



### **AARC Safety Rules**

The following rules apply to all AARC members, guests, and class participants (“Club Rower”) of the ANN ARBOR ROWING CLUB.

Use of AARC facilities is conditioned upon Club Rowers having read, understood and willing to abide by the rules set forward herein.

#### 1. General Rules

1.1. Common sense must prevail - do not engage in behavior that jeopardizes any person’s well-being or that may result in damage to equipment or facilities.

1.2. Only club members and persons attending club organized classes, who have paid all club fees, will be allowed to row or cox in club boats or use club facilities. Paid members of other rowing clubs who are also paid members of US Rowing can row or cox as guests on a limited basis. **Refer to full guest policy in the club rules and policies folder. (Please provide a link to this folder)**

1.3. Each Club Rower must have signed the AARC liability membership waiver and the US Rowing Basic Waiver and Release of Liability Agreement as directed by the website.

1.4. Individuals and groups are expected to abide by the OAAR Safety Plan in addition to all AARC club rules and policies.

1.5. All club rowers and coaches are responsible for upholding the integrity of the club’s participation in US Rowing and OAAR and the safety recommendations that those organizations set forth. Members are expected to bring any issues or concerns regarding this policy to the attention of the AARC board and the safety officers.

1.6. Violations of the safety plan should be reported to the safety officers or board members for appropriate review. In the face of real immediate danger, club members

should respond as needed however the safety committee is the appropriate body to review the situation, recommend to the AARC Board some measure of action, and ultimately make any necessary changes to club policy. The Director of Rowing Programs should also be made aware of any infractions.

## 2. Definitions

2.1. Club Rower: any AARC member, class participant or guest.

2.2. Technical Rower: a rower who has not yet completed a full chronological year of rowing.

2.3. Certified Launch Driver: an individual who has completed an AARC waiver and has been authorized by the AARC Board to drive a launch, and all AARC coaches, including any and all AARC members who have coached Learn-to-Row.

2.4. Coach: those employed by AARC to instruct, manage, run and mentor club practices &/or classes

2.5. Director: Director of Rowing Programs

## 3. Rules for Coaches

3.1. Each practice must have, at a minimum, one person in direct supervision of Club Rowers. If the coach is not present, the Safety Launch Driver is responsible for the safety of the practice session and must be at least 18 years old, be qualified in rowing by training or experience, and be knowledgeable about basic sports safety principles and basic rowing safety. The Practice Captain has the authority to cancel practices for safety reasons and shall otherwise exercise their supervisory role. Scheduled uncoached practices will have a designated Practice Captain and Certified Launch Driver overseeing the practice to ensure the safety of the crews.

3.2. As a part of determining whether a practice should be cancelled, the coach, or the practice captain is responsible for the practice session, shall obtain a current weather forecast to determine whether severe weather is predicted. Practices will be postponed or curtailed if lightning is seen or thunder is heard within the previous 30 minutes. In any case, coaches may choose to cancel practice if they feel the environmental conditions are unsafe. This may include considerations for snow, rain, ice, fog, temperature, wind, equipment conditions or skill level and focus of the Club Rowers.

3.3. No individual, regardless of ability level, may coach any technical, Learn-to-Row, or Learn-to-Scull crew from any single shell unless there is also a safety launch in

attendance or with the Director's approval. As stated in the OAAR safety plan, "No high school, youth, college, or technical coxed crew should be on the water without a safety launch close by. A coach sitting in the coxswain seat does not count as a safety launch." Use of a coaching launch is required as any emergency situation may require the distribution of life-jackets, first-aid, or immediate return of a person to the dock. Life jacket bags must be included in the corresponding numbered launch boat as they contain the correct boat registration information.

3.4. All coaches should provide pre and post- practice communication to rowers in a brief 2-3 minute meeting to review the following:

#### Pre-Practice Safety Checklist

- Communicate practice plan
- Discuss weather forecast
- Communicate knowledge of waterway and current conditions
- Ensure athletes have proper clothing
- Ensure athletes have water to drink
- Ensure launch has all safety equipment
- Ensure launch and shells have proper lighting

#### Post-Practice Safety Checklist

- Communicate any deviations
- Discuss any safety concerns
- Share any equipment issues

### 4. Rules on the Water

4.1. All members are to be safety conscious at all times. It is the moral obligation of any person/crew to immediately attend to a rower or coach who has been ejected from their craft into the water.

4.2. The coxswain is in sole command of a shell and is the only one giving commands and instructions when the shell is moving. All shells that are equipped for coxswains shall not go out on the water without a coxswain. Rowers should assist new coxswains in improving their skills, but only when it is not interfering with the coxswain's ability to administer his/her other responsibilities. If a coxswain's command might place either the crew or equipment in a harmful position the rowers have the responsibility to stop the shell. A rower should only stop the boat and not attempt to issue correcting instructions or commands. Any request by a member of a crew to end a practice for safety is to be granted.

4.3. Club boats may be rowed in the dark provided the conditions outlined in [Dark Rowing Policy \(Please provide a link to this document\)](#) are fully met. Dark rowing is defined as any on water time that falls before sunrise and after sunset in accordance with the coaches' discretion.

4.3.1. To be on the water, sweep boats must meet at least one of the following conditions:

4.3.2. 8's or 4's must be accompanied by a coach with Certified Launch Driver status in a properly equipped launch; OR

4.3.3. be accompanied by a Certified Launch Driver in a properly equipped launch, and if the boat consists of Technical Rowers in their first season of rowing. the launch must stay within 100 feet of the Technical Rowers and does not qualify as a Certified Launch Driver for other boats on the water, unless the boats stay within 100 meters and there are no more than two boats per launch.

4.4. Use general common sense - if you are a stroke or coxswain who meets the requirements, but does not feel comfortable going through bridges, please do not stroke or cox that session.

4.5. Every rower and coxswain on the river must have a life jacket, either in the coach's launch, or when you are on the water without a coach, it is the responsibility of each rower and coxswain to have an accessible life jacket in the boat.

4.6. All shells are to follow the set traffic pattern as described in the OAAR Safety Plan (unless suspended for the summer MCI regatta): row on the right-hand side of the river, turn in the counter clockwise direction, and ensure that craft traveling in opposite directions pass port to port. Turning between the bridges is not allowed at any time, and river turns are required at all times unless there are no other boats on the water. The passing boat for crafts moving in the same direction should pass to the center of the river (starboard side of passing crew to port side of crew being passed), unless directed differently by the coach.

4.7. Please be alert for both rowing and non-rowing craft as well as the changing water conditions, being that the environment on the water is very dynamic. If sudden severe weather should strike, all persons are to vacate the water immediately. This should be a crew-governing action; however, the coach(s) present are required to signal all crews to the severe weather situation and use the logbook to account for all crews before departing. Crews still upstream of the dock and still potentially unaware of the bad

weather should be signaled from the pedestrian bridge by sounding an air horn 3 times and repeating twice - do not venture back out onto the water in dangerous weather. In the event that no coaches are present, this responsibility falls to the Practice Captain present. These individuals are to remain at the boathouse/dock until all persons have returned.

4.8. Unaccompanied use of two-oared (1x or 2-) club equipment is restricted until water and air temperatures do not pose risk of injury/illness during the spring season (Refer to safety rubric). The Director will notify the membership when use of this equipment is permitted. In the late fall, the Director will advise rowers when weather conditions pose significant risk for two-oared craft and will designate a date when the use of unaccompanied AARC two-oared equipment is no longer permitted. Use of AARC club doubles during these early/late season conditions may be provisionally granted by the Director on a case by case basis.

4.9. Private Boat Owners should only consider rowing in these conditions if they have appropriately arranged for the use of a safety launch to accompany their outing and adhere to OAAR recommendations regarding cold weather rowing.

4.10. Single scullers must carry a cell phone or whistle with them during workouts.

## 5. Boathouse Rules

5.1. All boathouse doors are to be shut when crews are on the water and when the last person leaves the boathouse.

5.2. All gasoline and other flammables are to be kept in the equipment shed near the dock.

5.3. No smoking is permitted in or around the boathouse or shed.

5.4. Please make quick use of the dock to minimize the waiting time for others wishing to use the facility (e.g., adjust foot stretchers on the water).

5.5. All shells taken out of the boathouse, whether for practice or for a regatta are to be signed out in the logbook, prior to going on the water. For coxed boats, coxswains are responsible for signing in and out. For sculling the bowman is responsible. The responsible person should include the boat name and departure time. On return complete the actual time in, comments and any equipment problems encountered. If warranted, place Caution Tape on the boat and make a detailed entry via

**Repair Issue Report Form** Please provide a link to this document. For regattas, the coach or group captain is responsible for following the above instructions.

5.6. We share the boathouse with others. Be considerate of them. In particular, do not block the logbook/cox charging table or prevent other people from reaching their equipment. Also be considerate of other boats, sail boards, fishermen or swimmers in the area.

## 6. Equipment Handling Rules

6.1. Make sure any equipment problems are entered on the **Repair Issue Report**. (Please provide a link to this document). If further use would cause more damage to the equipment or injury to a rower, make sure the equipment will not be used by someone else. Do not assume someone else has reported the problem.

6.2. Shells are to be given routine/preventative maintenance on a regular basis.

6.3. Rigging is not to be changed without approval of the coaches other than the foot stretchers and oar lock height.

### 6.4. Moving Boats

6.4.1.1. When lifting a boat always ensure there are enough people and they are properly distributed.

6.4.1.2. Always lift boats off the racks, don't slide it off on the gunwales.

6.4.1.3. Watch riggers carefully to make sure they won't hit anything.

6.4.1.4. When putting a shell on the racks or on stretchers, make sure it isn't resting on any part of the rigger.

6.4.1.5. Lift the boat evenly.

6.4.1.6. Always use a coxswain to move a boat. Listen for the coxswain's commands and do not talk unless necessary.

6.4.1.7. Do not place shells on the ground. Shells should be placed on stretchers or horses so that they are properly supported.

6.4.1.8. When transporting shells to regattas make sure the shell is secure. Gunwales should be on foam protectors, never on plain metal. The boat should not be able to move in any direction. Secure all seats and remove riggers.

6.4.1.9. Walk around a shell. Never step over a shell.

## 7. Launching and Docking Boats

7.1.1. Never step in the bottom of the shell or drop anything heavy into the bottom of a shell.

7.1.2. Before leaving the boathouse area, place shell in slings and adjust foot stretchers. Do a quick inspection of seat, rigger, stretchers, etc. to make sure no parts are missing, loose or broken. Replace missing or broken parts immediately. If something can't be fixed, use a different shell. Do not row a damaged shell. Note any problems discovered before and after practice in your log entry.

7.1.3. Be careful when landing at the dock. Remember the coxswain is in charge. Take the best approach to landing. Do not go fast. Always try to have someone catch you at on the dock. If the landing doesn't look good, weigh enough, back off and try again.

## 8. Handling Launches

8.1.1. Use of launches is to be entered on log sheets, just as is done with shells, by the launch driver.

8.1.2. Life jacket bags must be included in the corresponding numbered launch boat because they contain the boat registration documentation.

8.1.3. Launches are to be securely tied to the dock and the motor properly hoisted and locked.

8.1.4. Motors stored inside the boathouse are to have the gasoline/oil removed. Store the gasoline in the shed.

8.1.5. The launch is to be considered a safety vehicle at all times. Launch drivers should make sure all the proper safety equipment is in the launch. Launch drivers should also be familiar with rescue guidelines. The number of persons in the launch should be limited to ensure room is available to rescue crews.

## 9. Reporting violations of safety issues

9.1 It is the responsibility of all club members to report incidents or observed safety violations/issues.

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