

GRRRA Club Rules

Revised March 31, 2019

1. Rowing Eligibility

- a. You must be a dues-paying member of GRRRA or registered participant in a GRRRA program to use club equipment. Minors must row under adult supervision.
- b. Prospective rowers must request a review by a duly qualified and appointed member of the Club's coaching staff to become certified. A list of coaches is available from the GRRRA board of directors or on the GRRRA website (growing.org).
- c. All members and guests MUST annually sign a waiver and a copy of these rules before launching (using) equipment.
- d. Guests and non-certified rowers may only row with supervision and with the permission of a GRRRA coach. Rowers in the high school and college programs MUST have their coach in attendance when at the boathouse and on the water.

2. Rules of the River

- a. Rowers may only row in shells in which they have been certified.
- b. One US Coast Guard-approved PFD for each rower and coxswain should be kept in the shell while rowing, unless a GRRRA coach is on the water in a launch with enough PFDs available for each rower and coxswain in ALL the boat being supervised. To meet this requirement, a PFD must be in serviceable condition and must be used in a manner consistent with the applicable US Coast Guard requirements (i.e., it must be continuously worn if so required by its US Coast Guard designation).
- c. To meet the previous requirement, the supervising coach's launch must AT ALL TIMES stay within a practicable line-of-sight of EACH boat that is being supervised by that launch, and that the launch be close enough to allow the coach in the launch to readily hear the type of audible signal that each supervised boat is able to produce. The responsibility for ensuring that these requirements are met is a MUTUAL responsibility of BOTH the coach in the launch AND all those (rowers and coxswain) in the rowing shell.
- d. Each boat must carry at least one sound-producing device available for use.
- e. It is recommended that every rower in a single carry a functioning cell phone in a waterproof case while rowing.
- f. All safety launches must have functional cell phones in waterproof containers.
- g. Launch upstream and row for at least 50 meters to establish clearance from any traffic. You should generally dock in the same direction (approaching from downstream). Keep to the starboard side of the river - shoreline is on your left when rowing (see "Traffic Pattern on River" diagram, on next page). Watch for river traffic and obstacles. If a passing motorboat leaves substantial wake, try to keep the shell PARALLEL to the wake to avoid potential submersion or damage to the shell.

3. Equipment Usage

- a. Always sign out in the logbook and sign back in upon returning. Please note any obstacles in the river, damage/repair requests, or other problems.

- b. All Club equipment must be handled with maximum care so as not to damage it, its user(s), or bystanders. Those using Club equipment are responsible for the cost of loss or repairs arising from usage, including but not limited to poor judgment in navigation or transport to/from the dock.
- c. Inspect the boat before and after each use. Report in the damage log any damage or problems and report the issue to a coach or GRRRA board member. Tag the oarlock of the boat needing attention with a written description of the problem.
- d. Club boats are designated with GRRRA or GRRRC and/or a blue or green sticker on the bow. Use of any boat not so labeled is strictly forbidden except with the prior permission of the owner of the boat.
- e. Rowers should know how to swim and sign a waiver indicating their swimming ability.
- f. Lock the boathouse if it is unattended.
- g. Clean the boat after each use. Wipe down the hull. DO NOT use a harsh abrasive or cleanser.
- h. Return all equipment to its proper storage location.
- i. DO NOT make changes to the rigging of any boats. If adjustment is necessary, notify the club captain or one of the coaches.
- j. Respect fellow members and all equipment.

4. Rules for Weather

- a. Be alert to changing weather conditions. DO NOT launch if a storm is approaching, or if a thunderstorm warning exists for the immediate area. If a watch or a warning is in effect for the region but outside the immediate vicinity, stay close to the dock area and monitor conditions. Land all boats immediately at the first sign of lightning!
- b. Boats must not launch and should head for shelter immediately under the following conditions: whitecaps on the water; fog (visibility to shore less than 100 meters); electrical storms and/or lightning.
- c. Do not launch if you will not be able to land before sunset, unless you have appropriate, serviceable lights on board. Members may not row before sunrise or after sunset, except with prior board approval, and if there is a coach accompanying them in a launch. Any boat on the water before sunrise or after sunset MUST have appropriate, serviceable lights on board.
- d. Do not row in fog unless visibility is at least 100 meters. If heavy fog sets in while on the water, keep a land reference on one side and return to the dock, moving slowly and being prepared to stop quickly. Make noise frequently with a sound device or by shouting to warn other boats. Ensure quiet when not signaling to listen for other boats.
- e. Water quality varies and may be poor. Current tetanus and hepatitis shots are strongly recommended for all rowers. River water should be kept from any open wounds (blisters too) as much as possible. Wash any wounds with soap and water as soon as possible after rowing. Wet clothing should be washed prior to wearing again.

5. Air & Water Temperature Rules

In order for rowing to be permitted, the following conditions must be met:

- a. the ambient air temperature must be ABOVE 32° F. and UNDER 95° F.;
- b. for water temperature BELOW 40° F., ROWING IS NOT PERMITTED. (The Board MAY choose to consider exceptions in advance on a case-by-case basis, with signed waivers from EACH rower and coxswain.)

- c. for water temperature between 40° F. and 50° F., for any size boat, rowing is permitted ONLY if either a) there is an accompanying coach's launch, OR b) specific approval has been granted by the Board in advance, with signed waivers from EACH rower and coxswain
- d. for water temperature between 51° F. and 60° F.,
 - i. eights, fours, and quads may row, but if there is no accompanying coach's launch, all rowers and coxswain must be certified as per general GRRRA requirements. This rule applies to ALL eights, fours, and quads used by GRRRA, even those that are privately owned
 - ii. doubles, pairs, and singles may row, but if there is no accompanying coach's launch, all rowers and coxswain must be certified as per general GRRRA requirements, AND specific approval must have been granted by the Board in advance, with signed waivers from EACH rower and coxswain.
- e. for water temperatures above 60° F., no WATER temperature restrictions apply. AIR temperature rules are still applicable, however.
- f. Owners of singles, doubles and pairs housed at the GRRRA boathouse (and any GRRRA members who is specifically invited to accompany that owner in that owner's double or pair, and who has signed a waiver) may row that owner's single, double or pair in ANY environmental condition provided the GRRRA dock is in place, recognizing that in so doing the owner (and accompanying member if any) do so at their own risk and NOT otherwise subject to GRRRA regulations. In such cases, GRRRA provided nothing more than boat storage and dock availability. If rowing takes place in violation of the above restrictions, GRRRA reserves the right to immediately terminate the boat storage contract of the owner of the single, double, or pair thus rowed. (The board MAY choose to consider exceptions in advance on a case-by-case basis, with signed waivers from EACH rower and Coxswain).
- g. G. paragraph (F) above does NOT apply to any privately -owned four, quad, or eight used by GRRRA or stored at the GRRRA boathouse, as all such boats shall be considered strictly regulated by ALL rules listed above in Paragraphs, A, B, C, D, and E.

The definitive sources for determining the current temperatures are the NOAA/National Weather Service for air temperature in Grand Rapids, and the U.S. Geological Survey National Water Information System for water temperature in Eastmanville, Michigan. Also displayed at <http://grrowing.org/weather>

I understand the above rules and agree to follow them as a member of the Grand Rapids Rowing Association. I also understand that failure to adhere to these rules may result in termination of membership.

Member's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Traffic Pattern on River

