



# **NEW TRIER ROWING HANDBOOK**

**Updated September 2018**

*This handbook is designed to provide rowing team members and parents with a baseline understanding of the rowing program at New Trier. Additional information and regularly updated materials can be found on the rowing website at*

*[http://www.newtrier.k12.il.us/Extracurricular\\_Activities/Athletics/Boys\\_Sports/Rowing/Rowing/](http://www.newtrier.k12.il.us/Extracurricular_Activities/Athletics/Boys_Sports/Rowing/Rowing/)*

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## **NEW TRIER ROWING HISTORY**

New Trier High School Rowing started in 2002, and the program has grown significantly in size and national stature over the years. A two-season sport, there are typically 130-140 rowers on the team in the fall and spring. The team is split up into four different squads—both boys and girls, Varsity/JV and Novice. All rowers who join the team as freshmen or sophomores spend their first two seasons as novices, then move up to Varsity/JV.

The fall racing season consists of long, “head style” races, typically three miles, where crews race in a staggered start and single file against the clock down a winding river. In the spring, the team competes in “sprint style” races of 1,500-2,000 meters in length, and boats are lined up six across in a buoyed course. It is fast and exciting, and results are known immediately.

In the fall, New Trier sends our top varsity boys and girls crews to the prestigious Head of the Charles Regatta in Boston. At the end of our spring season, many of our crews qualify for the Scholastic National Championships. We have had great success at this regatta over the years, and even have crews go onto the USRowing Youth Nationals, which pit our varsity crews against the best youth programs in the nation. Our two seasons include 4-5 regattas each, both locally, regionally and nationally.

New Trier Rowing has been a very popular sport for many years. Our student athletes enjoy mastering a new and challenging sport most have never tried before, and the sense of camaraderie, accomplishment and fun they have being on our team is significant and meaningful, both during their high school years and beyond, as many go on to row in college.

## LEARNING TO ROW

Rowing is a two-season sport at New Trier—both fall and spring. Novice rowing includes both freshmen and sophomores during their first two seasons of competition.

Every spring we host a rowing clinic at our boathouse in Skokie for rising 9th graders interested in rowing at New Trier. It is held on the last Saturday before our spring tryouts start, which is usually begin in the end of February or early March. Participants will row in our indoor tanks and on an ergometer, and get a tour of our boathouse as well.

Additionally, rising 9th graders interested in rowing are invited to visit our coaches and rowers at the After the Academics night at the Northfield campus, usually on the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday night of May every spring.

Throughout the course of the year (all four seasons), New Trier Extension (NTX) offers land-based “ergometer” classes at Northfield that are led by New Trier rowing coaches. The schedule for these classes can always be found on our website.

Every June and July, we offer separate “Learn To (Sweep) Row” and “Learn to Scull” camps. These are appropriate for rising 9th graders with less than one year of rowing experience.

Fall tryouts are held in the middle of August prior to the start of the school year, with the season running until the end of October. Spring season tryouts are typically held in the first week of March, generally several weeks prior to spring break, and the season ends Memorial Day weekend. Previous rowing experience is not required to join the team, but participation at all five days of tryouts is mandatory to be considered for the team. Importantly, the first day of practice includes a mandatory swim test and a USRowing safety video.

Team practices are held six days a week: Monday-Friday after school and Saturday mornings. Practice sessions occur on both the Northfield and Winnetka campuses, and the Dammrich Rowing Center (3220 Oakton in Skokie). When practices are at the DRC, free shuttle buses run from both campuses and return to the Winnetka campus. The shuttle does not typically run on early release days.

# TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES

Two things make participating in rowing at New Trier different from many other sports programs:

## **1. The stage is national**

The New Trier rowing team travels to remote locations to compete in regional and national events. Participants in these events come from high schools, colleges and universities, and club teams from all over the country and, at the Head of the Charles, from all over the world.

Members of the rowing team represent New Trier on a much larger stage and in front of a broader and more diverse group of people than many other sports teams. These circumstances make adhering to the *New Trier Extracurricular Code of Conduct* at once a bit more cumbersome and a lot more important. More than taking a bus to a conference school, team members represent New Trier in many new and unfamiliar situations and locations, including in airports, on airplanes, in hotels, and in restaurants.

The rowing team is often the first and perhaps only representative of New Trier to come in contact with these new communities of people; it may be your actions alone that they will associate with New Trier. As a result, our reputation is truly in your hands. Therefore we depend upon each and every member of the rowing team to have the maturity to demonstrate integrity, respect, and class in these unique situations as well as in your own backyard.

## **2. Parent volunteers are required to support the team's efforts**

Competing in regattas requires the logistics of transporting, feeding, and sheltering a very large team. Parent volunteers make travel arrangements, haul trailers, set up tents, shop for food, and cook breakfast/lunch/snacks for the team and families. These efforts are coordinated the the New Trier Rowing Club Board and all parents are asked to volunteer in some capacity during both seasons.

# NEW TRIER ROWING CLUB

The New Trier Rowing Club ("NTRC") is a parent organization whose mission is to support the New Trier Rowing Team (the "Team") in a manner consistent with the New Trier High School Athletic Philosophy: to provide an "educationally sound and successful, competitive interscholastic experience " for the members of the Team. NTRC implements its mission in several ways, including but not limited to:

- Encouraging by our example good sportsmanship, a sense of camaraderie, and a commitment to excellence.
- Providing support for the team:
  - by contributing to the purchase of shells, oars and other equipment or for other purposes as necessary
  - by handling registration and sourcing uniforms
  - by arranging for food and tents, and where necessary, lodging and flights for the team
  - by maintaining a team website with relevant information about the coaches, rosters, practices and regattas, providing parents with specific information about each regatta, and communicating with the local press and others about the Team's activities
- Organizing fundraising, through solicitation, sale of fan gear and other methods
- Maintaining a committed and capable board of directors consisting of parents of current rowers
- Maintaining a financially sound organization

# COMPETING AT NATIONAL REGATTAS

The Midwest Scholastic Championship Regatta, which is also called “Midwest’s” or “MSRA” is the qualifying regatta in which specific New Trier boats can qualify for one or two national championship regattas based on how they finish. Those two national regattas are:

1) **Scholastic Rowing Association of America National Regatta** aka “SRAA’s”, “Nationals” or “Scholastic Nationals”. This regatta is exclusively single high school-based teams and is always held Memorial Day weekend. The location is frequently in New Jersey but has also been held in NY, TN and OH. SRAA’s sees approximately 180 school teams with 560 entries competing in 32 events from 1x’s to 8+s.

2) **USRowing Youth National Championships**, aka “Youth’s” or “Youth Nationals”. This regatta is usually in mid-June at different locations each year. Youth National Championships sees more than 350 crews, representing some 150 teams from across the country, both club and scholastic, all vying for national titles in 18 boat classes.

## SRAA’s

Each region of the country holds qualifying events to send crews to SRAA’s. Only specific events at Midwest’s qualify for SRAA’s and only one New Trier boat will be entered in each of those events. It is the coach’s decision whether or not to enter a New Trier boat in these events. For the Novice rowers, only the “Freshmen 8+” category is eligible; all rowers must be academic freshmen. The “Novice” category includes rowers in their first year of rowing regardless of academic class. Listed below are the specific events and finish required to qualify:

Freshmen 8+ - Boys & Girls	Top 3
Junior 8+ - Boys & Girls	Top 3
Lightweight 8+ - Boys & Girls	Top 3
2V 8+ - Boys & Girls	Top 2*
1V 8+ - Boys & Girls	Top 4
1V 4+ - Boys & Girls	Top 4
Junior 4+ - Boys & Girls	Top 3
Lightweight 4+ - Boys & Girls	Top 3

\*The 2V category finishers must have a qualifying 1V from their school in order to qualify.

New Trier supports SRAA’s and annually sends all qualifying crews to SRAA’s. The school and parent board coordinate travel, hotels, tents and food as they do for the regular season regattas.

If your rower qualifies for SRAA’s you will receive information about the details, including a PayPal link with the cost. **This regatta is not included in the spring season regatta fees.**

In addition to the rowers and coxswains who were in boats qualifying for SRAA’s, the team also takes a limited number of spares for the boys and girls teams depending on needs. Coaches will determine how many and which additional athletes will attend in case of injury or illness to those rowers. These additional athletes are referred to as “spares”. Spares pay a reduced fee for these regattas, and will continue training with the

team and will attend the regatta with the team. At the regatta, they assist with rigging, launching, recovery and will row if the coach determines that one of the other athletes is unable to compete.

### **Youth Nationals**

Only Varsity events at Midwest's qualify for USRowing Youth Nationals and only one New Trier boat will be entered in each of those events. It is the coach's decision whether or not to enter a New Trier boat in these events. Listed below are the specific events and finish required to qualify:

First Varsity 8+ - Boys & Girls	1 <sup>st</sup> place
Varsity Lightweight 8+ - Boys & Girls	1 <sup>st</sup> place
First Varsity 4+ - Boys & Girls	1 <sup>st</sup> place
Varsity Lightweight 4+ - Boys & Girls	1 <sup>st</sup> place

New Trier is typically represented by all crews who qualify for Youth's, but that decision will be made by the coach and the qualifying rowers/coxswains. This regatta usually takes place after the end of the school year. As a result of the timing of this regatta, some rowers who qualify may not be able to attend. A maximum of half the boat, not including the coxswain, can be different rowers than those who rowed in the qualifying event.

Each rower/coxswain is required to be a current "Championship" member of USRowing, so many rowers will need to UPGRADE their USRowing membership to be eligible to participate. Each participant must also have a signed USRowing waiver on file.

The Parent Board does not support this regatta. The parents of the rowers who plan to attend Youth's manage coordination of air transportation, ground transportation, meals, and regatta site support. Hotels are reserved for the rowers/coxswains, but not parents attending the regatta.

If your rower/coxswain qualifies for Youths you will receive a travel letter with important information regarding costs and other important information. In that letter the regatta fee will be listed; this fee typically includes "per boat" entry fees, "per rower" venue fees, cost of transporting the boat trailer, hotel costs for three nights, food tent and dinner expenses, and coaching fees for post-season training and race days. Spares will be selected and their fee will be approximately half. Fees will be paid by check to Rose Marchuk.

The fee does NOT include travel. Families are responsible for making and paying for their own travel arrangements, including air and ground independently. Rowers/coxswains will be told when they need to be at the venue the first day and must plan travel accordingly. A parent is typically asked to facilitate carpools with other parents to get rowers to and from the regatta site, hotels and dinners.



# **PARENT/ROWER FAQ's**

## **1. I'VE NEVER ROWED BEFORE BUT WANT TO TRY OUT NEXT SEASON. WHAT HAPPENS AT TRYOUTS AND WHAT SHOULD I DO TO PREPARE?**

Tryouts consist of a variety of land-based strength and endurance evaluations. All athletes will complete a timed run (three miles or less) and timed pieces on the "erg" (ergometer). For tryouts it is important that a student be in strong physical condition to do their best in these events without injury.

Students do not need to have taken any specific classes prior to trying out, but erg workout classes are offered in the summer and winter through New Trier Extension for new as well as experienced rowers. Additionally, summer on-the-water rowing classes coached by New Trier Rowing coaches are offered through New Trier Extension and the Skokie Park District for new and experienced rowers. On-the-water summer classes are a great opportunity to learn to row (sweep/scull), to gain additional rowing experience, to further develop your rowing technique and to improve your rowing specific fitness. Please check the New Trier Rowing website for links to all NTX/Skokie Park District class offerings.

## **2. HOW DO I REGISTER FOR TRYOUTS?**

Several weeks before tryouts, links to the online registration forms will open on the New Trier Rowing website. Registration includes both the New Trier Athletic Department process and completing the NTRC Rower Information form. Contact the NTRC Registrar at [registrar@newtrierrowing.org](mailto:registrar@newtrierrowing.org) with any questions.

## **3. WHEN ARE TRYOUTS?**

Fall Rowing tryouts generally take place at the same time as the tryouts for all other New Trier fall sports, however, some years they are different so be certain to check the NT Rowing website for the most up-to-date information. Spring tryout dates vary by sport. Spring rowing tryouts usually take place the first full week of March and when the final dates are determined they will be listed on the New Trier Rowing website.

## **4. DO I NEED TO KNOW HOW TO SWIM?**

All new rowers and coxswains must pass a swim test prior to practicing on the water and after team rosters are posted. Due to the rare but inherent risks of an on-the-water sport, it is the expectation that all rowers and coxswains who make the team can demonstrate a minimum level of swim proficiency. The swim test includes being able to swim four laps in a 25-yard pool and tread water for 10 minutes while wearing a rowing uniform.

**5. IF I MAKE THE TEAM IN THE FALL DO I NEED TO TRY OUT AGAIN IN SPRING?** Rowing is a two-season sport and all rowers are required to try out each season every year. Just because a rower makes the team in the fall does not mean that they will make the team again in the spring. Likewise, just because a rower makes the team in the spring does not mean they will make the team the following fall. All current rowers are subject to cuts again in the following season due to the popularity of rowing at New Trier where more rowers tryout than can be rostered on each team. All rowers are required to re-register for tryouts each season through the link on the New Trier Rowing website.

## **6. WHAT IF I DON'T MAKE THE TEAM?**

The New Trier coaches encourage anyone who did not make the team but is interested in rowing to train with New Trier during the summer and winter months through the New Trier Extension classes. This is a great opportunity to work out with New Trier coaches and get feedback on areas of improvement.

## **7. WHEN AND WHERE DO WE PRACTICE?**

Practices are held six days per week either at the Winnetka and Northfield Campuses for land workouts or at the Dammrich Rowing Center (DRC) for rowing tank/on-the-water workouts. The DRC is located in Skokie at 3220 Oakton (northeast corner at McCormick). The boathouse is located on the east bank of the North Shore Channel of the Chicago River.

Training consists of rowing on the water, rowing in the tanks, rowing on ergometers (ergs), running, circuit training, weight training, running steps and running hills.

## **8. HOW DO WE GET TO PRACTICES HELD AT THE DRC?**

There is a two-way shuttle bus that takes crews to and from the DRC weekdays for the 4:00 p.m. practices. Buses transport students from both the Winnetka and Northfield campuses, however, all buses return to the Winnetka campus after practice, arriving at approximately 7:00 p.m. The bus is free-of-charge.

## **9. WHEN AND WHERE DO WE RACE?**

Although not everyone will race at every regatta, everyone putting forth the effort will race during the season. Our fall competitions will include head races (with a racing distance of about three miles on long rivers) that take place in locations that may be a day trip or require an overnight stay. In the past fall seasons we have competed in Rockford, IL, Milwaukee, WI, Columbus, OH, among other regatta locations. In the fall select varsity crews will compete in the Head of the Charles Regatta in Boston.

Spring regattas (with a racing distance of approximately 1,500 – 2,000 meters on lakes) also include both day trips and overnight stays. In the past spring seasons we have competed in Madison, WI, Columbus, OH, and Crystal Lake, IL among other regatta locations. In the spring select crews will compete in the Scholastic Rowing Association of America National Championship regatta which takes place at rotating venues generally on the east coast.

## **10. IS ROWING A FALL & SPRING SPORT?**

Yes, rowing is a two-season sport. However, the fall races are head races which are generally 2.5-3 miles long. The spring races are sprints races which are either 1,500 or 2,000 meters in length (1,600 meters = one mile).

## **11. IS THERE WINTER TRAINING?**

Optional winter workouts on ergometers (through New Trier Extension) and tanks (through Skokie Park District) with New Trier coaches are recommended but not mandatory. It is essential for rowers to maintain their level of conditioning during the off seasons. Good cross-training includes swimming, running, biking, cross-country skiing, weight training and core exercises..

## **12. WHAT IF I KNOW I WON'T BE ABLE TO MAKE ALL PRACTICES?**

Being the team sport that crew is, it is impossible to row a boat without all rowers and a coxswain present. Rowers should expect to commit to practice six days per week. Coaches need to be notified in advance of missed practices. Typically it is best to schedule dentist or doctor appointments on land training days.

### **13. HOW ARE LINEUPS SELECTED?**

Boat lineups are selected entirely by your coach based on a variety of factors that result in the fastest lineup, such as rowers' erg test scores, technique in boat, seat racing, attitude and attendance.

### **14. WHAT IF MY SON OR DAUGHTER DOESN'T MAKE THE BOAT FOR WHICH THEY ARE STRIVING?**

Keep working hard for next time. As a parent it is important to encourage your child to strive to do his/her best. But keep in mind all the things your child is learning from rowing--appreciation for the sport, character development, teamwork, cooperation, hard work, goal setting, technique, visualization techniques, appreciation for outdoors, competition, time management, listening, following directions, leadership, sportsmanship, respect, responsibility, timing, strategy, personal bests, rewards of belonging to a prestigious group, how to pull their own weight (literally and figuratively), how to get in the best shape of their life, friendship, and how to have fun.

### **15. DO I GET A KINETIC WELLNESS (KW) WAIVER?**

Kinetic Wellness (KW) waivers are available for junior and senior rowers during rowing season.

### **16. ARE PARENTS REQUIRED TO VOLUNTEER?**

**We ask that every parent plan to help facilitate at AT LEAST ONE regatta.** Traveling and feeding 140 rowers for daylong competitions far from New Trier is a serious undertaking. Rowers and their families enjoy competition and camaraderie that can only happen with the commitment of parents to volunteer. Volunteer opportunities include on-site regatta needs such as tent/food set-up, working our grill and food prep operations, last-minute local shopping and clean up. We ask that every family volunteer for one "set up" or "take down" for at least one regatta; however, even if you won't be able to attend the regatta itself there are many ways to support the team such as shopping or pre-cooking for our extensive regatta menus or washing utensils and tarps after the regatta. We depend on the repeat help of parents, and while there is sacrifice in the effort it is generally very rewarding.

### **17. WHAT DOES ROWING COST?**

For more precise costs, please refer to the "What Does Rowing Cost?" link on the NT Rowing website. Regatta fees vary each season depending on the events in which we compete. As a broad estimate, the regatta fee is generally in the range of \$300 for Fall season and \$600-\$800 for Spring season. The regatta fee covers transportation costs, food and hotel accommodations. In addition, the cost for mandatory uniforms is approximately \$100. There may be additional fees for certain regattas in either season. For those rowers who are selected to compete in championship regattas there will be an additional fee per regatta to cover airfare/hotel/food. This fee varies depending on airfare costs. The rowing team travels together on flights booked by the NTRC Regatta Travel Coordinator. New Trier High School provides significant financial support for the program. Parents should speak to a coach or NTRC Treasurer ([treasurer@newtrierrowing.org](mailto:treasurer@newtrierrowing.org)) if the cost of rowing is prohibitive.

Additional, optional rowing gear is sold at the beginning of each season and the cost of this gear is in addition to the costs outlined above.

**18. WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO GET CURRENT INFORMATION ABOUT NT ROWING?** The New Trier Rowing web site at [www.newtrierrowing.com](http://www.newtrierrowing.com) is the definitive source for NT Rowing information as well as links to other great rowing web sites. There is also a NTRC rowing parent Facebook page used for ongoing parent communications.

**19. WHO CAN I CONTACT WITH QUESTIONS?**

General questions can be directed to [newtrierrowing@newtrierrowing.org](mailto:newtrierrowing@newtrierrowing.org). Please refer to the “Contact Information” box on the New Trier Rowing website if you need additional contact information.