

PIERMONT ROWING CLUB INC.

Rules

Members who violate any of the following six rules must face the board and are subject to losing their membership.

1. All members must know how to swim. As a member of PRC, you have stated to the Board and other members that you are able to swim a minimum of $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile and are able to tread water for a minimum of 15 minutes. If you can't swim, you are putting yourself and other rowers at grave risk out on the river.

2. The Board Sets & Enforces Rowing Hours. The dates for season start and season close are determined by the PRC Club board. Throughout the season, all shells must be launched *after sunrise (Civil Twilight)*, and back on the corral racks *before dark (Civil Twilight)*. No exceptions.

3. Rowing is Not Permitted During Dangerous Weather Conditions. PRC Rowing shells are NEVER permitted to be used in: (1) thunderstorms, where lightning can be seen or thunder can be heard in any direction; (2) when there are white caps (winds above 9-10 mph) and (3) Fog (visibility of less than 100 yards, i.e. from the corral to the apartments). If there is any doubt, don't go out! In case of an approaching thunderstorm, get to shore immediately—if a shell is damaged, that is less important than the danger of lightening strike. Rowers must wait 30 minutes after lightening has been sighted to re-launch.

4. Tappan Zee Bridge Construction Zone. No shells allowed beyond (north of) the Grandview Village Hall. At all times, stay south of the buoys that delineate the construction barge anchorage area, and be alert for the new ones that mark the motorboat traffic channel along the north side of the Piermont Pier.

5. Rules for Cold Water Conditions. It is the policy of U. S. Rowing that water temperature plus air temperature should equal a minimum of 100 degrees for safe rowing for **any type of boat to be launched**. eg. if the water is 40 degrees, the air must be at least 60 degrees. Consult <http://24.229.16.23/chas/rivtemp.pl> for up to the minute water temperature data. Be aware that wind chill and cloudy conditions make cold water even more dangerous. Make sure you read and understand the hyperthermia information posted at the sign-up Board.

6. Eight Oars Rule: Single and double shells cannot be used when water temperature is below 50 degrees. When the water temperature is below 50 degrees, you must have at least 4 sets (8 total) of oars on the water; no singles or doubles are permitted to launch. Please note: Water temp this year on April 10, 2015 was only 41 degrees. Last year's water temp on April 10, 2014 was sixteen degrees higher, at 57 degrees. Single scullers should wear a neoprene vest and a PFD until the water reaches 70 degrees, and always carry a cell phone and whistle to summon aid.

General Safety Recommendations.

All members are expected to use common sense on the river.

Wear proper clothing: Do not wear loose clothing that snags in tracks. Wear kayak type water shoes for launching in the mud, which often has sharp junk buried in it. Dress in layers, using synthetics to protect from cold, bright sun etc. Wear bright, visible colors, especially a fluorescent hat, to alert other river traffic to your presence. Bring sunglasses and a visor to protect your eyes and face. Avoid cotton in cold weather, which drains heat from the body when wet. Wear neoprene vests etc. when rowing a single or double in cold weather. Bring a bandanna and an extra water bottle in hot weather, and wear plenty of sunscreen on your face, nose and the backs of your hands.

Personal floatation device (PFD): PRC and its Board strongly urge and recommend that all PRC members purchase and use their own PFD (an object formerly known as a life jacket) that is U. S. Coast Guard approved.

Cell phones: The club recommends that members bring their own cell phone in a waterproof cell bag container. Before rowing, enter the Piermont Fire Department emergency number 845-359-4022 and Piermont Police Department number 845-359-0240. A whistle on a lanyard is also useful as a backup.

Charts/Maps: Before launching, PRC members should go on line and consult weather websites, such as Weather Underground, as well as sunrise/sunset and tide charts <http://xtide.ldeo.columbia.edu:8080/locations/39.html>. In summer, check the weather radar for approaching thunderstorms before you go out on the water. Review the maps posted at the sign-up board that show the local breakwater, traffic flow patterns and known local marine hazards. *At all tide conditions*, it is critical for the crew to familiarize themselves with the location of known dangerous rock protrusions and hidden obstructions. High tide covers many protrusions just enough so you can hit them unawares. Low tide reveals new ones.

Shell Equipment: carry a plastic bailer and a pump on windy days.

Who's In Charge? The coxswain (in a coxed four and eight) or bow person (in a double or a quad) is in charge on land and on water. Other crewmembers must not make distracting comments and/or contradictory commands.

Sign-up sheets: Use the sign-up sheets at the corral before each row. Write your first name plus last name/first initial *legibly* in the column indicating the date and time the shell will be used. No shell can be reserved more than one week ahead of time. Most members row in the same groups on a regular schedule. Please *communicate* with other groups on your schedule and take scrupulous care to share access to the popular boats. Learn to Row and Piermont All Row sessions have priority over other member uses.

Rowing Alone. The club strongly discourages single scullers from rowing alone. Our river is always a challenging environment, filled with motor craft, sometimes littered with floating debris, and subject to strong tides and currents. It is best to row when other members are on the river. Single scullers must always let someone else know that they are on the river, and must be cautious about weather conditions, which can change suddenly. A life jacket is recommended for all single scullers at all times, and a neoprene wetsuit is strongly recommended until water temperatures rise above 70 degrees. Bring a cell phone and a whistle (as a backup) with you at all times.

Avoid Collisions. Bow rowers in a quad or double, and single scullers are 100% responsible for looking around at all times to determine if another boat is approaching. Beware; rowing sculls are very hard to see until they are close, and they approach each other very quickly. Wear brightly colored hats and windbreakers—orange or chartreuse. White, grey, navy blue and black clothing is nearly *invisible* at a distance. Note how many shells are out on the river when you launch, and keep track of each one while you are rowing. Do not cut the corner going around the end of the marinas. Do not cut across the marina exits until you are sure no motorboat is speeding in or out.

Flipped and Swamped shells: Single and double shells can easily flip due to rower error, equipment failure, or obstructions in the water. In choppy conditions, any shell may become swamped when waves continuously break over the gunwales and fill the interior. A large shell full of water may break apart, so rowers in an eight or four must swim free of the boat in pairs, starting from the center seats. COUNT HEADS, AND ASSIGN BUDDIES TO KEEP TRACK OF EACH OTHER. After this, in warm weather, try to swim the shell towards shore if you are less than 25 yards from shore.

In cold water, and when more than 25 yards from shore, STAY WITH THE SHELL AND WAIT FOR HELP. Turn the shell upside down. In cold water, rowers must pull themselves up onto the shell, out of the water and huddle together to conserve heat. They then have up to 30 minutes before hypothermia sets in, so use a cell phone to call for help and don't panic. Stay out of the water as much as possible. People who stay immersed in water below 55 degrees will lose muscle control in 3-5 minutes and often drown.

If you are a rower and you witness a flipped or swamped shell, you should provide assistance, but do not attempt a shell-to-shell water rescue, as it is likely to dump both crews in the water. First make sure all crewmembers are safe; count heads and assign buddies. Remind the rowers in the water to stay with their shell. Determine whether it is possible to swim the shell to shore. Contact Piermont Water Rescue immediately using your cell phone. If necessary, return to shore to summon help.

NEVER ATTEMPT TO LIFT A SHELL FULL OF WATER; it *weighs several tons*. Use your bailer and pump to remove as much water as possible. The shell should be mostly free of water before any attempt is made to lift it. Call for extra people to help lift the boat. Then, slowly *roll the shell up out of the water, near the surface, keeping it below waist level with the lower riggers just clear of the river bottom* so that the remaining water slowly empties out along one side.

Rowing Etiquette.

All members should be considerate of fellow rowers, boaters, and members of the river communities where we row at all times.

Oars: New Policy for 2015. Any set of quad sculling oars can be used with any quad shell; Same for the doubles—marked sets of doubles oars can be used for any double; first come, first served! Groups of oars will be marked as such, and should always be used together as a complete group. Sets of single sculling oars are assigned to specific boats, and should be used as shown on the new chart posted at the sign-up board. When handling sculling oars, carry a maximum of four oars at a time. Avoid chipping and scratching the blades. After use, if the handles have become dirty, be considerate! Please wash your handles to leave them clean and ready for the next rower.

Inspect the ramp prior to use. Remove debris, and be cautious of mold, moss, moisture, ice and high tide, which will make the ramp slippery. The ramp is especially prone to changed conditions after a storm, which can cause loss of dirt and beachfront making the step down from the ramp to the beach greater than normal.

Stretching and warm ups. Make it a habit to warm up and do stretching exercises prior to and after rowing to reduce risk of injury.

Launch Procedures. One person must call the commands. Carry quads upside down (guts down) with two people at each end of the cockpit area. Never lift a boat by its riggers, and never attempt to support the weight of a large shell just from decked area at the bow and stern tips. When carrying the eight, groups of four of similar heights, should bunch up at each end of the cockpit area. Carry the boats “out of house” stern first, lift over head to go through the gate to the ramp, and back down to shoulders on the ramp. At the beach, the water must be at least knee deep before you can roll your shell down into it. At low tide, you may need to walk far out into the cove to reach this point. Near shore, hold the stern from being blown back in against the beach, and always listen so that the skeg does not get damaged by dragging on the bottom when rowers get into the shell, or by hitting a loose rock.

Boats are all stored with the bow facing South (towards the library). For boats stored on the high racks, plan ahead to set stepstools and boxes so that shorter people can easily lift their part of the boat up to the rack when they return from rowing. When rolling a boat down into slings for washing etc., check that the stern skeg is clear of the sling.

Check equipment before rowing. Close all ventilation lids, at the bow & stern etc. before rowing. Before leaving the beach, each rower should also check the equipment for his or her seat: (a) check that your seat rolls freely on slides; (b) check that all rigger bolts on the hull & bolt at top of oarlock pin are snug; (c) oarlock gate locks properly & swings freely; and (d) set yellow spacers on the pin to the correct height for your needs. Check your foot stretchers to make sure that both heels are tied down securely with a twist tie, so that if you flip, you can easily slip your feet out of the shoes/clogs and not be trapped under the boat.

Low Tide. Make every attempt to sit backwards into the boat and rinse your shoes in the water to avoid letting mud fall from your feet onto the slides. When rowing in a shell with shoes (not clogs) bring clean socks with you, tucked into your waistband, remove your muddy watershoes, and wear socks in the shoes during your row. Please don't leave slime and mud in shoes to horrify the next rower. It is also crucial not to let any grit get into the slides. One sandy row is all it takes to ruin the wheels on your seat and the slides, a costly blunder that will quickly degrade our equipment. Use your water bottle to **rinse all grit out of the slides before you row.**

Avoid delays while launching. When several boats are attempting to launch at the same time, decide on seat positions while you are still on land, *before* laying hold of your boat to leave the corral. Final adjustments to rowers' foot-stretchers and heel height positions can be made after your boat has left the cove, to allow other groups to come down the ramp and launch.

Traffic Pattern/Right of way rules: Overall, boating practice is always to stay right, and allow oncoming boats to *pass each other on the port side.*

(a) Heading north towards Grand View, stay 200 yards off the shoreline. Turn around at the town hall and return on a line that is about 75 yards off the shore.

(b) Heading east along the Piermont pier, stay at least 50 yards away from the pier, to avoid the long line of submerged rocks along the last third of the distance; use the new pilings/buoys that mark the shipping channel as a guide. In the crabbing season, do not row across the crabby Crabman's line of Clorox bottle buoys. At the end of the pier, be aware of intermittent water turbulence caused by tides and swing wide to avoid the standing waves in the "rapids."

(c) On the south side of the pier, especially at high tide, be aware of the submerged line of pilings nicknamed "Moby Dick" that is located in an exact line between the end of the pier and Snedens Landing. Several members' boats have hit this obstacle and been damaged. To avoid Moby, row completely around the end of the pier, and aim back towards the apartments and the marsh shoreline for 75 yards, before you turn towards Snedens to take your line south. Obviously, on your return, do not take a line straight back from Snedens to the end of the pier either; aim for the middle of the pier, and then turn away from the marsh to go around the end of the pier when you are beyond the spot where Moby lurks.

Returning from Rowing. As you enter our cove, check your boat down from half pressure to a paddle when returning to the beach; let the boat run *slowly* towards shore, and then hold water on port side to bring the bow around so it is facing south and the boat comes to a stop parallel to the beach, 3 feet off-shore, without ever touching the sand or mud. NEVER come in quickly, or head straight at the shore or let the bow run up onto the sand. At low tide, you may have to get out far from shore and walk the boat in. Carry the boat back to the corral bow first. Don't forget to put away the oars after you carry the boat up to the racks, and don't forget to check that all boats are tied down properly before leaving for the day.

Boat Washing. We row in brackish water, and it is often contaminated with salt, silt and other unpleasant substances. Especially at low tide, it is extremely important to use sponges and fresh

water to wash down the inside and outside of every boat, cleaning all mud from the slides, stretcher adjustment mechanisms, etc. after the boat is placed on the racks. At low tide, you may need to put the boat in slings to clean out the mud. Use the hose if it is available, and when you are done, please fill all empty buckets from the hose to leave plenty of water for the next groups who may be rushed and will appreciate your courtesy. Then open the boat's ventilating lids to allow the bulkheads to dry out between rows.

Reporting Damage: When equipment is damaged, major or minor, on or off the water, the incident must be reported to the Maintenance Committee (In 2015, Elisabeth Tapley, Pascal Akesson and David Howe). Please inform one of them about the location of the damage, how it was incurred, and the date that it was observed. If the damage makes the shell unfit to row, you must tag that shell or equipment with a DO NOT ROW sign to prevent anyone else from taking it out until it is repaired. If you are responsible for damaging the equipment, then you should help repair it by contributing your time and/or money, as appropriate.