



LOWELL CREW

HANDBOOK

Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success. - Henry Ford

Suddenly you find your son or daughter is:

- a. gone
- b. tired
- c. eating like a horse, or eating only salad
- d. producing sweaty, wet piles of clothing
- e. talking a strange language
- f. all of the above

Congratulations! You have a rower in the family. Your child has been captured by a wonderful, lifelong sport. He or she will build muscles and endurance... and character, by learning the value of persistence, dedication and teamwork. This handbook of information is intended to help you get a handle on what is happening.

How our TEAM operates:

Lowell Crew consists of men's and women's teams. The team operates with head coach, Pete Chittenden, assisting coaches, David Cadwallader and Keith Gillhespy Lowell Crew was established in 2003. We race shells with two, four or eight rowers, each rower manning a single oar, and a coxswain.

Lowell Crew begins the season with a non mandatory training program. This is conducted to help rowers and coxswains get into shape. Workouts (running, weight training, calisthenics, and ergometer work) are conducted at the Runciman Building from January to mid March. All rowers not participating in a winter sport are encouraged to participate. **Prior to starting, all athletes are required to have a current (dated after April of previous school year) physical on file in the Lowell Athletic Department.**

Lowell Crew is a non school funded high school varsity sport, which is organized, funded and administrated solely by parents, coaches, volunteers and sports boosters. In order for Lowell Crew to continue to offer the rowing experience for our students, it is vital that all parents volunteer. When every parent volunteers for at least one committee the year runs a lot smoother. There are a lot to choose from:

Food Committee
Photographer
Regatta Tent Set-Up

Website Committee
Transportation Committee
Launch Boat Drivers

Fundraiser Committee
Community Interest

Safety

- Your child must be able to swim. We will conduct a swim test that requires each student to tread water while wearing a full set of sweat clothes for a period of five minutes followed by a swim of two lengths of the pool in any fashion they wish (freestyle, doggie paddle, etc.).
- Weather conditions are given careful consideration before launching...
- All students will be taught safety procedures.
- No boats are launched onto the water without having a coach and a safety launch with them. **Each safety launch carries approved floatation devices for all rowers and coxswains.**
- **No boat is left alone on the water without a coach!**
- The rowing shell will not sink.

When and where are practices?

On water practices:

Due to the nature of our sport, it is sometimes difficult to complete practice on time.

Unlike other sports, our playing field is constantly changing and our equipment is complex.

Changes in the weather, mechanical breakdowns and the number of people sharing equipment sometimes cause delays in our schedule. We make every attempt to complete practice on time but ask for patience when problems occur.

- Practice takes place either at Runciman Building inside, on the Flat River or on the Grand at the Township Park. Practice time varies throughout the season but averages two hours. More information about practice times will follow.
- Once we start on the water, practice will be every day unless otherwise notified. Typically we practice Monday through Friday, load the boats on Thursday after practice, travel on Friday and race on the weekend.
- In the case of inclement weather, we will still practice but indoors.
- The weather and condition of the water will determine when we start on the water.

Team Expectations

The sport of rowing is the ultimate TEAM sport. The objective of our competitions is to get a boat containing two, four or eight rowers to the finish line in the fastest time possible. To achieve this goal, it requires all rowers in the boat under the direction of the coxswain to do the same thing at the same time for approximately 200 repetitions.

To prepare for race day, it requires time and dedication during practice. We are a TEAM. We practice as a TEAM. We race as a TEAM. We travel as a TEAM. We win and lose as a TEAM. No one person in the boat can get the TEAM to the finish line by themselves. It takes the whole TEAM.

Athletes are expected to:

- Treat all teammates, opponents, coaches, officials and LHS members with respect
- Participate fully in all aspects of the training
- Be supportive of the team and yourself by accepting coaching decisions
- Seek feedback. If a rower doesn't know where they stand, ask
- Realize that team goals come before the needs or desires of any individual
- Enjoy being a member of a successful, competitive rowing team!

Coaches are expected to:

- Provide clear communication from the beginning on all steps necessary to make Lowell Crew a successful program
- Direct feedback to the athletes so they know their areas of strength and weakness, and methods to improve them
- Make fair assessments to achieve the fastest lineups & communicate the assessments openly
- Involve all participants in regatta competition to the maximum extent possible
- Share with the participants in the failures and many successes of this team!!

Parents are expected to:

- Provide support for your rower by taking an active role in at least one of the Lowell Crew committees
- Remember that the coaches have full responsibility for training the participants
- Respect the coaches as the final authority on boat selection and rowing matters

- Remember that coaches seek only to create the fastest lineups possible. While decisions can at times be somewhat subjective, they are not personal
- Participate in fund-raising activities
- Enjoy your rower's growth and development through their commitment, dedication and teamwork!

The coaching staff is prepared to dedicate their time and experience to getting the athletes ready to race. **We expect the athletes to commit to practice and do their best, everyday.** It becomes very difficult if athletes do not show up at practice and it also lets down the rest of the boat and TEAM that they are a part of. **Team members are expected to attend all scheduled practices during the season. Excused absence will be allowed for conflicting academic classes, recognition events, doctor appointments or family emergencies. Prior written notice must be given to the appropriate coach. It is expected that each team member will make every attempt to schedule other activities/appointments to avoid conflict with the team practice schedule and regattas.**

What clothing should be worn during practice?

- Tight fitting shorts, tight and/or pants and tops are recommended. Bring suitable clothes to match the temperature. Clothing that is approved by the school dress code.
- Crew is not necessarily a clean sport. It is recommended that you wear clothing that you don't mind getting grease and dirt on.
- Bring a gym bag containing a change of clothes in case of rain or you get wet from rowing. Plan on layering your clothing.
- A good pair of running shoes will be needed for the season.

When are the races?

- We compete in as many Regattas and scrimmages as possible.
- We compete against other rowing organizations from around the Michigan area.
- We may stage periodic scrimmage races (only two or three schools) during the week against local competition during the normal practice schedule.
- Our racing season runs during April and May.

How do you get the crews and equipment there?

- The boats are transported on the Lowell Crew trailer.
- Equipment and luggage is transported in the equipment trailer.
- Parent volunteers and/or school bus.

Where do you stay? What about food?

- If an overnight stay is required, we sleep in high school gyms. Most athletes have self-inflatable or blow up mattresses and sleeping bags. Showers are available at each location.
- All coaching staff and sufficient number of chaperones for that weekend are expected to stay with the crew.
- The crew parent group organizes all meals.
- Details will be handed out prior to each regatta.

Do you put your best crew members together to win?

- Each regatta we attend has different events and categories for novice rowers; we attempt to enter boats that will be as competitive as possible. Sometimes this means athletes will row in different boats each week depending upon their progressing ability and the

chemistry of the four or eight people chosen for a particular boat. Boat assignment will likely change throughout the season. This might be frustrating for some people who really strive to win, but it takes time to perfect skills and strength to win races. We do not rush a team unless they are capable of doing so. Winning will come with time spent on the water, race experience and dedication.

- All team members, provided they have been present at practice and not restricted due to any disciplinary action, will compete in at least one event at each regatta we attend.

Regatta rules

- All team members travel together to and from regattas. (Prior permission is required to travel with a parent).
- While traveling on team transportation, athletes are expected to exhibit behavior consistent with school guidelines.
- **All** team members are required to stay until after the award ceremony.
- No one is permitted to depart from a regatta site until after the award ceremony and all the equipment is securely loaded onto the trailer and the head coach has dismissed the team. The head coach may grant an exception based on a written request from a parent or guardian and under certain circumstances.
- The team is expected to stay together during the day.
- Team members are expected to help out on the docks when other team members are launching or returning from races.
- Food is provided by the team; please notify the coaching staff if you have any dietary restrictions.
- All students are expected and required to follow the athletic code and represent Lowell Schools in the best possible way during a regatta and for the entire season.
- The coaching staff has the right to inspect the contents of any luggage being transported on the bus & team trailer.
- All team members are required to stay with their crew and their team during a regatta/competition and to help with duties on the docks. Team members are not permitted to wander off on their own or in small groups without permission of their coach.

****Parents may take their rower with them when the regatta is over, but not until all the equipment has been packed onto the trailer and the coach has been notified.***

How much does it cost?

The crew program is not funded by the school district. The future of crew team will be asked to conduct fundraising for the season and beyond. **The fee each year is \$300.00.** Individual fundraising opportunities will also be available. The fees are used for operational expenses associated with the sport, including entry fees to the regattas, transportation and food at the regattas, maintenance, equipment, uniform tops and socks, etc. Racers need to purchase their own shorts.

We have a volunteer incentive program to promote needed volunteers for fundraising, Learn-to-Row and other special Crew events. The incentive program enables the rowers a chance to reduce the fee for next year's rowing season up to \$50.00. Rowers and parents are expected to volunteer more than just the \$50 worth. Our fundraising for the team includes:

Water Sales at graduation, Football stadium clean up

We also participate in various parades, the Riverwalk duck collection, etc. Each volunteered event is worth \$5.00 off your rower's Crew fee in the next season.

Regatta Packing List and Reminders for Rowers

***Before you pack, check the weather forecast and pack appropriately. It is better to have more clothing than not enough!**

- ****Student I.D. Card with Photograph** MANDATORY**
- **Uniform shirt, shorts, socks**
- Water Bottle
- Change of clothing or two
- Warm outerwear
- Extra shoes
- Medications (notify coach)
- Sunscreen
- Money for souvenirs
- Confirm arrangements for pick-up upon return from regatta
- Please keep personal items to a minimum (CD players, games, make-up kits, etc.) You are responsible for your personal items!!
- Food is provided at the regatta for team members.
- For overnights-Sleeping Bag, air mattress, pillow
- Pajamas / Sleeping Attire
- Toiletries (toothpaste, toothbrush, soap, shampoo, etc.)
- Towel, washcloth

Regatta Survival Guide for Parents

- Rain Gear
- Camera and extra film, telephoto lens if you have one
- Binoculars
- Lawn chairs Hat, sunscreen, t-shirt and shorts for hot weather
- Warm hat, gloves and warm jacket for windy and cold weather
- Comfortable walking shoes
- Snacks and drinks for yourselves
- A good sense of humor

Parents you will enjoy the races if you are prepared for the weather. Check the forecast. It tends to be cold and windy near the river, however conditions can change quickly. If you are warm and dry, you will be comfortable.

Rowing Websites: www.row2k.com www.concept2.com www.usrowing.org

Go to
www.lowellcrew.com
for updated schedules, photographs, contacts, and links.