

**BRIGHTON**



**ROWING CLUB**

**TEAM  
HANDBOOK**

Revised 07/2019

# WELCOME

Welcome to the Brighton Rowing Club (BRC). This Handbook contains information to help rowers and their families understand this exciting sport. It also outlines policies and procedures that govern the day-to-day activities of the BRC Program. Please do not hesitate to ask the coaches, any board member, or volunteers any questions. Information is also posted on [www.brightoncrew.org](http://www.brightoncrew.org).

# ABOUT BRC

Founded in 1998, the Brighton Rowing Club (“BRC”) is a rowing program for Middle School and High School youth from Brighton, NY and neighboring communities without a rowing program. Ours is a competitive program and we expect commitment to improvement, and the highest levels of teamwork, sportsmanship, and integrity from the athletes who represent BRC as ambassadors at local, regional, and national levels. In return, our athletes experience one of the most rewarding lifelong sports. Our boathouse is located at the Genesee Waterways Center, 149 Elmwood Avenue 14611. This allows us to row on both the Genesee River and Erie Canal, depending on conditions.

# ELIGIBILITY

We welcome anyone in grades 7 – 12 from any school districts, not just Brighton. We are not managed or funded by any school district or town Recreation Department. We work with Brighton, and other school districts to recognize rowing as a “club sport.” We are members of US Rowing, the national governing body for the sport of rowing in the United States. We do not recruit from places that have their own rowing programs, but we will accept rowers from any school/locality.

No prior experience is required. Every team member will be able to participate in all practices and regattas – there is a “seat in the boat for everyone” who demonstrates commitment to the team. BRC prohibits discrimination and harassment based on gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual orientation, gender expression, mental or physical disability, or other legally protected category.

# GOALS

The Brighton Rowing Club strives to:

- Foster and maintain an environment that promotes physical and emotional well-being, and encourages a healthy balance between family, school, and sport.
- Teach rowing skills and inspire commitment to improvement through focused training and opportunity to compete locally and regionally.
- Create a culture of respect for the athletic community, team equipment, and safety guidelines.
- Build teamwork, sportsmanship and competitive integrity with a spirit of camaraderie and enjoyment.
- Maintain a well-managed club that can provide the necessary resources for the abilities of individual athletes and team goals.
- Promote and further the interest of youth rowing in the Rochester community.

# VALUES

- Balance
- Commitment
- Respect
- Teamwork
- Sportsmanship
- Integrity
- Enjoyment
- Inclusiveness

# THE BRC FAMILY

Brighton Rowing Club functions best when we work collectively for the good of the club. Our athletes are at the heart of our club.

- **Parents** are vital to helping with the operation of the club in a variety of ways: by helping rowers to get to practice on time, volunteering to help with BRC committees and events, or serving on the Board of Directors.
- **Coaches** are talented, experienced, and committed. They have a passion for rowing, and the knowledge needed to teach the techniques and qualities that make successful rowers.
- **The Board of Directors** ensures BRC's future and direction, financial solvency, and nonprofit and legal compliance.

## TEAMS

US Rowing (the governing body for the sport of rowing) categorizes rowers into Novice and Varsity levels. This insures fairness and safety in competition between athletes of similar skill and experience levels. No prior experience is required to join BRC. Competition placement is based on years of competitive racing, not age, so participants who start in mid to late high school still have the opportunity to do well in this sport.

### MODIFIED

- Open to 7th and 8th graders. Some 6th graders may be eligible if they have the height, weight, and maturity, and can carry 30-pounds overhead.
- Practices 2 – 3 times each week for one or both rowing seasons (fall, spring).
- Modified athletes are not eligible to compete in regattas. There may be demonstration or scrimmage events available for Modified boats to participate in. Modified rowers and their parents are welcome to attend local regattas, mingle at the BRC tent, and cheer on the BRC teams!

### NOVICE

- New high school rowers are placed on the Novice Team regardless of age, grade, or previous participation in Learn-to-Row or Modified programs.
- Athletes are generally on the Novice team for two competitive seasons.
- Practices are 5 days per week after school.
- Novice athletes participate in regattas and wear a Racing T-shirt uniform (must be ordered).
- Novice athletes may join during one or both rowing seasons (fall, spring) and are encouraged to participate in Winter Conditioning between seasons.

### VARSITY

- Open to high school students who have completed two competitive seasons as a Novice.
- Practices are 5 days per week after school.
- Varsity rowers participate in regattas and wear a Tech Shirt and a Unisuit (must be ordered).
- Once an athlete is on the Varsity team, they stay there even if they take a season off from rowing.
- Captains: Each season team captains are nominated and voted on by Novice and Varsity team members. In order to be considered as a captain an athlete should be a leader with good communication skills; one who will encourage, support, and motivate their teammates. A good captain displays a high level of commitment, focus, intensity, passion, and effort.

# ROWING SEASONS

## FALL SEASON

- Late August – Early November
- Novice and Varsity athletes begin practice in late August.
- Modified team members typically start in early September.
- Fall regattas consist of longer-distance “head races” of between 4 – 6 km; boats start at set intervals from one another and the time for each boat to complete the race is recorded to determine the winner. Selected Varsity may also get the opportunity to compete in the world-renowned Head of the Charles Regatta in Boston.

## WINTER CONDITIONING

- January – March
- Sessions are held prior to the start of the Spring season for returning and new athletes. The maintenance of fitness levels is essential to the team’s success in the spring.
- Winter conditioning consists primarily of land workouts on ergs or using free weights and cardio equipment.
- Mandatory for returning Varsity athletes unless they are participating in a winter sport or school play with prior approval from the Head Coach. Novice athletes are encouraged to participate and Modified athletes are welcome to join in, too.

## SPRING SEASON

- Late March – May
- Our most intense competitive season, where our winter conditioning is put to the test and many championships take place.
- Novice and Varsity athletes begin practice in late March. The Modified team will start in early April. Please note that all team members are expected to attend practices during spring break.
- Spring regattas are typically short (1500 to 2000 meters) Sprints. Depending on the venue, two to six boats race side by side, in lanes marked with buoys. Sprints typically take under 8 minutes start to finish and are very exciting, especially when you have multiple boats sprinting to the finish side by side. The winner is often only ahead by a few hundredths of a second.
- The NYS State Championship occurs once per year in mid-May, typically in Saratoga Springs, NY
- The Scholastic Rowing Association of America (SRAA) National Championship Regatta takes place in late-May. The US Rowing National Youth Nationals are held in June. Participation in both regattas is based on results from the State Championship.

## SUMMER SEASON

- July – August
- BRC often runs summer “Learn to Row Programs” for prospective athletes who wish to try the sport before joining the team in the fall as a Modified or Novice athlete.
- BRC usually provides summer programs for experienced athletes who wish to continue rowing between the spring and fall seasons.
- There may be other local clubs that offer a variety of summer rowing experiences. Contact the Head Coach for more information.

Athletes can participate in any or all rowing seasons.

# PRACTICES

- The Novice and Varsity teams practice 5 days per week, Monday through Friday after school.
- The Modified team practices 2 – 3 days per week after school as well.
- Practice schedules may continue over school breaks, holidays, and early dismissal days. Check the calendar on BRC website.
- Practice Cancellations: Practices (and regattas) are very rarely canceled. We row in rain, cold, and sleet. If electrical storms or river current and debris make the water unsafe, practice will be held at the boathouse using erg machines and other on-land workouts. In the unlikely event that practice is cancelled, we will send an email and a text to athletes and parents.
- Transportation to/from practice is each family's responsibility. Car pools are available. Members will receive a roster with teammates' contact information. Email registrar@brightoncrew.org if you need a copy.

## WHAT TO WEAR

- Arrive to practice already dressed to exercise.
- Synthetic, technical fabrics are best because they are lightweight, durable, and wick moisture away from the skin; the fabrics' heating or cooling properties are not diminished when wet.
- Bottoms should be tight-fitting to avoid catching in the boat's moving parts; running/cycling shorts or leggings are ideal.
- Layers on top allow easy adjustment for weather or exertion levels.
- Shoes get left in the open at the dock - the boat has special shoes built in to it, so consider shoes that are easy to get on and off, not valuable, and not slippery.
- Thick wool or synthetic socks, running shoes (for erg-ing, jogging, and warm-ups)
- Snug, breathable hat or visor; sunglasses

## WHAT TO BRING

- Full water bottle
- Sweatproof sunscreen
- Emergency medications like inhalers or epi-pens
- Belongings are left in the boathouse during practice. The boathouse is in a publicly accessible area, so please avoid bringing valuables to practice.
- Cell phones may get dropped or stepped on, so a protective case is helpful. Athletes should leave their phone in the boathouse during practice. Coxswains will be asked to have a phone with them in case of emergency and a waterproof packet is provided.

# COMMUNICATION

- **Email:** It is very important that each team member and parent ensures that BRC has the correct email address for every parent and athlete.
- **Website:** The BRC website is also an important communication tool. We encourage you to visit the site often for general rowing information as well as updated information such as regatta plans.
- **Remind:** Remind is a tool that allows communication in a more immediate way. It provides real-time messaging for the entire club, group, or single person via text or app. Information for joining Remind will be provided to parents and athletes at the beginning of each season.

# REGATTAS

Regattas are crew races for the Novice and Varsity teams, similar to track meets, with events scheduled throughout the day. The larger ones feature a festival-like atmosphere. They are a big commitment, often on consecutive weekends, but the racing season is short, and regattas are the icing on the cake. Novice and Varsity athletes need to be at the regatta all day, and have responsibilities even when they are not racing. When the athletes aren't racing, or performing team duties, they are usually resting at the team tent, eating, or watching the action.

Local regattas (those with no overnight) are included in your season dues, so there is no additional fee. There is no credit given for non-attendance. For away regattas, fees will be finalized once we know the travel details, entry fees, etc. BRC arranges hotel and transportation for away regattas. Parents are encouraged to attend for support, and are needed as chaperones or for hospitality.

## ATTENDANCE

Regattas are NOT optional. The calendar is posted well in advance on the BRC website. We understand that there may be unavoidable conflicts or family/medical emergencies. If an athlete cannot attend a regatta, or can't row due to an injury, notify the head coach immediately. Backing out at the last minute lets your whole boat down! Deadlines for entering line-ups are scheduled weeks before the event, making changes in line-ups can be difficult. This means the other athletes in the boat may not get to participate because of the conflict of one rower.

## BOAT ASSIGNMENTS

Athletes are assigned to boats based on a complex set of factors that includes: size, power, endurance, skills, port/starboard proficiency, teamwork, attendance, and dedication. Assignments are also influenced by the number of athletes and boats we have available, the timing of different events, and developmental goals the coach has for individual athletes and the team overall at each regatta. We aren't always trying to make the fastest boats at every regatta, sometimes we are trying to build toward longer-term goals.

## ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Coaches and the regatta details page will provide specific arrival times. Athletes will be dismissed when the last boat has been de-rigged and loaded, typically around 5 or 6 pm. Athletes are not free to go until all equipment is loaded, and they have been dismissed by their coach. If an athlete must leave early, please communicate with the coach in advance and have your child notify their teammates in advance.

Parents should not be at the boat trailer during the day. The trailer area is crowded, busy, and contains a lot of fragile expensive equipment. It is also where coaches will hold pre-and post-race meetings with the teams. We ask that the trailer remain an "athletes and coaches only" zone, unless a coach specifically asks for your help.

## HOSPITALITY TENT

BRC provides rowers and their families with a home base during day-long regattas. We provide food, beverages, and shelter for the crew team in between races. The hospitality tent is a great place for parents, siblings, and special guests to hang out and cheer on the team. Athletes may have a narrow window of time to eat before racing, or come off the water cold and hungry, so check in with Hospitality volunteers before serving yourself. Hospitality for BRC starts well before the first race of the day, and doesn't end until the rowers from the last race get a chance to hydrate and refuel. Watch for parent volunteer requests a few weeks in advance of each regatta.

## **WHAT TO BRING & WEAR**

### **Athletes**

- Wear uniform (varsity bring the long sleeve shirt if not wearing it)
- Wear layers on top of uniforms (i.e. warm up pants, sweatshirts, jacket)
- Shoes suitable for carrying the boat and leaving at the dock;
- Water bottle, sunscreen, extra socks
- BRC has blankets available, but you can bring your own
- Bring emergency medications such as an epi-pen or inhaler
- A backpack or drawstring bag to keep all of your belongings together and safe

### **Spectators**

- Dress in layers, be prepared for anything from warm sun to cold rain and mud
- If cold or rain is likely, waterproof boots, umbrellas, and rain jacket/pants help
- Bring a folding chair as seating is not provided at regatta venues
- Many people bring books or magazines to read

Note: BRC is not be responsible for cellphones, cameras, clothing, etc. left at the tent at the end of the day. Please keep your items packed together and pick up your belongings from the tent before it gets broken down at end of day.

## **RACING**

There are different events based on experience/gender of competitors, the size of boat, and the style of rowing. Different regattas may categorize events using a variety of terms: novice, freshmen, junior varsity, varsity, club, scholastic, lightweight, midweight, heavyweight etc. Your child will know what event(s) they are rowing. Depending on the size of the regatta there could also be heats, semi-finals, and finals for each event. Medals are awarded separately for each event. If a boat wins their event, everyone on that boat gets a medal.

### **How will I know when a race is?**

The BRC Race Schedule will be posted in the Hospitality Tent with the bow number, time they depart the dock, and the start time. This helps athletes, coaches, volunteers, and parents stay on time and aware of regatta responsibilities. Crews meet at the trailer about an hour before their start time, to check rigging, adjust shoes, and carry the boat to the dock. They launch from the dock 30 to 40 minutes before start time, in order to warm up and row to the starting line. Depending on the length of race, it can take 10 to 30 minutes to row from start to finish. Then the crew has to paddle back to the dock, and get the boat back to the trailer. Schedules are posted ahead of time on Regatta Central.

### **What are good viewing spots for the action?**

You need to decide whether you want to see the Start, Middle or Finish of a given race, and position yourself accordingly (or go to multiple viewing spots throughout the race). Ask an experienced parent at the hospitality tent to direct you to good viewing and cheering spots for this particular regatta. If the course passes under bridges, some enjoy viewing from the top of the bridge, or underneath where you get close to the boats and your cheering is amplified. Depending on the regatta, the Hospitality tent may not have a view of the race course and you will need to walk to a viewing area. It is also interesting to watch the action at the dock, as long as you stay well out of the way.

## **AWAY REGATTAS**

### **Lodging**

- 4 athletes are assigned to each room, separating boys and girls.
- BRC covers double-occupancy hotel rooms for coaches, official team drivers, chaperones, and Hospitality lead. Please discuss roommate arrangements with the Regatta Director. If you prefer a private room, you are responsible to pay for it and BRC will reimburse you for half of the cost.
- BRC does not cover hotel costs for other parents, spectators, and volunteers, but there may be rooms available at a group rate. Book with the hotel directly as soon as possible.

### **Transportation**

- All athletes get a seat on the bus. Parents are responsible to transport kids to/from the bus, which typically departs from the Brighton High School parking lot. If you need to drive your child one or both ways, please check with Regatta Director ahead of time. Some venues do not allow individual access, so all athletes are required to ride the team bus to the venue.
- Chaperones are required to ride the bus or drive vans as well as chaperone at the hotel. Coaches and Hospitality Lead have the option to ride the bus if seats are available, or to have BRC reimburse gas and tolls.
- BRC does not reimburse travel cost for spectators and volunteers. If there are seats available, you may ride with the team.

### **Athlete Supervision**

- At the venue, the coaches are in charge.
- On the bus, hotel, and organized meal stops, the chaperones are in charge.
- Athletes are expected to act safely and responsibly at all times, and exercise good judgement. If a serious violation occurs, you will be asked to come and get your child immediately.

## **OMBUDSMAN**

Staff members, volunteers, athletes, and parents may report concerns to the BRC Ombudsman. The Ombudsman is a BRC Board Member. The Ombudsman is charged with the unbiased evaluation of alleged misconduct, and the role has been put in place specifically to mediate sensitive concerns. The Ombudsman, that person can be contacted via email at: [ombudsman@brightoncrew.org](mailto:ombudsman@brightoncrew.org).

## **PARENT EXPECTATIONS**

Parent involvement is vital to support our athletes and the club. Please review these expectations:

- I understand that rowing is a physically demanding sport, requiring high levels of cardiovascular output. If I have concerns about my child's medical fitness for rowing, I will discuss this with my child's physician. If needed, I will provide a medical excuse from rowing or have my child cleared to row by their physician.
- I will review this Handbook with my child, and do my part to ensure all responsibilities are met.
- I will arrange transportation and schedule other commitments to support my child's full attendance at practices and regattas.
- I will ensure that registrations and payments for my child are completed in a timely manner.
- I will review information about volunteering and sign up for activities in order to support the club.



# REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT

Brighton Rowing Club (BRC) is a non-profit club. All costs (coaches, equipment, facilities, insurance, etc.) are covered by registration fees. We work to keep fees as low as possible and similar from year to year. **Athletes must complete registration for the season prior to the first practice or they will not be allowed on the water.**

## DETERMINE ATHLETE/TEAM LEVEL

- **Novice:** High school students new to rowing. Athletes are on the Novice team for two seasons.
- **Varsity:** High school students who have completed at least two competitive seasons as a Novice.
- **Modified Program:** Open to students in grade 7&8.

## REVIEW POLICIES AND SIGN REQUIRED FORMS.

Forms (Code of Conduct, Attendance Policy, Travel Permission, Payment Policy) must be signed by athlete and parent, and returned before each season begins to: [registrar@brightoncrew.org](mailto:registrar@brightoncrew.org).

## SWIM TEST/WAIVER

BRC requires team members to complete a swim test in order to assess whether, in the event of an emergency, the athlete can remain calm in the water, get back to the boat and hang on, and follow coach instructions. The athlete must tread water for 10 minutes and swim 50 yards, both while wearing a sweatshirt and without rest or assistance. Swim test dates will be scheduled at the beginning of each season for new rowers. To be exempt, a parent may complete a Swimming Ability Statement to attest to the athlete's ability to meet the minimum swimming requirements.

## REGISTER ON REGATTA CENTRAL

If you are new to BRC create an account on [www.RegattaCentral.com](http://www.RegattaCentral.com). Only one RegattaCentral account is needed—multiple athletes from each family can use the same account.

## PAY REGISTRATION FEE

Payments can be made by check or an electronic form of payment. Please note athlete's name. Please use one of the following payment options:

- Debit/credit card on RegattaCentral
- Check made out to Brighton Rowing Club and mailed to Brighton Rowing Club, PO Box 18724, Rochester, NY 14618; Attn: Treasurer
- Electronic payments to [treasurer@brightoncrew.org](mailto:treasurer@brightoncrew.org).

## COMPLETE US ROWING MEMBERSHIP AND WAIVER

- Select Basic Membership Level (fee of \$9.95 per year)
- Enter the Team Name: Brighton Rowing Club
- Enter the Club Code: **37JE4**
- Keep the rowers name the same as it is listed in Regatta Central
- Use a parent email address for contact (communication and password recovery)
- Sign the online waiver (look for the green checkmark)
- All rowers must verify that their membership and waiver will be current for the entire season.

## ORDER YOUR UNIFORM

Uniforms are required for regatta participation. The cost of uniforms is not included in the registration fee. Ordering information is available on [www.brightoncrew.org](http://www.brightoncrew.org).

# **POLICIES AND CONSEQUENCES**

BRC has a Safe Sport Policy, as required by USRowing, to promote an environment free from bullying, hazing, harassment (including sexual harassment), emotional misconduct, physical misconduct, and sexual misconduct (including child sexual abuse). This policy applies to staff members, volunteers, athletes and parents of participants. Coaches, Board Members, and chaperones.

BRC has written policies on attendance, payment, and travel, plus a Code of Conduct for athletes. These must be signed and returned by athlete and parent at the beginning of each season. Copies of these policies are located at the back of the handbook and are available on the BRC website.

Consequences for violations of any BRC policy or guideline will be proportionate and reasonable under the individual circumstances. BRC may take disciplinary actions including, but not limited to:

- Inform the individual's supervisor (coach, volunteer, or Board Member) or the athlete's parent or guardian.
- Provide the individual with guidance, redirection and instruction
- Temporarily suspend the individual
- Issue a verbal warning
- Issue a written warning
- Suspend or terminate employment or membership

# **ROW MORE HARD!**