

Q & A for Novice Rowers

Joining the club...What's in it for me? Rowing is a lifelong sport, with few injuries, great conditioning, and terrific opportunities rowing just for fun and fitness, all the way up racing on the national level. If you are one of those intense people who love to train and race, or you want a great community of interesting people to stay fit with and to enjoy the sport for its own sake, we are committed to giving you skills and resources to do so.

Who are the novices? Novices are first-year rowers. As a group you'll row together and learn the sport, which will include boat moving and storage, safety regs, terminology (what's a saxboard, anyhow?), club rules, and the basic strokes. You'll build some muscle, and you'll get some blisters. By fall you'll race.

What does MRC provide with my Program Fee? The fees novices pay include coaching, motorboats, safety equipment, training, gas, administration and the acquisition and care of the club's \$350,000 fleet of elite and recreational boats.

Is rowing safe? It is as long as you follow the rules, and we're sticklers for safety rules. Our coaches receive safety training, and our launches have USRowing and Coast Guard mandated safety equipment in them. We also have firm policies on cold, low light, and river flood conditions. For regular updates, go to the River Conditions page on the website.

Looking into my crystal ball, rowing after my novice year looks hazy. Help!! After your Novice year you move together as a group into the Green Team for your second year. You concentrate more on sculling technique as well as your sweep technique and endurance. After your second year you can decide if you like to move on to the Competitive teams or Recreational Team. Fitness is a huge component to moving up, and we have member training groups, XC-ski to stay fit over the winter.

I'm a trainer and racer. I bet I could be good at this! Ok, hot shot, go for it! Competitive rowing is one of the most physically demanding of all sports. Not only is the energy demand great, but every mistake a rower makes will be repeated 30+ times a minute in a race, so it must be learned correctly. So be patient; it takes a while (years) to master our sport, but in our club, with scores of national medalists, you have a lot of great rowers to model yourself after. You have to have a year in the club and must commit to training five times a week, a minimum of 4 on the water or erg.

Did you say that rowing takes years to master? We have top rowers who are still perfecting their form after 20 years, which is why getting off on the right foot is so important. But as my old Pappy used to say, there's little that succeeds better than hard work...except private lessons. MRC coaches are available, see the website.

Who is Sabine Johnson? Sabine (pronounced Sabee-neh) is our Club Administrator. She's been at Austin Rowing Club where she's coordinated LTR, and Recreational and Competitive Rowing for ARC. She's a rower as well and once you meet her, you'll love her.

So how much does all this stuff cost?

- A good used single costs between \$3000 and \$6,000 and they are \$7-12,000 new.
- A new pair of sculling oars is \$550.
- And those big eights? \$35-\$52,000!
- (knock off 30% if you buy Chinese)

How do I sign up for Novice workouts? Once a club member and enrolled into the Novice Team, you'll be invited to join the novice signup group on "Signup Genius" our tool of choice.

Who will be our coach? We have great USRowing certified coaches and you can read their bio on our website under 'Coaches Corner'.

I am a self-starter, and want to work out on the rowing machines in the boathouse. Is that OK? We don't recommend it for the first few weeks, simply because we want your rowing technique to settle in a bit, then go for it. Also, the boathouse is locked, and it's best to come at times when others are in the boathouse – 5:30-10AM and 5-7:30 PM

What is Safesport? MRC is a member club of USRowing, the National Governing Body rowing in the US. They insure us and we race in their regattas. The USRA has an expectation that as an organization, we are inclusive and civil and that we adhere to our Code of Conduct. That means we all do our best to treat others as we would want to be treated. It's easy to treat friends well, but those that treat their rivals well?...how cool is that?!

I can just row and do nothing to help the club, right? Huh? It will never happen, because your club needs you and you're the best, and if it's laundering the boat towels, weeding the garden, sweeping the boathouse, or serving on the board or other committees, you're up for it. MRC will not function if every member does not contribute.

Where can I find some resources on my own? Here are a few websites with great resources.

- Row2k.com (classifieds, results, videos, shopping, special coverage of major events)
- Worldrowing.com (site of the Olympic and World Championship news and info)
- USRowing.org (home of American rowing, articles on technique, safety, organization, regattas, Olympic Team, etc.)
- Rowingillustrated.com (videos, chatrooms, opinion and blogs)
- Biorow.com (Are you a rowing nerd? This place is for you, complete with formulas, charts and graphs.)
- Concept2.com. (Home of the people friendly Ergometer, with training plans, logs, and world indoor records)
- Craftsbury, The Florida Rowing Center and Calm Waters Rowing Center. Find these great rowing schools on line. A number of our members take a rowing vacation.