

Bainbridge Island Rowing Club
Safety Program

PREREQUISITES

General Notes

The goal of the BIR Safety Program is to minimize the possibility of accidental injury to an athlete. The Safety Program is not meant as an all-inclusive treatment of rowing safety, nor does it, in any way, guarantee your safety. Instead, this safety program is meant to encourage responsible behavior. The following recommendations apply to all who either use club equipment or use private boats stored at the boathouse.

1. Head Coaches
Must meet minimum qualifications, assistant/volunteer coaches are strongly encouraged to acquire qualifications:
 - A. USRA Level 1 certificate or equivalent
 - B. Current First Aid/CPR certification (retraining required every two years)
 - C. Boating Safety course certification (U S Power Squadron, USCG, WA State Parks)

2. Juniors
Must complete the following before using BIR-owned boats:
 - A. Program Registration Form
 - B. Medical History and Release Authorization
 - C. Signed and returned USRA Liability Waiver
 - D. Medical Emergency Contact Form
 - E. Documentation of completed BIR float test
 - F. BIR Consent and Release From Liability Form

3. Sweep Rowers
Must complete the following before using BIR-owned boats:
 - A. Signed and returned USRA Liability Waiver
 - B. Medical Emergency Contact Form
 - C. Documentation of completed BIR float test

4. Scullers
Must complete the following before using BIR-owned boats:
 - A. Signed and returned USRA Liability Waiver
 - B. Medical Emergency Contact Form
 - C. Documentation of completed BIR float test.
 - D. A flip test is required to row club equipment other than wherries.
 - E. All BIR scullers are strongly encouraged to perform a flip test to demonstrate that they can either safely get back into a shell or use it as a paddleboard to get to shore.

5. All Novices

Must complete the following before using BIR-owned boats:

- A. The USRA Safety Video “ready All, Row” is to be viewed by all novice rowers before rowing on the water.
- B. Signed and returned USRA Liability Waiver
- C. Medical Emergency Contact Form
- D. Documentation of completed float test

Sweep Boat Safety

1. On Land
 - A. Before getting into boats, all Novice Classes will be instructed on how to move shells:
 - a. carrying boats from boathouse to the water;
 - b. setting boats in the water properly;
 - c. carrying boats back to slings; and,
 - d. carrying boats back to the boathouse and carefully racking them.
 - B. This will help ensure safe methods of carrying, as well as preventing damage to the equipment. This also reinforces the club’s commitment to safety protocols.

2. On the Water

- A. Boats may not enter the water or will head in immediately in the event of:
 - a. High winds;
 - b. Threat of electrical storm; and/or
 - c. Severely restricted visibility (heavy fog, driving rain, etc.).
- B. Boat lights must be used during dusk, dawn and hours of darkness.
 - a. Boat lights shall consist of at least one bright light affixed to the bow clip of the boat.
 - b. Flashing lights are strongly encouraged.
- C. Coach launches must always carry:
 - a. At least one “Kippy Liddle” bag plus one life jacket for each occupant of the coaching launch.
 - b. Coaches are responsible for ensuring that the “Kippy Liddle” bag contain a first aid kit, a whistle, and a working flashlight.
 - c. Tool box with spare rowing parts.
 - d. Fire extinguisher.
 - e. Paddle(s) for use in the event of mechanical problems.
- D. Sign-out procedure
 - a. Coaches are responsible for signing-out novice boats.
 - b. The cox, or stern seat in the case of non-coxed boats, are responsible for signing-out other boats.

3. Learn-to-Row Participants

- A. Novice crews will always be supervised from a motorized launch/boat that is capable of water rescue if there is an accident.
- B. Novices shall be supervised by a coach-to-rower ratio of no more than 1:16 (plus coxes).
- C. All Novice boats must remain within visual distance of the coach launch.

Sculling Boat Safety

1. Successfully complete a sculling clinic and/or be checked out by a coach before allowed access to club sculling equipment.
2. Log in and out on the Boat Use Log Sheet every time they go out on the water.
3. Check equipment for breakage or wear before going out. Tag defective club equipment and log it in as soon as it is noticed.
4. Be responsible for their own safety. The Club strongly encourages sculling with a buddy and staying near shore.
5. Learn and conform to traffic patterns. Be alert and aware of where you are heading.
6. Wash club boats upon returning them to the boathouse.
7. Scullers under the age of 18 may use club equipment only under the supervision or with the permission of a coach/instructor.

Traffic Pattern

Every rower, sculler, and cox has a responsibility to know the Eagle Harbor Traffic Pattern.

Traffic Pattern Guidelines:

1. Always stay to starboard. This means stay to the right if you are facing forward.
 - A. Traffic patterns are counter-clockwise.
2. Heading west from Bill Point (the Creosote Plant):
 - A. Take a straight line from Bill Point to the Washington State Ferry maintenance yard.
 - B. Move carefully through the Middle Harbor, staying to starboard. Watch out for dinghy traffic and traffic coming out of the Waterfront Park boat launch area.
 - C. Stay close to shore as your turn to starboard into the Inner Harbor. Head directly toward the Sunday Cove Condominiums piers before turning to port into the Aquatic Conservancy.
 - D. Swing wide, leaving room for east-bound traffic, as you enter the Aquatic Conservancy.
 - E. Stay to starboard in the Aquatic Conservancy. Let the height of tide dictate how close your course is to shore. If you go to the head of the Harbor, leave the log boom to port.
3. Heading east from the head of the Harbor.
 - A. Leave the log boom to port. Swing wide around the red mooring buoy and head to the south shore.
 - B. Hug the corner as your turn to starboard into the Inner Harbor.
 - C. Take the white trimaran on either port or starboard. If you leave it to starboard, stay on the west side of the waterway.
 - D. Swing wide heading from the Inner Harbor to the Middle Harbor.
 - E. Again, be extra cautious in the Middle Harbor.
 - F. After passing the "C" can, head in a straight line to the *Olympic*.
 - G. From the *Olympic*, head in a straight line to Bill Point.

BIRC Safety Policy

In the Event of An Emergency

Chain of Command / Order of Events

1. In class and clinic situations, the Coach is in charge. All Coxswains and rowers must follow the directions of the coach.
 - A. If there is a health or safety emergency on the water, the Coach will use his or her judgment and call 9-1-1 or use VHF Channel 16 to call Harbor Patrol Boater Distress.
 - a. Note: The nearest pay phone to the launching ramp is on Bjune across the street from the Senior Center.
 - b. Be sure to note your location and the location of the boat in trouble (Example: I'm calling from Waterfront Park. A four-oared shell has capsized mid-way between the creosote plant and Wing Point. Five people are in the water.)
2. Documentation
 - A. All medical or first aid emergencies during club activities will be reported to the Club President.
 - B. All serious incidents (youth disciplinary, boat collision, or medical first aid) will be documented and reported to a BIRC Board Member.
 - C. In the event of medical treatment due to a rowing accident involving BIR members or equipment, the Coach shall notify the Club President.

Equipment Maintenance

1. Properly functioning, well maintained equipment is essential to the safety of rowers.
2. As part of all training courses, and periodically during the course of the season, the Coach should remind rowers and coxswains of the following: If equipment is broken, do not use it. Stop rowing. Rowing with broken equipment will further damage the equipment.
3. Rowers are responsible as they enter the boat to check bolts, riggers, top nuts, foot stretchers, etc. for proper function. They are encouraged to check periodically during the workout that everything is in order.
4. Each Coach is responsible for any breakage that occurs under his or her instruction. This means the Coach must either fix the breakage, find out how to fix it, or document the repairs needed on the coaches message board in the BIRC shed.
5. Cleanliness:
 - A. Boats, oars and riggers are to be rinsed off with a hose after each practice.
 - B. Boats, oars and oar handles are to be periodically washed with a soapy solution.
 - C. Thoroughly clean and bandage all cuts and blisters before touching equipment.
6. Chemical Storage
 - A. Gasoline is to be stored in a designated locker located outside the Boat Shed within the club facility.

Distribution

Members should certify annually that they have received and read this document. A copy of this document will be included in the annual membership packet.