



Ottawa  
Rowing  
Club

Junior Rowing

Handbook

- 2026 -

[www.ottawarowingclub.com](http://www.ottawarowingclub.com)

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## INTRODUCTION

The ORC Junior Rowing Handbook has been developed to give athletes and parents a resource that has everything they might need to know about rowing and racing. This is one of your best resources for any questions you may have so please read through it thoroughly and refer back to it throughout the season as needed. If you are looking for more specifics on our programs, refer to our [2026 Season Outline](#).

## ABOUT US

### Vision

The ORC is an inclusive, volunteer-driven organisation that inspires excellence and builds community through the sport of rowing.

### Core Values

Excellence, Respect, Teamwork, Responsibility, Community

### Athlete Doctrine

Our [Values Contract](#) explains each of these in depth.

- 1) We work hard
- 2) Be the best training partner you can be
- 3) \$10M Attitude
- 4) Practice with a purpose
- 5) Better today than yesterday - Better tomorrow than today
- 6) We don't dig holes, we build skyscrapers
- 7) Talent sets the floor, character sets the ceiling

8) The truly extraordinary do something mundane every day

9) We are all leaders. Act like it.

10) Be a good ancestor

## Roles and Responsibilities

For more information about the board of directors and other staff, please see our website.

### Head Coach

Zak Lewis

[zak@ottawarowingclub.com](mailto:zak@ottawarowingclub.com)

Oversees all programs at ORC

### Lead Junior Coach

Meg Jolley

[meg@ottawarowingclub.com](mailto:meg@ottawarowingclub.com)

Oversees all Junior programs

### Parent Liaison

tbd

### Assistant Coaches

Marc Marion, Julia Fournier, Christina Fernandez, Sam Sloan, Kurt Herman, Greg Brown, Karin Germann & Others

### Captains ('25/'26)

Tamsen Taylor, Jack Coulson, Mason Gauthier, Oskar Roy

### ORC Administrator

Adrian Clementino  
[rowing@ottawarowingclub.com](mailto:rowing@ottawarowingclub.com)

## Communications and Helpful Links

### Email

Email will be used for longer messages or personal communication.

### WhatsApp

We have a WhatsApp community specific to the Junior programs. This is where most of the quick communications occur (i.e. last minute practice updates, regatta updates, etc.). You join the sub-channels that are applicable to you. Please ask Meg for the link.

\*If an athlete would like to send an individual message to Meg, a parent must be included in the chat.

### **ORC Website and Calendar**

Most of our club information and resources can be found on our website at [www.ottawarowingclub.com](http://www.ottawarowingclub.com). Our schedule can be found on the *Calendar* tab. Please subscribe to any relevant calendars for the most up to date schedule (i.e. your program and regattas, etc.).

### **Social Media (Instagram, Facebook, etc.)**

Our Instagram page ([@ottawarowingclub](https://www.instagram.com/ottawarowingclub)) will have some of our updates and important upcoming events. You can also find fun Junior-specific posts on Coach Meg's account ([@coach\\_meg](https://www.instagram.com/coach_meg)). Please like, comment and share our content to help grow our club's reach.

### **Regatta Central**

Visit the Regatta Central website for each regatta to find details like the regatta package, your race time, heat, etc. Please be advised that the race officials and coordinators may change the draw at any time. Their website is [regattacentral.com](http://regattacentral.com). Some regattas opt to post their live results in other places like [regattamasteronline.com](http://regattamasteronline.com) and [crewtimer.com](http://crewtimer.com).

### **Rowing Canada Aviron and Row Ontario**

Visit the Rowing Canada website to learn more about rowing, find more [resources](#), learn more about [Safe Sport](#) and find information on [rowing for Team Canada](#) (NextGen) and the pathway to get there. Their website is [rowingcanada.org](http://rowingcanada.org). Row Ontario has similar information, including their NextGen program, specific to our province which can be found at [rowontario.ca](http://rowontario.ca).

## **PREPARE FOR PRACTICE AND RACING**

### **What to Bring to Practice**

- Water bottle (with sock around it)
- Sunscreen, sunglasses and hat
- Athletic clothing (tight fit to avoid getting caught on equipment)
- Multiple layers (long sleeves, long pants)
- Easily digestible snacks for in the boat ('baby food' pouches, dates, etc)
- Change of clothes
- Indoor shoes

- Running shoes
- Personal light and whistle
- Long hair tied up

## What to Bring to Regattas

### Athletes rowing uniform, equipment and supplies:

Clothing	Equipment and Supplies
ORC Unisuit	10mm and 7/16 wrenches + a 5mm hex key
White short sleeve	Water bottle with sock on it
White hat	Sunscreen, bugspray
ORC hooded long sleeve	Running shoes and dock shoes (slides, crocs, etc.)
Rain gear (jacket, pants, umbrella)	Trash bags or plastic tubs to keep gear dry
Extra layers for race day	Blister kit (tape and antibiotic ointment)
Change of clothes for ride home	Personal snacks
Extra socks if wet launching (wading in)	Electrolyte powder or tablets
Training clothes (if training at regatta site)	Camping chair

## Regatta and Race Uniform

All items in the Regatta and Race Uniform are mandatory for athletes that are competing unless otherwise noted. The official race uniform is an ORC branded race unisuit, a white short sleeve with UVA/UVB protection and a white hat (see image below, left). While not racing or preparing to race, an ORC branded sun hoodie (see image below, right) must be worn at the regatta site. The short sleeve and hat do not have to be ORC branded but they must be white in order to race. We will have ORC branded options available. All of these items will be available for purchase in the office.



## Parents and Spectators

We suggest bringing a chair, binoculars, rain gear, umbrella and something to do (book, crossword, etc.), portable charger, sunscreen, bugspray, blanket, snacks, cash for parking, camera, etc. To tell the crews apart, look for our uniform (red top with blue sash) and oar colours (white with blue and red stripes, like in our logo). The boats are often labelled with a number on the bow. The assigned numbers can often be found on the regattacentral site, however, please note that the regatta organizers may change the numbers last-minute. Many parents will print out a copy of the race draw (schedule with lane and bow numbers) to follow along as the races go by. Depending on the regatta, you may see one single race, or there may be multiple heats with top crews advancing to finals. Some regattas may have time trials instead of heats. Some race courses have a cycling lane along them so you can watch the whole race, however this is not the norm here. We recommend watching near the finish line when possible as it typically has the most excitement.

The trailer area is a place where athletes and coaches prepare and debrief from races. Please feel free to observe from a distance but do not enter the area as it can distract from the race prep. The trailer and control commission area is also very busy with a lot of long, moving equipment, so it is a safety hazard when spectators get in the way.

## Regatta Site Rules

1. The trailer area is our “locker room” of sorts and is where the athletes need to focus on racing - parents please do not enter the trailer area unless you have been given a specific task (ex. Snack table). If athletes are not preparing for a race, please avoid the trailer area so others can get ready without distraction.
2. No phones within 2 hours of your race, except for music.
3. We will win and lose humbly
  - a. No excessive displays of positive or negative outbursts. It is okay to be really happy or upset after a race, but wait until we are back at the trailer so we can discuss the race.
  - b. Congratulate your competitors regardless of whether you win or not.
  - c. Do not talk about the details of the race on the dock with your teammates, coaches or competitors.
4. No loud music around areas where others are trying to brief/debrief
5. Each athlete must have permission from the Lead Junior Coach to leave the regatta site so we can keep track of where you are. All athletes must stay after each regatta to help load the trailer.

## SAFETY

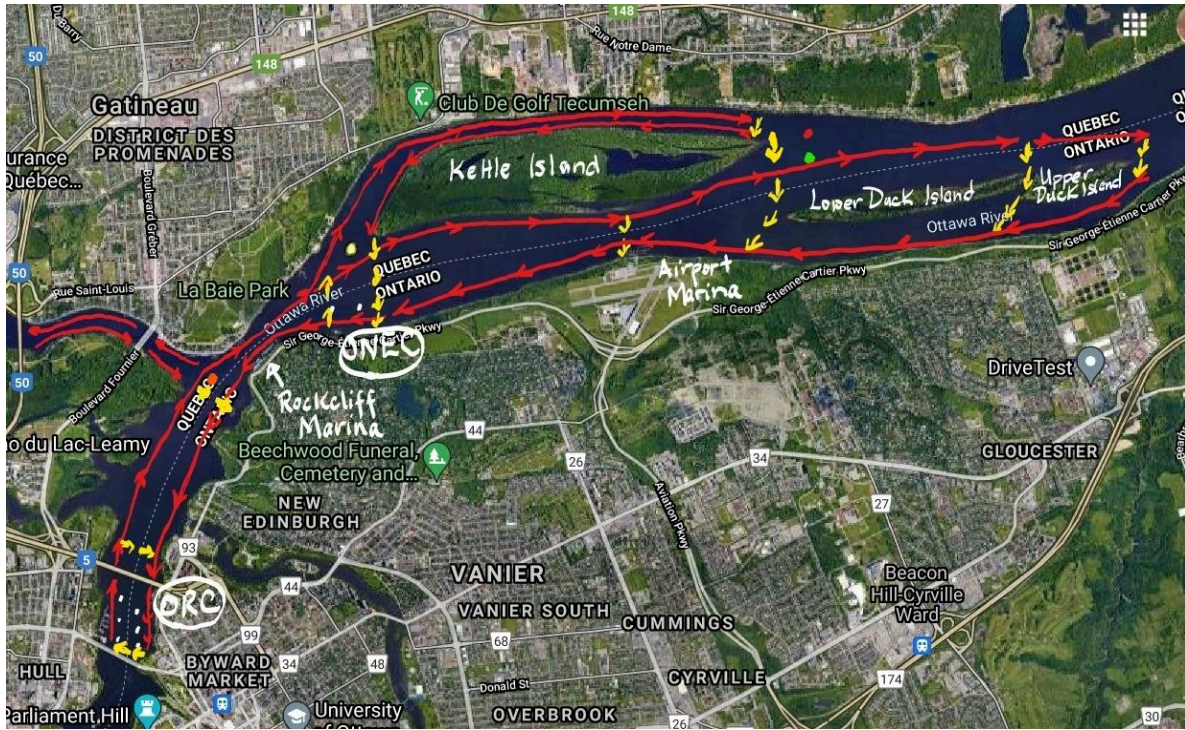
### Personal Safety

All necessary safety information is covered in the ORC Safety Training found on our website. Each athlete is required to pass the ORC Safety Training before their first on-water session, once per year. Here are some of the basic safety requirements covered in the Safety Training:

- Whistles are mandatory for all sessions
- Lights are mandatory for all sessions starting or finishing in low or no light conditions
- Do not launch until coaches are on water
- Dress for the weather

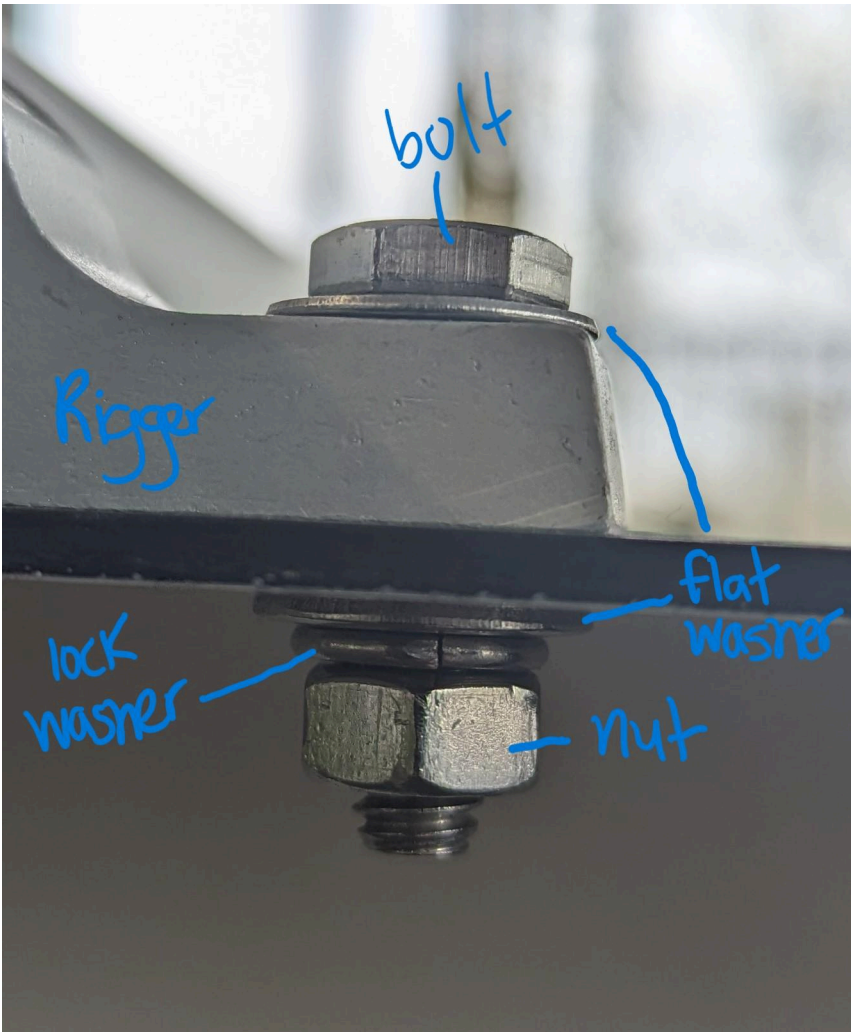
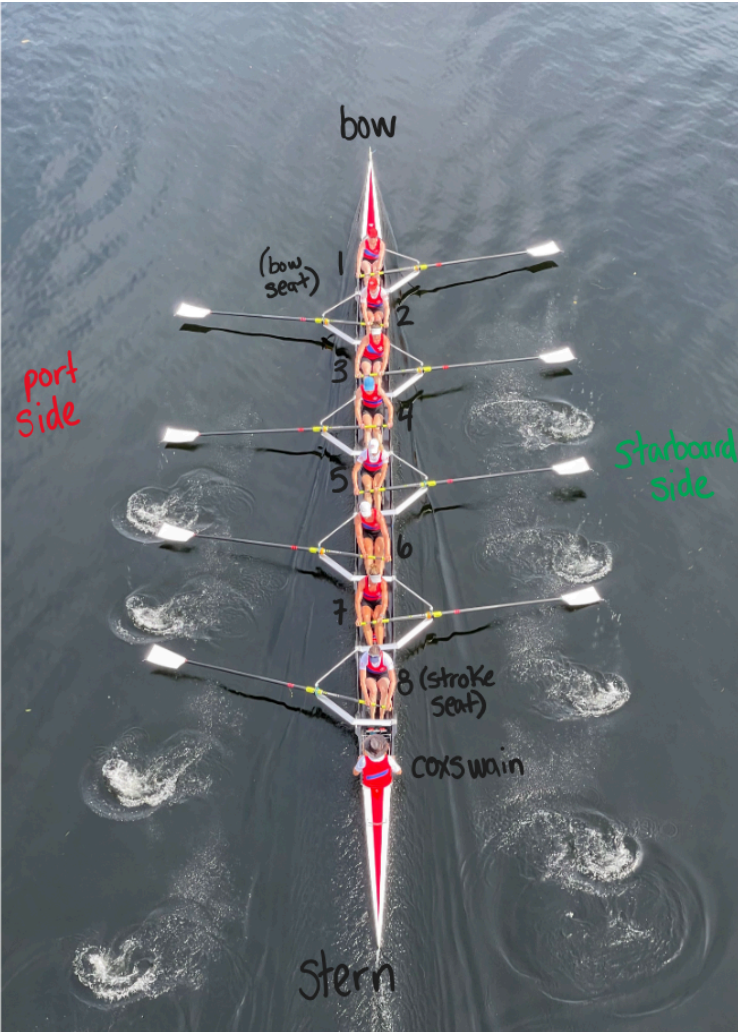
Reminder: Athletes attest to their swimming ability during the registration process.

## Traffic Pattern

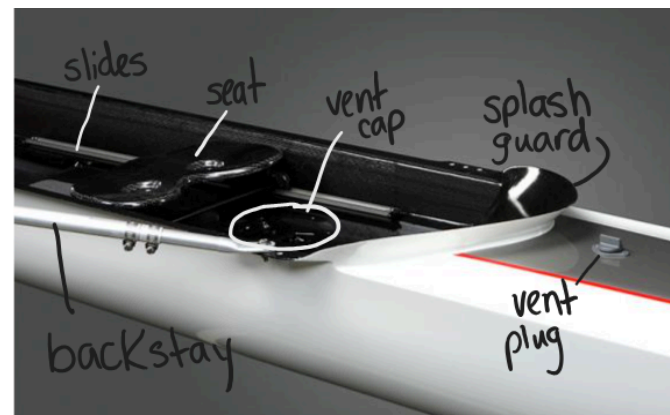
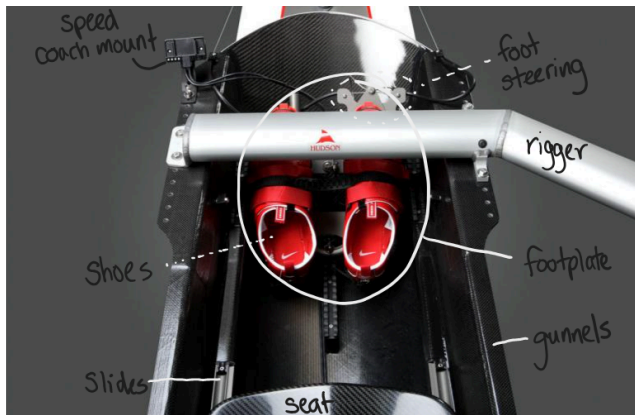
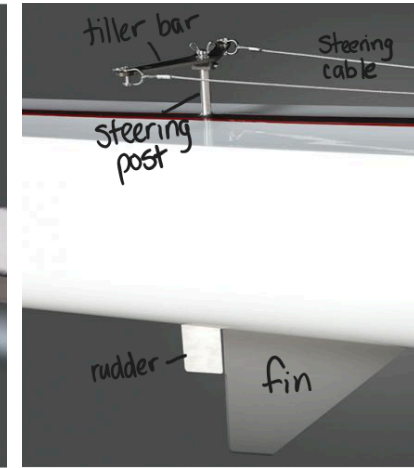
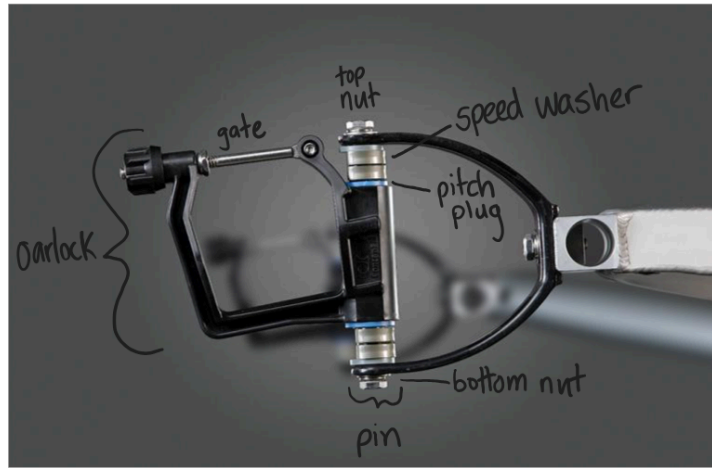
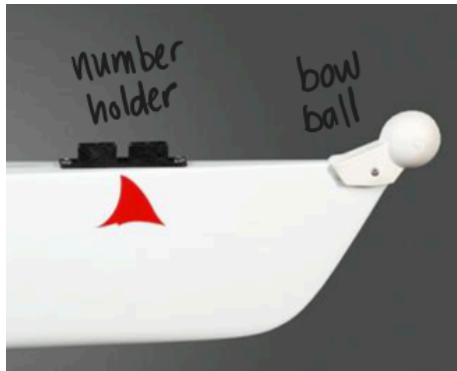


# GLOSSARY

## Boat Terms



The following images are property of Hudson Boat Works and have been edited for our educational purposes. Please do not redistribute these images.



## Common Calls and Terms

### Miscellaneous Terms

**Bowloader:** a boat where the coxswain seat is located at the bow

**Coxbox:** a piece of equipment that allows the coxswain's voice to be sent throughout the boat. Coxboxes now often include information such as rate, split, etc.

**Coxswain:** often called a cox or coxie. They are typically smaller in size and steer the boat, provide motivation, provide feedback to individuals and the whole crew, and execute practice and race plans. They communicate with the boat via a microphone and speaker system.

**Regatta:** rowing race

**Stroke/Speed Coach:** a small device that attaches to the boat that provides rowers with information such as rate, split, etc.

**Stern-loader:** a boat where the coxswain seat is located at the stern

### On Land

**“Back it”:** row the boat backwards, push water away from you instead of pulling it towards you

**“Bear hug the boat”:** reaching over the boat, grab a gunnel with each hand, prepare to lift

**Drag factor:** the rate at which the flywheel decelerates, sometimes referred to as resistance. Typically 110 for women and 130 for men or lower for younger rowers.

**Ergometer:** often called an erg, it is a rowing machine.

**“Up an inch”:** lift the boat slightly off racks

**“Up over heads”:** grab each gunnel and lift the boat overheads

**“Roll to \_\_\_\_\_”:** roll the boat slowly together to put onto stretchers or water, etc.

**“Side step”:** walk the boat sideways one direction

**“Toes to the edge”:** walk the boat to the edge of the dock until your toes are on the edge

### On Water

**Backsplash:** the splash that occurs off an oar as it enters the water

**Crab:** occurs when the oar gets stuck in the water, occasionally causing it to go over your head or ejection

**Feather:** rotation of the oar so that it is parallel to the water, which occurs during the recovery part of the stroke

**Foot steering:** when an athlete uses a moving footplate to change the direction of the rudder

**“Hold water”:** square the oar in the water to stop or turn the boat quickly

**Inside hand:** the hand closest to the blade on a sweep oar

**Missing water:** when the blade does not enter the water properly, causing the rower to miss the stroke

**Outside hand:** the hand furthest away from the blade on a sweep oar

**Paddle:** row lightly

**Puddles:** the ripples in the water made by an oar

**Pressure steering:** when the crew uses more or less pressure on one side to turn the boat

**Run:** the amount of distance the boat travels between strokes which can be determined by looking at the distance between the puddles

**Seat racing:** racing used to determine with combination of athletes is the fastest

**Set:** the balance in the boat

**Skying:** when the blade is too high above the water on the recovery as the rower approaches the catch

**Square:** the blade of the oar in perpendicular to the water

**Swing:** synchronization of motion

**Tap down:** move the handle downwards around your finish to get the blade off the water

**Time trial:** racing to best ones time, typically over 2km, 3km or 5km

**Washing out:** When the blade is not fully under the water during the drive

### **On Land or On Water**

**Catch:** the point where the blade is in the water and pressure is put against it

**Drive:** the part of the stroke when the blade is in the water

**Entry:** the point where the oar enters the water

**Finish/Release:** the part of the stroke when the blade exits the water

**Half slide:** a shortened stroke where the rower catches part way up the slide on the recovery. Sometimes  $\frac{1}{4}$  and  $\frac{3}{4}$  slide are used.

**“Heads up”:** duck and get out of the way, there is a boat coming your way

**“Let it run”:** stop

**Pause position 1:** pause at the finish of the stroke

**Pause position 2:** pause at arms away on the recovery

**Pause position 3:** pause at arms and bodies away on the recovery

**Piece:** component of the workout

**Rate/stroke rate:** the number of strokes per minute

**Recovery/Return:** the part of the stroke when the blade is off the water, returning to the catch

**Rushing the slide:** when the rowers recovery is too quick relative to their drive, causing the boat to move in the wrong direction

**Split:** the amount of time it takes to row 500m (lower number = faster)

## Racing

**Draw:** the document showing race times and lane allocations for each crew

**Head race:** typically held during the Fall, crews race single file down a river over about 3-5km. Boats row through a starting line at a set interval against the clock for the fastest time. Sometimes crews may pass or get passed by other crews. Slower crews are expected to yield to faster crews.

**Hot seat:** when a rower or equipment needs to go from one race immediately into another race

**Quick start:** the umpires will not do roll call. They will do a short call such as “attention, row”

**Sprint race:** typically held in the summer, crews race side-by-side over 2km on a buoyed course.

**Start gate:** in sprint racing where the athletes start the race, sometimes there is a boat holder, sometimes it is a floating start

## Boat Classes

“x” indicates it is a sculling boat

“-” indicates it is a sweep boat without a coxswain

“+” indicates it is a boat with a coxswain

### Sculling (one oar for each hand):

1x: Single. One person boat.

2x: Double. Two person sculling boat.

4x: Straight Quad or Coxless Quad. Four person sculling boat.

4x+: Coxed Quad. Four person sculling boat plus a coxswain.

### Sweeping (one oar per person):

2-: Pair. Two person sweeping boat.

4-: Straight Four or Coxless Four. Four person sweeping boat.

4+: Coxed Four. Four person sweeping boat plus a coxswain.

8+: Eight. Eight person sweeping boat plus a coxswain.