

## Mission Statement

The Mission of New Canaan High School Crew is to provide an enriching and rewarding team sport for New Canaan High School students who are interested in physical and competition challenges and in developing rowing skills and knowledge as an important part of their overall education experience at NCHS.

New Canaan High School Crew will provide the environment to gain these rewarding experiences in both training and competitive situations and permit each student/athlete to advance whether as a novice beginner or experienced competitive rower.

New Canaan High School Crew's Mission will always place the growth, development and needs of our student/athletes first since their safety, well-being and personal progress are our first priorities. This Mission will be accomplished by building collaborative relationships with key New Canaan Stakeholders in the rowing club including: students, parents, coaching staff, Board of Education, New Canaan High School Athletic Department, NC Sports Counsel, the Community, local newspapers, local merchants, and other local and regional rowing organizations.



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# So What's a Regatta?



## A Rower and Parent Guide to New Canaan High School Crew



## A Glossary of Rowing Terms

**Blade:** The flat part of the oar that makes contact with the water. Blades are usually decorated with the team's colors and/or logo, so you can spot them in a race.

**Boat (or shell):** the fiberglass vessel in which the rower or rowers sit. There are two classes of boats:

**Scull Boat:** each seat has two oars, one on each side of the seat. A Single has one rower; a double, two, a quad four, and an octuple eight.

**Sweep Boat:** each seat has one oar, and sweep boats usually (but not always) have a coxswain to help steer the boat. A Pair has two rowers, a "4" has 4, and an "8" has eight.

**Boathouse:** a shed, ranging from simple to luxurious, on the water that houses the team's boats and serves as the meeting place for practices.

**Bow:** the front of the boat; or the first seat in a multi-seat boat.

**Catch a Crab:** allow an oar to pull deep into the water instead of keeping it parallel to the boat. This can be quite disruptive to the rowers' rhythm and could cause a capsized.

**Coxswain (or Cox):** a non-rower who usually sits in the stern of the boat and helps steer the boat and directs and encourages the rowers. "Small, pushy, and loud."



**Erg (short for Ergometer):** a rowing machine that closely approximates the feel and motion of sculling a boat on the water.

**Feather the Oar:** turning the oar so that the blade is parallel to the water.

**Oar:** a pole with a rower on one end and a flat blade on the other, used to propel the boat through the water.

**Port:** the left side of the boat when facing the bow; on a sweep boat, rowers with their oars on the left side of the boat.

**Race:** a competition to see which rowers can propel their boat faster from point A to point B. There are two types of races:

**Head Race:** A race where boats are started one at a time down a long, (typically 2-3 miles), usually windy course, usually at 15 second intervals. Each boat is timed, and the winner is determined at the end of the race by identifying the crew with the fastest time. It is generally not a good sign if your boat gets passed by another boat during a head race.

**Sprint:** usually a shorter race on a wider body of water, where all boats start at the same time and the first one across the finish line wins.

**Power 10 (or 20):** a burst of all-out strokes from the rowers, usually called for by the cox.

**Regatta:** an event where multiple crew teams assemble and compete in races, and their families and friends come and cheer them on. They are usually quite festive, so come prepared to have fun. They are also usually quite muddy and cool, so take care to dress appropriately.

**Rigger:** The metal frame that is attached to the boat and holds the oar in position. The rigger is usually removed, or **de-rigged**, from the boat while transporting it.

**Seat:** That part where the rower meets the boat; also, if qualified by a number, the position of the rower in the boat, with seat 1 being the bow, seat 2 right behind the bow, etc.

**Starboard:** the right side of the boat when facing the bow.; on a sweep boat, rowers with their oars on the right side of the boat.

**Stern:** the back of the boat

**Stretcher:** the part of the boat that holds the rower's feet in place while rowing.

**Stroke:** The cycle of inserting the oar into the water, pulling on it, lifting it out, pushing forward, and reinserting it into the water again. Also, the rower seated closest to the stern, who sets the pace for the rest of the rowers on the boat (because she's the only one they all can see.) No reputable cox or spectator ever attempts to encourage their rowers by yelling, "Stroke!"

## Welcome to New Canaan High School Crew

One of the objectives of the New Canaan Public Schools' Physical Education Curriculum is the teaching and development of lifelong skills and habits that promote physical wellness. Rowing is an example of a sport that affords our students such an opportunity.



As with most other high school sports, only a very small percentage of high school student athletes will ever have an opportunity to

compete at the collegiate level in crew. New Canaan High School Crew is proud to have contributed to the development of several such rowers, who have gone on to row at schools like John Hopkins, Georgetown, Villanova, Wisconsin, and Yale. And we are equally proud of those students who leave our program and may never row again competitively, but have acquired a skill and a passion they can enjoy throughout their adulthood.

Crew has been a collegiate sport for well over a hundred years, but the geographic and financial challenges of the sport have slowed its migration to the high school level. New Canaan High School is one of a handful of schools in Connecticut that offers a rowing training and development program to its student/athletes.

This brochure intends to provide general information, and answer some basic questions about our sport and program. For more information, please consult our website:

[www.newcanaancrew.com](http://www.newcanaancrew.com)

### Rower Responsibilities

**Attendance:** Attendance at practice and at regattas is essential. An eight seat sweep boat with seven rowers can only go around in circles; and we can't call "time" and send another rower out to the boat in the middle of a race. Rowing is a commitment to yourself and your teammates; they need you there at every practice and competition to be their best.

**Clothing:** Rowing involves movement and mechanical parts; the proper clothing contributes to performance, comfort, and safety. At practices, spandex shorts and tight fitting shirts are required. At Regattas, the team uniform is the Unisuit, which can be ordered via the website.

**Team:** Your boat is a team, and New Canaan Crew is a team. Support your boatmates and your teammates, at practices, and especially at regattas, by attending the entire regatta and cheering on your teammates.

### Parent Responsibilities

**Attendance:** Boats are a team, and they need to practice together. Unlike many other sports where players can be swapped in and out during a competition, the makeup of a boat is fixed. Your children need to attend practice consistently, so they and their boat can learn and improve. Please schedule doctor and other appointments around the team's practice schedule; the team feels it when your son or daughter is not there. If an absence is absolutely unavoidable, please let the coach know as far in advance as possible, so he or she can make alternate plans for the rest of the team.



**Regattas:** It is important for all the rowers to have parents and teammates to cheer them on at our races. Plan to spend the whole day at the events whenever possible to encourage team spirit and enthusiasm. Regattas are also social events; look for the New Canaan High School Crew tent, wear team paraphernalia to help identify yourself as a NCHS Crew Parent, and gather around the food table for a snack and conversation.

**Clothing:** Support the team by purchasing NCHS Crew apparel (orderable on the website)

**Safety is everyone's responsibility:** rowers, coaches, and parents. Rowing obviously takes place in and around water, so there is always potential danger. All prospective rowers must take a swim test to demonstrate basic proficiency in the water. Coaches are strictly intolerant of horseplay in the boats and on the docks, and parents need consistently and regularly to reinforce this message with their children.

**Fundraising:** There are a few major fundraising events held through the year to help with capital improvements and purchases; for example, a pie sale (fall), and a plant sale and car wash (spring.) Please support the programs yourself and encourage your rower to solicit purchasers. Approximately 50% of the income from these events is profit to NCHS Crew.

NCHS Crew is a non-profit 501 (C ) 3 organization. Please consider giving a gift to the team. If you have corporate matching available, please use it to increase your gift.

**Volunteer:** Crew is a lot of fun, and it is a lot of work. Please consider a gift of your time and talents to enrich the experience of everyone involved in the program. We can always use more help at regattas, with publicity, with registration, and with fundraising.

### Coaches Responsibilities (excerpted from the New Canaan High School Coaches' Handbook 2004)

- ◆ Demonstrate knowledge of human growth and development as it relates to the teaching/learning process.
- ◆ Help students develop positive self concepts.
- ◆ Effectively organize time, space material, and equipment for instruction.
- ◆ Establish a positive learning environment.



- ◆ Demonstrate a knowledge of the relationship of athletics to the American public school system.

- ◆ Effectively communicate with student-athletes, parents, officials, and the media.
- ◆ Effectively assess student needs and progress.
- ◆ Effectively meet the needs of exceptional student-athletes.
- ◆ Facilitates the independence of the student-athlete as a learner.
- ◆ Meets professional responsibilities.



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