



First Some History:

The Christopher Newport University Rowing Club was revamped in the fall of 2012 through the efforts of Alison Mayer and a small group of interested students to provide the students at Christopher Newport University an opportunity to participate in the sport of rowing. Ali recruited Scott Smith to coach the team, and with a dozen or so kids, the program was launched in three borrowed boats. If it wasn't for her vision, we would not have the extraordinary Crew Club that we have now.

Today, the Christopher Newport University Rowing Club has approximately 30 co-ed members, and no potential rower is turned away due to financial reasons. Crew is recognized as the ultimate team sport with great pride, great coaches, great families and great rowers!

FAQs

Below are a few facts and interesting points regarding crew and some are specific to Christopher Newport University Rowing Club. We try hard to communicate everything, especially to new rowers, but the board and coaches are all very busy and can't always make that happen. It is our hope that this fact sheet will at least answer some of those questions. In addition, we hope this will be a living document so that if you have a question not answered here, we can add it for the benefit of future parents and rowers.

The Top Questions from Rowers:

What is Crew and is it for me?

1. What is crew and who participates?
 - a. Crew is the sport of rowing. We use long boats with multiple people in them and race in lakes and rivers.
2. Does everyone get to participate?
 - a. YES! There are no benchwarmers in crew. It could happen, but we make every effort to make sure every rower participates in every event.
3. Do you need experience?
 - a. NO EXPERIENCE REQUIRED! Most people have not heard of crew other than seeing the long boats in the Olympic games.
4. Will I know a lot of people my first day?
 - a. Starting college is tough, but it is a lot easier when you have 60 friends from Crew that you spent the previous week rowing with! Crew is also a sport where class distinction means very little, our Seniors need our Freshmen in order to win team events so every rower is important. Crew kids also have a reputation as the nicest team sport with very helpful crew teammates.
5. How many seasons are there?
 - a. Two seasons: Spring where boats race all lined up and fall when boats race one at a time.
6. When do you recruit new rowers?
 - a. We only recruit new rowers in the Fall season.
7. What if I need some financial help?
 - a. Our crew wants everyone to row that wishes to. So far, we have not had to turn anyone away and have been able to offer a few full and a few partial scholarships when requested. We keep it confidential and the process is simple. Just ask the Treasurer.
8. Is Christopher Newport University Rowing Club an official school sport?
 - a. Yes, we are recognized as a club team by Christopher Newport University. Therefore, we only recruit Christopher Newport University students.
9. Can I do crew if I am in Band or Lacrosse or swim or ...?
 - a. YES! Many of our rowers are also in other activities, especially band. We do our best to coordinate any conflicts with the other activities.
10. I heard there is a swim test ... where, when, what?
 - a. Just one time in a rowers career, before they get into boats too often. Normally at the YMCA pool at the start of the fall season or a coach will test them in the river if need be. We want to be certain that every rower is a good swimmer. It's a pretty standard test and most years everyone passes. It's not too hard. We just want to be safe!
11. Is it OK if I am short, tall, big or small? (That rhymes)
 - a. Yes. We want everyone to row. We need different sizes for different jobs, but tall is always good. But small is great if you're a coxswain.
12. Can I try crew for a day or two before I commit?
 - a. Absolutely. We love people to try it out first, but you will love it!
13. Does crew do anything in the off season?
 - a. As a team we lift weights and erg together after during the Winter. In the Summer many rowers join club team back at home to stay in shape.
14. If I have comments or questions, who do I go to?

- a. Please ... if you have a question, ask it. If you have a comment, share it. Talk to any board member or coach or e-mail any of them. We want to hear from you.
crewclub@cnu.edu

General Information

15. What are the season dates normally?
a. Fall season starts the week after classes begin and ends around Halloween. In Spring we start as soon as the weather is warm enough to go on the water. Spring lasts until finals week.
16. How do I join crew?
a. If you want to try it first, go to our Learn to Row classes.
17. How much does it cost?
a. It costs the club a lot of \$ to put rowers on the water. Since we are a club we get some school funding, but not enough to run our team. We do a lot of fundraising (even have a dedicated fundraising committee), but in the end the registration fee has typically been \$165/season (Subject to change). If that is an issue for your family please see ask for a partial scholarship. Don't let \$ stop a rower.
18. Is crew safe?
a. We take safety very seriously. Our coaches follow the boats during practice in a launch that is outfitted with life saving devices. However, it is VERY rare that a rower ever comes out of a boat. We also don't row if the river is too fast or the weather is too questionable. For more information, ask any coach. We pride ourselves on our safety record.
19. What are the uniforms like?
a. Normally our team wears racing shirts and spandex shorts for races.
20. What are the main crew expenses for the club?
a. Regatta fees, coach's salaries, boathouse rent, equipment and boat maintenance, travel expenses, etc. cost the club much more than the registration fee.
21. Do we own the boat house?
a. No. A man by the name of Dr Howard owns the boat house. We are polite tenants.
22. How many boats do we own?
a. It changes each year, but about 10 or so?

Practice Information

23. Where is crew practice held?
a. If weather is questionable or the river is too high or an erg test is scheduled ... practice is probably on campus in the gym. The rest of the time we row out of the our boathouse in Hampton.
24. What time is practice normally?
a. Schedules change for vacation weeks and for a number of other reasons. Once the season is underway we usually have practice from 5:30 to 7 at the Boathouse. There is a lot of carpooling so don't worry too much about rides just yet.
25. How do I get to practice and to races?
a. We do a lot of carpooling! Don't feel like you will have to drive them to and from practice every day because if you ask, there is usually someone to carpool with. We will set up a carpool at the beginning of the season.
26. What happens if I can't make it to a practice?

- a. Tell our vice president as soon as possible (don't tell a friend to tell them). (S)he keeps track of attendance and is in charge of notifying the coaches.
- b.

Regattas

27. What is a Regatta?

- a. That is a rowing race. We try to have at least 4 per season and sometimes have as many as 6 or 7 races. They are a lot of fun.

28. What is an Ergatta or an Ergathon?

- a. It is an indoor rowing competition. We encourage all our rowers compete.

29. Where are race events held?

- a. Most years our races are in Virginia including at the Occoquan in Manassas, Virginia.

30. Do we stay at a race all day?

- a. Most of the time, yes, but it is so fun you probably don't want to leave. We need rowers to be there to unload boats in the morning and put them back on the trailer after the races and then have team meetings.

31. What should I bring to a Regatta as a rower?

- a. A waterproof bag or container for my dry clothes, your racing uniform, warm clothes for when not racing, maybe boots, something to drink.

Rowing Terms and information

32. What is an Erg?

- a. It's an ergometer or rowing machine. It is used for practice and exercise. CNU has 6 Ergs in the gym and rowers will erg at the gym when weather isn't cooperating.

Cont'd : Rowing Terms and information

33. "Caught a Crab"

- a. Every rower catches a crab once in a while ... it's when the oar gets "trapped" in the water and it's hard to get it out to keep rowing.

34. What is an Erg time? What should it be?

- a. Erg tests vary in length just like races do. Typically they are held in 2k increments. Your rower will likely know their 2K time and their 6K time. The erg time is just one of several factors that coaches use to determine boat placement. We strive that our #1 men's boat reaches the 7:00 mark for a 2k and 8:00 for the women, but we haven't made that goal yet. New rowers typically start at 9 or 10 minutes for a 2k.

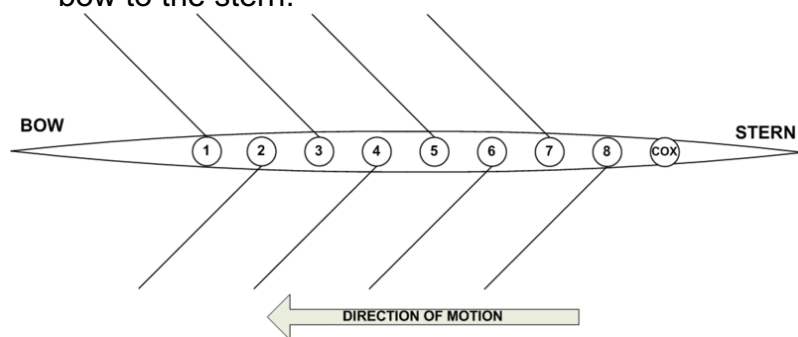
35. Is fall season like Spring? What is a Head Race?

- a. Fall is typically longer races and the boats leave the start one at a time and are timed to determine winners. Spring they line up and start together on shorter race lengths (usually 2km) and the first to cross wins. Both are fun. Fall races are typically referred to as Head races. Regattas will be called "Head of the Charles" for example.

36. What is a Coxswain?

- a. Arguably the most important person in the boat is the Coxswain or Cox (Pronounced Coxin). That is the boat leader who steers the boat and sets the pace with their commands. Small people make great coxswains and don't add much weight to slow down the boat!

37. How many people are in a boat?
 a. We normally row 8s and 4s. That means 8 rowers plus a cox so 9 in a boat. Or 4 rowers and a cox in a 4 boat.
38. How does a boat work?
 a. An 8 boat is a 56 ft long hole in the water filled with \$27k worth of fiberglass and equipment. The seats slide on rails and the rowers feet are in “shoes” that stay attached to the boat. The oars are locked in place at the end of a metal support bar called a rigger. The cox has a microphone that is wired to a “cox box” that amplifies their voice to speakers in the boat so the rowers can take direction from the cox.
39. What are the different boat positions (Stroke seat, etc.)?
 a. The “engine room” are the 3-6 rowers in the center of the boat. Bow and Stern pair are the other 4. The Stroke seat (#8) is the first rower and the rest of the rowers all watch the rower in front of them. The stroke (with pace direction from the cox) determines the moment each oar enters the water. The rowers are referred to as #1 to #8 in position so you can know where your rower will be sitting if you know their seat #. They are numbered in ascending order from the bow to the stern.



40. What is port and starboard?
 a. When facing the bow, port is on the left and starboard is on the right.
41. Is the rudder attached to the skeg really that small?
 a. Yes, the rudder is the size of a credit card a steers a 56 ft long boat. The skeg is the center support section on the underside that the rudder attaches to.
42. What is a rigger?
 a. The metal supports that are attached to the sides of the boat to support the oars.
43. What is a Novice versus Varsity rower?
 a. It's not as easy as this, but generally novice is a first year rower and after two seasons you are a varsity rower.
44. What is feathering?
 a. Feathering is the gentle glide of the oar, parallel to the water on the return stroke.
45. What is skulling vs. sweeping?
 a. If a rower has both hands on one oar, it's sweeping and what we do mostly. Skulling is two oars, one in each hand, which is mainly on smaller boats and there is normally no cox.

For lots more information about crew go to Wikipedia and type in rowing sport and you will learn a tremendous amount of information. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rowing_\(sport\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rowing_(sport))

NOTE: If the above did not answer your question feel free to email us at crewclub@cnu.edu

