



2008 - 2009

**LAKE BRADDOCK
CREW**

LAUNCH SAFETY

LAUNCH SAFETY TRAINING PLAN

Welcome to Lake Braddock High School Crew!

Safety is the number one priority for Lake Braddock Crew. This Launch Safety training plan is intended to promote safety by providing parent volunteers with an understanding of launch procedures for rowing practice and regattas.

This Launch Safety training plan accompanies the Lake Braddock Crew Safety / Security Plan.

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INTRODUCTION

The Lake Braddock Crew follows the guidelines of the Virginia High School League (VHSL) and competes under the auspices of the Virginia Area Scholastic Rowing Association (VASRA) and the U.S. Rowing Association. We are a member in good standing of both organizations. The VASRA website (www.vasra.org) currently lists 36 area member high schools and the number of crew teams keeps growing each year.

Lake Braddock Crew operates and practices out of Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority's (NVRPA) Bull Run Marina. A majority of the other regional high school teams row out of Sandy Run Rowing Facility on the Occoquan River. Our Bull Run facility is about nine miles up river from Sandy Run. Most regattas are at Sandy Run.

The Crew program is conducted through the Lake Braddock Crew Boosters Club, Inc., (Crew Boosters), a non-profit 501c(3) corporation, whose purpose is to encourage, maintain and further the participation of parents, teachers, and adults of the community in active support of scholastic rowing at Lake Braddock Secondary School. The Crew Boosters promote, assist, and support all rowing activities at Lake Braddock Secondary School with financial assistance, human resources, management, and consultative advice. The Crew Boosters Club is managed by a Board of Directors, elected for one-year terms, composed of no fewer than eleven members, chosen from members of the Club in good standing, including alumni. Parent volunteers are essential to the success of the team. One of the parent volunteer duties is to operate launches: to support VASRA during regattas, to support team preparations for and recovery from regattas, and to support coaches during rowing practice.

PURPOSE OF LAUNCH DRIVER TRAINING

The primary purpose of launch driver training is to ensure the safety of all participants during practice and regattas. Launch driver training also will improve the care and maintenance of team equipment.

The secondary purpose of launch driver training is to provide enough qualified volunteers to meet Lake Braddock Crew commitments to VASRA for Sandy Run regattas.

TRAINING PLAN

Training will be conducted by experienced boaters who already are qualified to support VASRA regattas, and who may have additional Coast Guard or other certifications. Training will be provided to all willing Lake Braddock Crew Boosters parent volunteers.

Classes will be conducted at and around Bull Run marina. For 2009, classes are scheduled for Saturday, March 7, and Saturday, March 14. Ground training will be conducted first, starting an hour before the end of the team's practice. On-the-water training will be done as the coaches return launches at the end of practice.

Training will follow the attached outline. Launch driver training will use the checklists from the lake Braddock Crew Safety / Security Plan.

TRAINING GUIDELINES

Launches

The Team owns and operates seven launches. Typically, five launches are used by the coaches during practice. On Fridays, two launches are shuttled from Bull Run to Sandy Run for the regatta the next day. Launches are shuttled back from Sandy Run to Bull Run at the conclusion of the regatta on Saturday.

Radio Communications

Launch drivers and coaches are provided with short range radios and with radios that can connect to the Fairfax County emergency system. Radio procedures will be covered under the emergency procedures section of training. Short range radios (walkie-talkies) are useful for communicating between launches, especially while shuttling back and forth to Sandy Run.

Volunteer Sign-ups

The Team volunteer coordinator will keep track of who has completed the launch driver training. The volunteer coordinator will ensure that qualified launch drivers are assigned to the Team's VASRA commitments.

Team Safety Rules

- All team members must pass a swim test (a one-time requirement), view the team's water safety video, and read and sign-off on the team's safety guidelines before going on the water for the first time.
- All boats will be accompanied by a coaching launch after moving out of the designated launching and docking area. Do not row if a coach is not in sight.
- All coaches' launches must be outfitted with life vests and other safety equipment.
- If your boat swamps (fills up with water) or turns over, stay with the boat. The boats are designed to float and you should stay with it until you can be picked up by the accompanying launch. **NEVER** leave the boat.
- When the boat is on the water, follow the instructions of the coxswain and coach. Other than in the case of an emergency or during breaks in practice, rowers should not talk while in the boat. This may interfere with instructions from the coxswain, coach or racing officials.

- If you or someone else is injured, notify the coach immediately. Those who are seriously injured must report to the LB Trainer at the first opportunity. If you are held out of practice or a regatta because of an injury, you may not return without prior clearance from the LB Trainer.

Equipment Rules

- Rowing equipment is very expensive and must be handled with care. Carefully follow all directions regarding the handling of equipment.
- Unnecessary talking is not permitted when handling equipment. Your attention to the task at hand is very important.
- All rowers must participate in routine cleaning and maintenance of equipment. Please report any equipment problems to a coach immediately.
- It is the responsibility of both the coaches and rowers to properly secure all equipment on the trailer before traveling to away regattas. All rowers are likewise expected to return to Bull Run Marina to help unload the equipment after completing a regatta.

Launch Driving Advice:

- Treat all teammates, opponents, coaches, spectators, officials and LB Crew members with respect.
- Refrain from displaying inappropriate behavior and/or the use of foul language. Violations of this rule can lead to boat disqualification.
- Support the team and yourself by accepting coaching decisions.
- Dress for the occasion
 - Launch drivers must be appropriately dressed for current weather conditions. It is highly recommended that they have extra clothing with them. Clothing for water training should be close fitting and have basic water resistant properties. Drivers should be well covered with warm clothes that can withstand wind and water penetration. Coaches recommend the following:
 - *In Cold Conditions (you will get wet and it will be cold):*
 - Winter hat (this is critical as most heat is lost through your head)
 - Gloves
 - Lined, long spandex or close-fitting fleece/lined athletic pants
 - Dry-fit or moisture-wicking inner layer (i.e., polypropylene, cool max)

- Waterproof or water-resistant jacket (shells work better than large bulky jackets)
- Fleece vest or jacket
- Warm socks - polypro, fleece, or warm wool socks
- Sunscreen (protect your face from the sun)
- *In Warmer Conditions:*
 - Baseball cap or visor to protect your face from the sun & to keep your hair in place
 - Sunglasses
 - Close-fitting shorts (baggy shorts can get caught in the seat tracks)
 - Cotton, dry-fit, or cool max T-shirt
 - Sunscreen (protect your face and body from painful burns)

COMMUNICATIONS

Website: The Lake Braddock Crew web site, along with directed e-mail, provides a multitude of Information. The website can be accessed through <http://www.bruincrew.com>. Parents and rowers are encouraged to access the website on a daily basis for late breaking news such as practice time changes/cancellations or boat lineups. More casual browsing may be made for information pertaining to:

- An electronic copy of this handbook
- Safety / Security Plan
- Launch Driver Training Plan
- Safety Checklists

ROWING TERMINOLOGY

Equipment

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| Blade | The wide flat section of the oar at the head of the shaft. The two types of blades are called hatchet and spoon. |
| Button | A plastic or metal fitting tightened on the oar to keep the oar from slipping through the oarlock. |
| Foot Stretcher | Adjustable brackets in a shell to which the rower's feet are secured in attached sneakers or similar footwear. |
| Gunwale (Or Gunnel) | Top section on the slides of a shell, which runs along the sides of the crew section where the rowers are located. The riggers are secured to the gunwale with bolts. |
| Hatchets | These oar blades have a bigger surface area than the standard or spoon blades and have a hatchet or meat cleaver shape. |
| Keel | The centerline of the shell. The term refers to the extent to which the boat is balanced from side to side while rowing. A "good keel" is where the shell is rowed with little or no continual dipping to port or starboard. |
| Oar | The piece of equipment that each rower uses to propel the boat. In sweep rowing, each oar is approximately 12 feet long, lightweight and well designed. |
| Oarlock | A U-shaped swivel that holds the oar in place. It is mounted at the end of the rigger and rotates around a metal pin. |
| Rigger | The device that connects the oarlock to the shell and is bolted to the body of the shell. |
| Rigging | The adjustment and alteration of accessories (riggers, foot stretchers, oars, etc.) in and on the shell. Examples of rigging adjustments that can be made are the height of the rigger, location of the foot stretchers, locating and height of the oarlocks, location of the button on the oar and the pitch of the blade of the oar. |
| Rudder | Steering device at the stern. The rudder is connected to cables (tiller ropes) that the coxswain uses to steer the shell. |
| Scull | A shell configured so that each rower uses two oars. This term is also used interchangeably when referring to the oars used in a sculling shell, the shell itself, or to the act of rowing a sculling shell. |
| Shell | The racing boat. Shells come in configurations and sizes for single rowers, pairs, fours and eights. An eight is approximately 60 feet long, narrow (about two feet wide at its widest point), and weighs about 280 pounds. |
| Skeg(Or Fin) | A small fin located along the stern section of the hull. This helps to stabilize the shell in holding a true course when rowing. All racing shells have a skeg. The skeg should not be confused with the Rudder. |
| Slide (Or Track) | Two tracks on which the seat moves. The seat moves forward and backwards on the slide, enabling the rower to "gather up" his or her body at the start of the stroke and then use the combined power of the legs, back, and arms when actually executing the slide. |

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| Slings (Or Boat Slings) | Collapsible/portable frames with straps upon which a shell can be placed temporarily. |
| Sweep | A shell configured so that each rower has one oar. Oars on a sweep shell are normally alternated from side to side. |

Rowing Cycle Terms:

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| Catch | The start of the rowing cycle at which the blade enters the water. It is accomplished by an upward motion of the arms only. The blade of the oar must be fully squared at the catch. |
| Crab (Not a hard or soft-shell edible.) | “Catching a Crab” refers to a problem encountered by a rower when his or her oar gets “stuck” in the water, usually right after the Catch or just before the Release and is caused by improper squaring or feathering. The momentum of the shell can overcome the rower’s control of the oar. In extreme cases, the rower can actually be ejected from the shell by the oar. |
| Drive | That part of the rowing cycle when the rower applies power to the oar. This is a more or less blended sequence of applying power primarily with a leg drive, then the back, and finally the arms. |
| Feathering | The act of turning the oar blade from a position perpendicular to the surfaces of the water to a position parallel to the water. This is done in conjunction with the Release. |
| Finish | The last part of the Drive before the Release where the power is mainly coming from the back and arms. |
| Rating | The number of strokes per minute. Also known as Stroke Rating. |
| Recovery | Part of the rowing cycle from the release up to and including where the oar blade enters the water. |
| Release | A sharp downward (and away) motion of the hand, which serves to remove the oar blade from the water and to start the rowing cycle. |
| Squaring | A gradual rolling of the oar blade from a position parallel to the water to a position (almost) perpendicular to the surface of the water. This is accomplished during the Recovery portion of the rowing cycle and is done in preparation for the Catch. |
| Stroke | One full motion to move the shell. It is also used as a term referring to the stern-most (eighth seat or fourth seat in the case of fours) rower who sits nearest the coxswain. |

Other Terms of Interest:

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| Bow | The forward end of the shell. |
| Check | Any abrupt deceleration of the shell caused by some uncontrolled motion within the shell; an interruption in the forward motion of the shell. |
| Course | A straight racecourse for rowers that normally has 4-6 lanes. In high school, the course length is 1500 meters, while in college and Olympic events; the course length is 2000 meters. |
| Cox Box | A small electronic device, which aids the coxswain by amplifying his or her voice, and which gives a readout of important information such as stroke count. |
| Coxswain (Or Cox, or Cox'n) | The person who sits at the stern of the shell (although this may be in the bow of some "4s"), steers, gives commands, calls the ratings, and urges the rowers on in a race. A knowledgeable coxswain will generally serve as an "on-site/in-the-shell" assistant to the coach. Relatively light in weight, a good coxswain will have as much competitive spirit as the rowers and can make a considerable difference in a race. |
| Ergometer | A rowing machine. An "erg" allows beginning rowers to learn the basics of the stroke before going on the water, and is used by all rowers to develop their conditioning. |
| Port | The left side of the shell when facing the bow. In sweep rowing, the designation of a rower who normally rows with an oar on the port side. |
| Starboard | The right side of the shell when facing the bow. In sweep rowing, the designation of a rower who normally rows with an oar on the starboard side. |
| Stern | The rear end of the shell. |
| The Stroke | The rower sitting nearest the stern (and the coxswain). The stroke is responsible for setting the stroke length and cadence for the rest of the crew, following the commands and encouragement of the coxswain. |
| Weigh-Enough | Actually sounds like "way-nuff". This is the coxswain's call to have all rowers stop rowing. |

LAUNCH TRAINING OUTLINE

I Ground Training

- a. Introduction to the boat driver duties
 - 1) Crew Practice
 - 2) Regattas
 - 3) Shuttling between Bull Run and Sandy Run
- b. Equipment
 - 1) Describe the boat and motor equipment
 - i. Dogging bolts to hold motor to transom
 - ii. Painter for securing launch to dock
 - iii. Gas can; primer bulb; air valve; fuel gauge
 - iv. Motor kill switch and wrist strap
 - 2) Show and explain the safety equipment
 - i. PFD; inflatable and otherwise
 - ii. Paddle
 - iii. Bailers
 - iv. Whistle
 - v. Space blankets
 - vi. First aid kit
- c. Rules of navigation
 - 1) Explain the basic coast guard rules of navigation
 - 2) Review the checklist
 - 3) Explain etiquette around shells and the effect of wake
 - 4) Describe Regatta referee procedures
- d. Safety rules and procedures
 - 1) Explain the launch operating and safety procedures
 - a) Review the checklist
 - 2) Explain the rowing/shell operating and safety procedures
 - a) Review the checklist
 - 3) Explain the emergency procedures
 - a) Review the checklist

II Operational Training

- a. Prepare the launch per checklist
- b. Review dock procedures per checklist
- c. Demonstrate and have trainee demonstrate starting procedures per checklist
- d. Operating procedures to be covered during check ride
 - 1) Proper life jacket wear and kill switch use
 - 2) Proper seat position and ballast requirements
 - 3) Checking fuel/oil
 - 4) Throttle cutoff, tension, and control
 - 5) Tiller tension and control
 - 6) Trim bar adjustment
 - 7) Backing operations with turns

- 8) Forward operations with turns
 - 9) Wake control
 - 10) Idling, stopping, maneuvering to another boat/dock (using dock as a surrogate for a boat) – repeat until comfortable. Focus on frame of reference for judging motion and soft touch on engine.
 - 11) Review the referee position during regattas
- e. Post operating procedures
- 1) Stow equipment
 - 2) Stow boat and motor

III Qualification Requirements for general launch driving duties

- a. Complete Ground Training
- b. Complete Operational Training

IV Qualification Requirements for NCASRA positions

- a. Grandfathered by prior NCASRA certification, OR all of the following:
- b. Complete Ground Training
- c. Complete Operational Training
- d. Complete one of the following:
 - 1) Shuttle a launch between Sandy Run and Bull Run
 - 2) Drive a coach's launch for an entire practice
 - 3) Drive a launch for setup or takedown of the point