



Bergen County Rowing Academy

A 501(c)3 Not-for-Profit Incorporation
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Blueprint for High Schools Creating a Rowing Team

Introduction

Over the past twenty years, rowing has become an increasingly more popular sport in High Schools across the Northeastern United States. It is a Spring sport among the scholastic varsity sports. The Bergen County Rowing Academy (BCRA), whose mission it is to provide rowing instruction and coaching for all age and skill levels to Bergen County residents, offers Bergen County schools the opportunity to make rowing available to their students with minimal financial outlay.

According to Wikipedia¹, "Rowing, often referred to as crew in the United States, is a sport with origins back to Ancient Egyptian times. (...) Modern rowing as a competitive sport can be traced to the early 18th century when races were held between professional **watermen** on the **River Thames** in **London**, United Kingdom. (...) Rowing is one of the oldest **Olympic sports**. It was on the programme for the 1896 games but the rowing did not take place due to bad weather. It has been competed since **1900**. Women's rowing was added to the Olympic programme in **1976**." **"Rowing is the oldest intercollegiate sport in the United States."**

The Bergen County Rowing Academy, which holds a lease with the County of Bergen for a boat pen in Overpeck County Park, has developed an easy way for schools to allow their students to participate in scholastic rowing competitions. High school rowers from Northern New Jersey typically participate in competitions organized through the Philadelphia Scholastic Rowing Association², the Overpeck Regional Youth Regatta (our home race), the Garden State Scholastic Championships, and the Stotesbury Cup Regatta³.

¹ Rowing (Sport), Wikipedia, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rowing_\(sport\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rowing_(sport)) (accessed 01/23/16), and: College Rowing (United States), Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/College_rowing_%28United_States%29 (accessed 01/12/11)

² For more information check www.phillyflicks.com

³ "The Stotesbury Cup Regatta, sponsored by the Schuylkill Navy, is the world's oldest and one of the largest high school rowing competitions.^[1] It is held annually in mid-May over a two-day period along the Schuylkill River near Boathouse Row in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Competing crews come from schools all over North America, though most hail from the Northeastern and Mid-Atlantic United States." (Stotesbury Cup, Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stotesbury_Cup)

What's the Process to get into Rowing?

- For students who have never rowed before we recommend that they would complete a Learn-to-Row class (at BCRA, we offer classes with nine 90-minute sessions throughout the year) to be ready for the scholastic rowing season in the spring.
- If they complete their Learn-to-Row program early in the year they might even want to sign up for the summer or fall club seasons to gain further experience. *(not mandatory)*
- Rowers could also participate in the BCRA indoor winter training to gain strength, endurance, and more experience. *(not mandatory)*
- Ultimately, sign up for the Scholastic Spring Season with both, the school and BCRA, to compete representing the school.



(Girls Novice Quad – Hackensack High School – March 2024 – Overpeck Lake)

What will the Bergen County Rowing Academy (BCRA) provide?

- Three spring rowing programs:
 - High School Learn-to-Row Class
 - High School Freshmen/Novice Team
 - High School Junior Varsity/Varsity Team
- Quality rowing instruction and coaching:
 - Head coach, Clemens Reinke, oversees the entire program
 - Depending on the size of the team there will be two or three assistant coaches
 - All coaches are properly vetted with back ground check, fingerprinting, and for Catholic Schools completion of “Protecting God’s Children”
 - All coaches are trained and certified in First Aid, CPR, AED, Concussion Training, Blood Born Pathogen Training, Heat Exhaustion Training.
- A fleet of boats:
 - Sculling Boats: Single Sculls, Double Sculls, and Quadruple Sculls
 - Sweep Boats: Pair, Fours with Coxswain, Eight with Coxswain
- Equipment transport to and from competitions
- Insurance for all athletes while at practice or competitions provided through the United States Rowing Association (USRowing)
- BCRA, through Coach Clemens Reinke, will stay in communication with the athletic director of the participating high school as needed or required, and provide assistance to the school with their USRowing and PSRA memberships.
- BCRA, through Coach Clemens Reinke, will be in communication with the athletes’ parents/guardians regarding practices, race plans, and any other important questions
- BCRA will schedule a date for all athletes to take their swim test at the beginning of the season.

What is the school expected to do?

- Become a member of USRowing (\$700), if the team is more than 4 rowers. With four or fewer rowers the USRowing membership is free. This is a more affordable rate as the school’s membership will be counted as a subsidiary under the Bergen County Rowing Academy’s membership. *[Coach Clemens Reinke can assist with this]*
- Become an associate member of the Philadelphia Scholastic Rowing Association (\$50/athlete) – This fee might increase in 2025. *[Coach Clemens Reinke can assist with this]*
- Clear their students through the school’s internal medical clearance process, and communicate each athlete’s clearance with Coach Clemens Reinke (BCRA)
- Provide their student athletes with a proper uniform for rowing competitions
- Support and encourage their student athletes in their pursuit of athletic excellence as they would with any other athlete at their school

How are parents/guardians expected to participate?

- Register their daughter/son with BCRA (www.bcrowingacademy.org/High-School-Rowing)
- Be in communication with Coach Clemens Reinke
- Organize and provide transportation for their daughter/son to and from practices in Overpeck County Park, and to and from regattas
- Potentially volunteer at one of the PSRA regattas in Philadelphia
- Support their high school team at regattas by cheering them on, providing snacks, etc.
- Parents might also want to form a BCRA Parent Booster Club to help raise funds for new equipment and expansion of the fleet.