race, the tent goes on the trailer, parents set it up by the finish line and bring healthy food for all to share (Bananas, Oranges, Bagels), and kids bring their own lunch with water. The ground here is very mushy by the water. Picnic tables are available along with FLUSH and Porta-potties.

Saturday May 9th - [Choate Canterbury Race](#) - at Rogers Lake

Every other year, this race is at Rogers Lake, and this is Choate's year. Both boys and girls will be racing.

[Stotesbury Cup Regatta](#)-The Largest High School Regatta in the Country

Thursday through Saturday - May 14-16 Schuylkill River, Fairmont Park, Philadelphia PA. This is the Big Kahuna of all Spring Sprint Races...what your kids will never forget. Much rowing history here with Boathouse Row and many old famous boat clubs. Excellent spectating, lots of planning required for the Stotes trip Cost per rower: (in the past) Approximately \$125.00. \$110.00 for trip expenses, \$15.00 for food expenses payable to the trip food coordinator.

Rowers leave LOLHS via coach bus on **Thursday** by 10:30-11:00 a.m. Lunch is at a rest stop along the way. Students should bring money for this.

Boats are loaded the night before, and a parent volunteer traditionally drives the Old Lyme town truck and the boats to Philly and back. This parent also sets up our tent, which is loaded on the trailer.

Accommodations: Most convenient is the **Holiday Inn City Line**, 4100 Presidential Blvd., Philadelphia, PA, (215) 477-0200 we usually reserve 30 rooms

This must be done one year in advance by a parent coordinator Parents reserve and pay for rooms through the parent coordinator in advance, not by calling the hotel direct. A pasta dinner is organized at the hotel for Thursday eve. This arrangement is also made by the parent coordinator. Parents are welcome and encouraged to join rowers for dinner. Cost for parents is approx. \$20.00 per person payable in advance to the food coordinator.

The bus brings rowers directly to the river to unload boats and practice. Rowers return to the hotel for dinner. There is a pool at the hotel a quick dip is acceptable, but rowers need to save their energy for Friday races.

Parents suggested route is the Tappan Zee to Garden State, to NJ turnpike to PA turnpike. A traditional stop is the Montvale rest stop off of the Garden State Pkwy, it has Dunkin' Donuts coffee! EZ Pass is highly recommended to have for tolls.

Rowers are assigned to rooms according to boats by a parent volunteer. Parents are welcome and need to let the contact person know well in advance if they plan to attend as there are a limited number of rooms. Rowers are expected to stay with their boat, not with parents.

Chaperones should be assigned for bed checks and lights out. Coaches will be busy making last minute boat adjustments, filling out forms and getting a good night's sleep.

FRIDAY

Breakfast at the river. The food coordinator organizes bagels, fruit and granola bars for breakfast. Lunch is also at the river. We traditionally make homemade grinders and salads with fixins' brought from home. Cookies and baked goods are always a treat! We bring Gatorade and water. This is time trial day. The fastest boats today will race in the finals Saturday. Dinner is at the King of Prussia mall. Rowers are bussed to the mall where they have an array of affordable food choices (bring \$).

SATURDAY

Some rowers won't race today, but they are expected to CHEER and help out. Breakfast again at the river. Lunch is burgers and dogs on the grill that we bring from OL. Would you like to be the chef? After finals, the bus heads to OL, with a fast food dinner at a rest stop (bring \$). This will be a late OL arrival between 11 p.m. and midnight. Yes, rowers have to unload boats.

As you can see, this is a huge undertaking. It is necessary to have a meeting before this race for rowers and parents. The food coordinator is a key person on this trip. Parents please check out the Stotes website as there is a wealth of information there. This is by far the best race for spectators. There are vendors, and many T-Shirt opportunities.

Best behavior only no questions asked...or, they really do send you home.

NEIRA - New England Interscholastic Regatta Championships -Worcester, MA

May 23 -Saturday Many of our earlier races (Gunnery, Choate, Pomfret, Founders Cup) are races that are used in order to qualify for this prestigious race. The 4+s here are the best on the East Coast and maybe in the country. Some vendors here. There is an entry fee of \$5.00 for spectators. All day racing with Heats, Petite Finals and Finals. Spectating from a hill, pretty good viewing. Bring your binoculars.

The Parent Food Coordinator organizes cold cuts, bread, fruit and cookies for this event.

This year the Prom is on the evening of the 24th. **Rowers will need a parent permission form signed by the principal in order to take their rower home early from this (or any)event.**

Thursday May 28 - Shoreline Invitational – *This* home race is with East Lyme, Fitch and maybe Stonington this year. You will be able to come and cheer your rower on. Sometimes we have done a barbeque after this race. Last year we tried Pizza.

Saturday May 30th - Emerson Regatta – *Harbor* Park, Middletown, CT

This is our last race of the season and we mix it up by rowing some interesting combinations of rowers in 8+'s. Many of the Public High School teams that row in this regatta are those that were started by Fred Emerson, who started our program and lived on Rogers Lake

Things to Bring to Regattas For Parents and Participants

- Water! Always keep your rower hydrated
- Motrin or Tylenol
- Inhaler if needed
- Extra socks
- Warm clothes

- Sunscreen Sunglasses
- Personal items
- Band-Aids
- Wrench 7/16” every rower should have one for rigging
- Camera
- Binoculars
- Kleenex and Hand Sanitizer—Porta-Pottys
- Safety pins
- Music/CD player, a good book for between races, portable homework
- Snack food. Bagels, fruit, home made goodies for after the race.
- Money for T-Shirts, programs
- Folding camp chairs
- Umbrella/rain gear Races are rarely cancelled unless there is lightning
- Cell Phone
- Walkie-talkies are fun to communicate from the start line to the finish line
- Bicycle for Philly trip spectators
- We suggest you leave the dog at home.

Etiquette for Rowers and Spectators

Students are expected to be on their best behavior at all times. There is zero tolerance for drugs, alcohol, or any nonsense ... **period... end of story.**

Many students go on to colleges where rowing is a big part of their future. Lyme-Old Lyme has a fine reputation for excellent students and each student has a responsibility to uphold this reputation. Foul language is never appropriate and can cause a crew to be disqualified.

Rowers are expected to load boats before races and unload at the boathouse when the trailer returns. It is the responsibility of the rowers to be sure all of the equipment gets to the race and returns to the boathouse. Learning to rig and de-rig boats is one of the first skills your rower will learn. When at races, between races, equipment must be accounted for, and teamwork is essential. Boats are big, awkward to maneuver and expensive, but you watch, by the end of the season, your kids will be an organized impressive crew!

No electronic devices like battery powered megaphones or cell phone communication with a rower or coxswain are allowed. This is another way to disqualify a boat.

Parents are expected to cheer!

Often parents plan to spread out their cheering throughout the race course to encourage our boats the whole way. Due to the nature of our sport, there are not a lot of spectators, and rowers really like the encouragement and support, so GO FOR IT.

Parents should leave their beer and wine at home...with the dog.

Consider Getting Involved

So much of the success of this program depends on volunteer efforts. Here are some ways you can help.

- Bring food to races
- Make calls to reserve hotel rooms for the team
- Help keep equipment in shape ask Coach what needs fixin'
- Volunteer to be a part of the Fruit Sale Committee
- Drive the boats and trailer to a race
- Donate Misc. items to the boathouse such as:
 - Duct tape
 - First Aid Supplies including ice packs
 - Bottled Water
 - A nice folding table to bring to races
 - A box of granola bars for hungry kids
 - Blue and White Spray Paint for oars
- Consider loaning any of the following for races:
 - Large cooler
 - Gas Grill
- Anybody have a connection to purchasing or fixing up a small box trailer to put items in to bring to races?
- Can you build us some new slings?
- Become a parent representative on the Old Lyme Rowing Association Board
- Volunteer to be a media representative. This would involve contacting local papers and encouraging them to publish our race results. Could you be the newspaper contact person?
- Fundraising ideas? The Fruit sale has been a great success in the past, and is a big tradition, but in addition, an idea has been to put together a calendar or note cards to sell. Anyone a photographer or graphic designer?
- Smile! Introduce yourself to other parents, get to know each other!

Invaluable Internet Resources

<http://www.row2k.com> Results, pictures, Regatta links...it's all here.

<http://www.regattacentral.com> Results, entries, participants in each boat included

<http://www.usrowing.org> National team testing information: Serious juniors must join US Rowing to submit erg times in the off season.

<http://www.irow.com> More good information. Register on the parent page, juniors register for college coaches to review their statistics.

<http://www.rowersworld.com> Lots here, message board under the “Community” section, also nice photos

<http://www.rowingtalk.com> Message Boards

<http://www.concept2.com> The ERG site.

<http://www.sportgraphics.com> Beautiful pictures of YOUR junior rowers!

<http://www.boathouserow.org> Stotesbury Cup Regatta Philadelphia PA (May) Same website for Head of the Schuylkill

Rowing Terms

- Blade: The oar; also the end of the oar which is placed in the water.
- Bow: the front end of the boat; also used as the name of the person sitting nearest the bow.
- Catch: The oar blade entering the water at the beginning of the stroke.
- Crab: A stroke that goes bad. The oar blade slices into the water at an angle and gets caught under the surface. A bad crab can catapult you out of the boat.
- Ergometer: A rowing machine designed to simulate the actual rowing motion; used for training and testing.
- Feathering: Turning the oar blade flat during the recovery to lessen wind resistance.
- Finish: The oar blade leaving the water at the end of the stroke.
- Foot stretcher (or clogs or shoes): An adjustable bracket in a shell to which rowers feet are secured.
- Hatchet: A type of oar with a blade larger in surface than that of a Macon blade.
- Oarlock: A U-shaped swivel which holds the oar in place. It is mounted at the end of the rigger and rotates around a metal pin. A gate closes across the top to keep the oar in place.

- Port side: Left side of the boat, as facing the bow.
- Recovery: The time between strokes, the oar blade traveling through the air.
- Rigger: The assembly of tubes which are tightly bolted to the hull to which are attached an oarlock.
- Rigging: The adjustment and alteration of accessories (riggers, foot stretchers, oar, etc.) in and on the shell to maximize particular rowers efficiency, based on their size and capabilities.
Scull: this term is used interchangeably: to the oars used in sculling, the sculling shell itself; or the act of rowing in a sculling shell.
- Shell: A racing boat; Term for rowing boats
- Slide: The track on which the seat moves.
- Slings: Collapsible/portable frames with straps upon which a shell can be placed.
- Split: The time a crew takes to complete a 500 meter segment of the race.
- Starboard: Right side of the boat facing the bow.
- Stern: the rear end of the boat.
- Stroke: Apart from the rowing action, this can also mean the person who sets the pace for the rest of the crew. The stroke sits nearest the stern.
- "Washing Out": Not fully recovering the blade during the whole stroke.
- Recovery: The part of the rowing stroke from the release up to and including the catch.
- Skying: The fault of carrying the hands too low during the recovery, causing the blade to be too high off the surface of the water.
- Squaring: Term describing the turning of the oar from a horizontal (feathered) to a vertical (squared) blade position.
- Sweeping: The art of rowing with one oar.
- "Ready all, Row": Begin rowing.
- "Power 10": A race tactic. A call for rowers to do 10 of their most powerful strokes.

This information is taken from a variety of sources, mostly from the Rowing Handbook by

Harold Y. Finigan. This handbook was developed as a guide to rowing for the Lower Merion High school crew (Philadelphia), which is coached by Finigan.