

# Rowing Members' Handbook

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## Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to document the basic knowledge required by every rower at Locarno. Some of this material is presented in new member orientation, and most of it is covered in beginner lessons. This handbook should be used:

- for new member orientation,
- as pre-reading for those registered for beginner lessons or new member check-outs,
- as reference, to answer specific questions, and
- as light evening reading from time to time, as a refresher .

This handbook is not intended to teach rowing technique or terminology. Please refer to the documents listed below, and if in doubt, take a course.

Learn to Row Open Water Scullers' Guide by Richard Copley

Rowing Canada Skills Program

<http://www.rowingcanada.org/en/services/skillsProgram.html>

Rough Water Technique <http://www.owrc.com/technique.htm>

We continue to grow and improve the rowing program and this manual. Please feel free to contribute your insights on both, along with any ideas for improvements, to [rowing@clublocarno.com](mailto:rowing@clublocarno.com).

### ***Locarno Approach to Safety***

Your safety is your personal responsibility. The club offers clinics to assess your skills, lessons to develop them and the level system to set clear boundaries. It is each member's responsibility to understand your skills and limits and to stay within them.

## Rowing Fleet

Our rowing fleet offers 8 boats including

### *Two Alden 16 Ocean Shells.*



The Alden 16 is the most popular recreational rowing shell in the world. It delivers satisfying speed and stability, and a dry ride and is ideal for local conditions. The exclusive hull design is the key; the flared bow lifts the boat over waves and the flat bottom provides stability. The dropped keel design eliminates the need for a skeg, so it launches easily from a beach. The first Alden 16 was rowed by the designer into the teeth of 62 MPH winds from Tropical Storm Doria in order to confirm the shell's seaworthiness.

Boat Specs: The Alden 16 weighs approximately 58 lbs. when rigged. It has a functional weight capacity of 200 lbs, a hull length of 16 feet, a waterline beam of 24 inches and an overall beam of 25 inches.

### *Two Alden 18 Ocean Shells.*

The Alden 18 is a very versatile open water rowing shell. It offers all the benefits of the Alden 16, plus the ability to easily set up for double or single person rowing.

Row with a partner, take a friend as a passenger, or row by yourself. The 18 features the same hull design as the Alden 16, but is a bit longer with a stiffening section to maintain rigidity when loaded. The large cockpit has extra space for storage and touring. The double has been rowed all over the world, including a coastal adventure from Alaska to Washington State, loaded with gear. Even on shorter trips, you will appreciate this shell's stability and versatility.

Boat Specs: The Alden 18 hull weighs approximately 86 lbs. with one rigging unit. The Double has a functional weight capacity of 450 lbs, a hull length of 18 feet, a waterline beam of 29 inches and an overall beam of 30 inches.



## Four Echo open water shells

Organic and deceptively simple in appearance, The Echo integrates numerous functions within its flowing lines. Its simple hull form is easily driven in flat water while the 21”



waterline beam is reassuring and stable in rough water. Leaving a remarkably small wake at normal rowing speeds, the Echo will rise and skim like a powerboat when pushed by a strong rower.

The long moulded keel gives good directional stability at rowing speeds and even in surfing conditions. It makes for easy beaching or dragging up a dock without fear of damage. Since the keel does not go to the stern of the shell, turning the shell in close quarters at slow speed is effortless. The rolled gunwale makes for a strong stiff boat and together with the high bow keeps the water down and the rower dry in rough conditions.



Boat Specs: The Echo weighs about 48 lbs fully rigged and has a suggested weight limit of 260 lbs. Its overall length is 18', has a waterline length 17' 3", a beam at the deck of 26" and a waterline beam of 21".

## The Hudson

The Hudson T-6--the T stands for Trainer--is made by Hudson Boat Works of London,



Ontario, makers of some of the world's fastest boats in all categories of flat water racing. This is the boat made famous by Xeno Mueller, who trained on a T-6 in San Diego Bay before winning the World Rowing Championship (single scull) in 1998.

For club members who are instructed in the deep-water recovery-system on the Hudson, this is a comfortable boat in all conditions, and it is better than the Aldens at giving the rower feedback on faulty technique while still being more seaworthy. For most rowers it is slightly slower than the Alden 16 and definitely faster than the Alden 18 rigged as a single. . We are grateful to Hudson Boat Works for donating this boat to the club.

Boat Specs: The T-6 is 19' long, 24" wide and weighs 88 pounds. We have made Xeno's boat even more seaworthy by adding decks fore & aft and two air bags and a capsize-righting bar with flotation, which added 8 pounds to Xeno's 80 lb. boat.

## Oars

Most of our sculls are hatchet blades (the standard for racing and most recreational uses), in wood, fibreglass and/or carbon fibre. We also have two sets of Macon blades; one with aluminium shafts and one with very light fibreglass. These tend to require a bit more refined technique, but are preferred by some rowers, especially in heavier seas.

## Selecting a boat

Every boat in the fleet is stable, forgiving and suitable for any rower regardless of skills. There are some differences in performance and capability that you should be aware of, and you will, like most rowers, develop personal preferences depending on the conditions.

The Echo is an excellent all-around choice. It is fast, stable and cannot be swamped as long as the hull is not breached. It is very manoeuvrable, which is less of an asset when you are attempting to row in a straight line. It also has low gunnels and is without a coaming, which will result in a wet rower in heavy seas.

The Alden 16 and 18 are dry, stable and track well. They are reputed to surf better than an Echo as a result of good tracking and a flat bottom. Neither are as fast as an Echo, and can be very slow indeed when entirely filled with water – this condition should be avoided. Take a large bailer. The Alden 18, rigged as a single, is the best in the fleet for heavy rowers.

The Hudson is fast, stable and very seaworthy. It moves very quietly through the water and tracks and runs well. Its high gunnels make it a very dry boat, but more difficult to re-enter at sea. There is a special technique; learn and practice this manoeuvre prior to requiring it.

## Rowing Levels

There are three levels in the rowing fleet; these govern the use of boats and guest privileges.

### **Level I Skipper**

This is where you will be after an introductory lesson and five hours of coaching. You can row in good conditions and are not permitted guests. Experienced scullers can be checked out as Level I Skippers.

### **Level II Skipper**

Your experience allows you to row in more challenging conditions, and you can use a double scull with a guest.

### **Instructor**

You are an accomplished sculler and have led at least once Locarno introductory lesson in the current season. You and a guest can use single sculls.

Refer to the Training section to learn how to develop and supplement your sculling skills and move up through the levels.

## *Level 1 Skipper*

Skills:

### 1. Background

- ❑ Trip planning and outfitting
- ❑ Knowledge of local currents, tides, winds and hazards
- ❑ Rowing terminology
- ❑ Use of log books

### 2. Rigging and launching

- ❑ Unracking procedure
- ❑ Matching Oarmasters to boats
- ❑ Oarmaster check, adjustment and mounting
- ❑ Mounting and shipping sculls
- ❑ Use and care of dollies
- ❑ Beach launch

3. On water

- ❑ Touching
- ❑ Backing
- ❑ Close manoeuvres
- ❑ Use of automatic bailer
- ❑ Steady state row (10 minutes)
- ❑ Steady state row in small waves
- ❑ General level of comfort on water
- ❑ Re-entry from deep water ('ditch and recover')
- ❑ Swimming abilities – comfortable in deep water

4. Landing

- ❑ Beach Landing
- ❑ Cleaning and stowing boat and rigging

5. Other

- ❑ Five hours of practice with Level 2 Skipper or instructor

Privileges

- ❑ Use of singles in wind less than 7 knots/no whitecaps
- ❑ Use of doubles in #2 seat with Level 2 Skipper or experienced rower in bow

## **Level II Skipper**

### Skills

- ❑ Towing
- ❑ Exit and re-enter in waves
- ❑ Recover a swamped shell
- ❑ Take #1 seat in a double
- ❑ Lead a double exit and recover
- ❑ Rowing in 10+ knots
- ❑ Surfing
- ❑ Assisted with at least one Locarno Rowing 101 class

### Experience

- ❑ 20 hours of rowing in the logs

### Privileges

- ❑ Use of singles in wind of more than 7 knots
- ❑ Use of doubles in bow seat with new rower or guest in #2 seat
- ❑ Buddy rowing

## **Instructor**

### Skills

- ❑ Explain, demonstrate and teach sculling technique
- ❑ Explain, demonstrate and teach rigging, launching, landing
- ❑ Explain, demonstrate and teach capsized and recovery procedures
- ❑ Explain and teach club policy, procedures, safety considerations (contents of Locarno Rowers' Handbook)

### Experience

- ❑ Taught at least one Locarno Rowing 101 class in current season

### Privileges

- ❑ Use of singles with a guest
- ❑ Introducing new members to this great sport

## Use of Boats

### Locarno Policy

Members can take out rowing shells for up to 2 hours at a time, subject to the following:

Stay on shore until dawn; return before dark

New members must be accompanied by a buddy rower

Level 1 Skippers must stay on shore if there are whitecaps or if the wind exceeds 7 kts

Level 1 Skippers take out double shells with experienced rowers only

### Locarno Practices

Level 2 Skipper should stay on shore if wind > 20 kts

Know your capabilities and stay within your limits

The boat use policies and practices are in place primarily for the safety of the members. If you respect them, it is very likely that you and the craft will return without incident.

The two-hour policy is in place to help to ensure that no one gets stuck on shore on a beautiful day, not to limit your enjoyment. Use your judgement; don't plan your marathon rows for those hot, still days when everyone in the club will be visiting, and if you want to stay out longer, stop by the club first to see whether anyone is waiting for a boat. Remember too that the Echo's are in high demand – you may want to do your second lap in an Alden.

On those rare days when you cannot immediately get the boat that you want, check the log. You will be able to predict with some accuracy when you should be on the beach to intercept the returning rower.

You will be very popular indeed if you are ready to take over the craft as soon as it is beached, saving the returning member the need to land, clean and stow the equipment..

## Training

### *Beginner lessons*

Introductory rowing lessons begin shortly after the new member signup days. The training consists of an introductory lesson of approximately 4 hours in duration, and 5 hours of coaching. The course content is divided into four components; sculling technique, self-rescue, ocean travel and equipment care. Participants will start with dry-land practice, will move to the water and will be getting wet. Dress for the weather, bring a change of clothes, and consider a wetsuit if you have little tolerance for a short dip in cold water.

Upon successful completion of the lesson and 5 hours of coaching, you will be eligible for you Level 1 Skipper designation, allowing you to use the rowing fleet in calm conditions.

Prerequisites: Pre-reading material (Learn to Row Open Water Scullers' Guide and Locarno Rowing Members' Handbook) is provided on registration for lessons

Duration: 4 hours on a weekend, plus 5 hours by individual arrangement over several sessions

### *Checkouts*

Many of our new members join us from a competitive rowing background and want to maintain their skills and continue to enjoy the sport. If you are an experienced sculler and are comfortable on the water, we will arrange a checkout where we will assess your skills and practice self-rescue techniques. The successful candidates will earn their Level 1 skipper designation and the use of the rowing fleet. Contact [Rowing@clublocarno.com](mailto:Rowing@clublocarno.com) to arrange a checkout.

### *Advanced skills*

If you are interested in rowing in more challenging conditions or want to introduce others to the sport in one of the club's double shells, you must obtain your Level II Skipper designation. You will go out with an experienced coach in higher winds and seas to learn how to modify your technique to accommodate these challenging conditions. You will also be checked out in the bow seat of the double shell and will lead a double self-rescue.

Prerequisites: Level I Skipper designation and 20 hours of rowing in the club logbook

Before rowing the Hudson T6, you need to be familiar with its capabilities. The Hudson is a high-volume training shell which fast, seaworthy and a pleasure to row, but is 'sensitive to errors in technique' (i.e. it is not as forgiving as the rest of the fleet). It also has high gunwales compared to the other shells. We will give you instructions and check you out on the use of its self-rescue provisions.

Prerequisites: Level I Skipper designation

If you are interested in either of these options and have the prerequisites, contact [Rowing@clublocarno.com](mailto:Rowing@clublocarno.com) to arrange a checkout.

## ***Racing***

If you have two rowing shells travelling in roughly the same direction, you have a race. While the main focus of most of our members is recreational rowing, many of us keep an eye on the watch while rowing to the main lights and markers, and unofficial records are maintained. We have organized the occasional race in the past, and will make them a regular event if there is sufficient interest.

## What to Bring

### DoT regulations

Take approved PFD, bailer, heaving line, whistle
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### Locarno Policy

Wear your PFD
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Many rowers resist wearing a PFD, as they tend to be too warm in many conditions, can restrict movement and can sometimes interfere with the hands. In order to help rowing members to comply with Locarno policy, the club is investing in pouch-style inflatable PFD's that are ideal for rowing. They sit on the small of the back, are attached with a waist belt and are basically undetectable by the wearer. In the event that you and your craft are separated while at sea, these PFD's have the significant advantage of remaining with the rower rather than the boat. To put them into service, the rower slides the pouch around to the front and pulls the tab to inflate, then pulls it over the head. In a non-emergency situation, it they can be manually inflated as well.

Comfort comes at a cost, however; each time they are to be taken out, the vests must be folded and packed into the pouch, and each time they are returned they must be unpacked, rinsed in fresh water and hung to dry. If you have had opportunity to pull the cord, you will find that the CO2 cartridges are single use; each member is responsible for replacing the cartridges that they use.

There is a supply of bailers in the rowing shack, and you are encouraged to add to the collection any containers of the right shape and size.

Most members acquire a loud whistle and attach it to the lanyard that holds their membership card and key (as the latter two items should be with you at all times when you at Sailing Centre).

### Other items to consider

- a batten to hold open the bailer if you are rowing an Echo
- cell phone or VHF transceiver
- smoke or rocket flare
- signalling mirror
- water bottle
- energy bars or other snack food
- hat and extra clothing
- sunglasses and sunscreen
- short length of sturdy cord (to lash oars together or to make an emergency oarlock)
- A small waterproof kayak bag

## What to Wear

Locarno kayakers, sailors and windsurfers wear wetsuits. In each of these activities, there is a fair chance of capsizing, and a high likelihood of prolonged immersion once you are in. For open-water rowers, things are not so simple.

Rowing entails a great deal of motion, and a rower produces heat. For these reasons, rubber or neoprene clothing is usually too hot and restrictive. Exceptions to this are “fuzzy rubber,” (ultra light rubberized shirts) and stretch shorty suits, both of which can be useful below 10 degrees C or when the spray flies. The appeal of a wetsuit increases with the probability of capsizing, of course; if you are a new rower and still feeling unsteady, or if you are working on your heavy-weather technique, you may decide to trade off some comfort for the security of a wetsuit.

Most rowers dress roughly the same way as cyclists or Nordic skiers would dress in similar weather conditions, or one or two layers more than a runner would wear in similar conditions. Remember that it is usually colder on the water and that splash and spray can be a factor.

Some guidelines for dressing:

- Dress in layers
- Windproof/waterproof layer outside
- Avoid cotton
- Stretch is key – unrestricted arm and leg motion, stretch waistband
- Roll-up legs or shorts for launching
- Nothing too slippery for pants – spandex tights tend to slide off the seat
- Snug on top so your hands don't get snagged
- Nothing dangling or long in the back (gets caught in the track)
- Leave your rings at home – they will raise blisters very quickly

A warm hat (woollen or pile watch cap) is a very effective means of slowing heat loss, particularly if the rest of you is soaking wet.

Sailing or cycling gloves are often worn to ward off blisters, but avoid leather; it will stiffen and crack in our salt-water environment.

Many rowers wear neoprene shoes or booties, mainly for the launch and recovery. They will easily fit in the stretchers, and the feet will be warm and wet for the duration of the row. Another approach is to wear water sandals or old runners for the launch, and remove them once in the boat if they are incompatible with the stretchers (but they should be easy on/off). Bare feet are fine to row in, but may not withstand the barnacles and rocks exposed at lower tides.

## Where to Row

### *Local destinations and hazards*

The area immediately in front of the sailing centre can be chaos, particularly on a warm summer weekend. There can be literally dozens of other craft, many piloted by individuals still in the process of developing their particular skills. As you have the added challenge of travelling backward, it is best to exit this area as quickly as you can. Remember that a windsurfer, when startled, can and will drop their mast on you or your vessel.

The nemesis of local boaters is of course Spanish Bank. The bank begins in earnest at the west end of Locarno Beach and at low tide dry sand extends a remarkable distance out to what would normally be sea. The water can be very shallow even when the sand is covered, and the depth varies considerably with the wind speed and direction as well as with the tides. Take careful note of tide heights and timing when planning a trip to the west; if the water is expected to fall below 2.5 meters (8.1 feet) during your voyage, part of the bank get quite shallow and you begin to run the risk of grounding your oars on the sand. Below 2 meters of water you will begin to see drying on the bank and will at least know for certain where you cannot row. Beware – the bank does not slope entirely evenly; this feature results in shallows and sandbanks appearing in unexpected places, often quite far from the tide line.

Consider setting a course that takes you to the north of the three dolphins that mark the bank; Spanish Bank Anchorage East, Spanish Bank and Spanish Bank No.2 (the 'third mark'). Popular turn-around points are the Third Mark (about 2 ½ nautical miles or 4.5 km), Q62 (the red bell buoy also known as the Point Grey Bell Buoy, 3 nautical miles or 5.5 km) and Wreck Beach (a long way – between 7 and 9 km, depending on the tide height). All of these routes are exposed to the Strait, and can be rough and windy – ensure that you know what conditions can be expected and plan your trip accordingly.

East of the RVYC to Kits beach is good rowing that can be more sheltered than other waters. Pay attention to the tide height if you are close to shore however; there are drying rocks a considerable distance out from the beach at high tide, especially for the first 200 meters east of the Royal Vancouver Yacht Club, and also immediately off Kitsilano Point (a.k.a. Kits Point).

The red buoy Q52 and its green companion Q41 mark the entrance to False Creek. This is a popular rowing destination that can be reached in 20 minutes by a fast rower, and is about 2 nautical miles (3.7 km) from the club. Stay alert – boat traffic at the mouth of False Creek can be heavy.

If you are interested in a marathon row, consider continuing into False Creek. The scenery and the flat water make it a sensational trip, but the boat traffic can be extremely heavy – avoid this area altogether on summer weekends unless you get a very early start. The trip from Q52 to Science World is about 2 nautical miles (4 km).

If you are looking for rough water to hone your skills, look no further. Two of the roughest areas in the southern part of English Bay are just north and west of the 'crab

dock' (Jericho Pier) and next to the RVYC breakwater. In both cases, these structures reflect the waves that strike them, and they force the flood tides to move out and around them, creating chaotic and unpredictable conditions even when all around is fairly quiet. When the wind is blowing from the west, conditions can also be quite rough along Kits beach and at the mouth of False Creek, where the waves tend to pile up as the water becomes shallow.

Seas often increase as the rower nears the west end of Spanish Bank, as exposure to the Strait of Georgia increases.

Plan your trip with the wind and tide in mind. It is usually preferable to get the hard work done on the way out, and have the wind/waves/tide working with you on the return journey when you are tired. While the tides can run up to two knots along the shore, the wind and waves can have a much greater impact on the rower. As these can change during the trip, it is important to be familiar with the forecast.

You will find that travel is easiest when you are moving either directly into the waves or directly away, and increasingly difficult as you take the waves more on the beams. Taking waves sideways will start to roll the shell, making it more difficult to achieve the correct oar depth on the drive and blade height on the return. You will also find that waves striking on an angle will tend to push on the stern, turning the shell into the waves/wind. This can be particularly problematic when surfing big waves, as you will first be turned broadside to the weather.

As a result of these factors, your choice of rowing destinations on any given day will be heavily influenced by the wind speed and direction, and by the tides.

## Other Preparation

It is wise to regard a trip on the ocean in the same manner as a hike in the North Shore mountains. In both cases, you are travelling into the wilderness, from an area that is organized, well-travelled and patrolled into one that is not. In both cases, you should:

- Know what conditions to expect, and prepare for them,
- Bring what you will need, and a bit extra,
- Know your limits, and stay within them,
- Tell someone where you are going, when to expect you back and what to do if you don't return as planned,
- Turn back, if in doubt – you can always return in more favourable conditions.

## Use of Log Books

### Locarno Policy

Log out before leaving shore

### Locarno Practices

Log your intended destination/direction/route

Note the winds and tides in the log

The accurate use of logbooks is important for the safety of the rowers and for the management of the fleet. It is also your training record, and the record of your volunteer instructor hours.

Each boat must be logged out before leaving shore. The convention is to enter the time at which you expect to be on the water; times should be on the 24 hour clock, and your name should be printed so that it is legible.

Consider also leaving some details of your planned route since unless you made other arrangements, this is the best clue to your whereabouts should you not make it back when planned.

New members must also note the wind speed and direction and the tide height and tendency. These are critical to the planning of a safe journey, and no one knows that you checked unless you log them. This information is all available by the JSCA office.

## Launching

Much of the wear and tear and damage sustained by the Club's fleet is incurred between the rack and the water. Most of this can be easily avoided by following good practices and treating the equipment as though it were borrowed from a friend (which is basically the case).

### *Unracking the boats*

A good practice is to take boats from the lower levels first. That way, the next person can "walk the boat from one level to another," which is easy to do, even unassisted, by moving one end at a time.

Position the dolly so that the sling is even with the arm of the rack that is supporting the bow. The bow can usually be lifted from the rack and set onto the sling while the stern remains on the rack. Keep a hand on the boat while you move to the stern, lift and flip the boat and position the stern at the end of the dolly.

If the boat is on a high rack, lift it all at once or get some help (there is usually someone around).

Insert and lightly tighten the drain plugs at the bow (all) and stern (Aldens). Close the automatic bailer.

The shell will be sitting on the dolly with the stern nearest the handle and the bow on the sling. Push rather than pull the dolly (bow first) and you will have a much better chance of avoiding collisions).

### *Selecting an Oarmaster*

There are two general configurations of Oarmasters. The easiest way of telling them apart is to look at the seats; an Oarmaster III has a white seat, and an Oarmaster II does not. The III has a slightly higher seat and the pins are closer to the bow, favouring a larger rower. They have a variety of footstretchers, the selection of which is largely a matter of personal preference.

Note that the Oarmaster II models have been modified so that they will now work in any shell.

The Hudson will need its seat installed; it slides onto the end of the track so that the retaining clips ride under it, and the cutaway on the seat faces the bow. Ensure that the Hudson's airbags are fully inflated before going out; they can usually be topped off with a few breaths.

The Echo of course is completely rigged as it comes off the rack.

### *Oarmaster check, adjustment and mounting*

Before mounting the Oarmaster in the shell, ensure that all bolts are tight (there are allen keys in the desk if required) and that the oarlocks and slide move smoothly. Note that the anchor sleeves that are used to fasten the Oarmaster into the shell are meant to have some

play – please do not tighten these). Rinse with fresh water if there are problems, and take a different rig if this does not solve the problem. Please flag any damaged equipment with the orange tape in the desk. This is also the right time to adjust the foot stretchers to the proper position for you.

All of the oarlocks in our fleet are currently set up in the same manner. The starboard is set two spacers higher than the port (to accommodate left over right) and the pitch is set to 5 degrees. The height of all oarlocks should also be roughly the same. If you find that you need different settings, please contact the fleet captain or director of rowing.

## ***Mounting and shipping sculls***

Mount the oars, close the oarlocks and tighten the thumbscrews until they stop – they need to be snug, not tight. Rest the handles in the coaming on the bow of the Aldens, or under the shock cords on the bow of the Echo. This the right time to double check the mounting of the oars; the hollow face of the blade should be toward the stern when the large side is down, and the oars should both be on the inside of the oarlock pins. This is important: the boat will be very difficult to row if the oars are outside the pins, and there is a good chance that you will break the plastic oarlocks.

## ***Dolly etiquette***

If you had to get a dolly from the beach, it means that someone is out rowing; dolly etiquette requires that you return it to the beach as quickly as possible, so that the returning rower is not required to beach their boat while they search for a dolly.

## ***Beach launch***

### **Locarno Practices**

Boat and equipment touch nothing but water (not always possible, but try your best)
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Roll the boat to the water bow first, down the sand (never the asphalt ramps!), remembering that you have a much wider load with oars in place, and keep the handle low to avoid grounding the bow. Stop when the tires first touch water; pick up the stern and slide the boat off the dolly bow first until it floats. The less time the wheels of the dolly spend in the ocean, the longer they will last – try to avoid floating the dolly.

Ideally, none of the equipment will touch anything other than water. An experienced rower will not let the sculls (handles or blades) touch the ground or the bottom, and will let the shell float a meter from shore while the dolly is parked or fetched (barnacle-encrusted rocks exposed at low tide are particularly hard on the gelcoat). When it is necessary to briefly beach a boat, avoid dragging it onto the shore; lift the stern high and float the shell ashore until the bow almost grounds, then place the boat on the sand. Under no circumstances should you leave it where it is being battered by waves, even for a moment.

When you have launched your boat, leave the dolly on the beach, beyond reach of the tide (if in doubt, leave it above the high tide line)

## On the Water

### *Rules of the water*

It is every member's responsibility to know and observe the rules of the road when on or near the water. Here are some key rules that every Jericho member must know and practice. These have been abridged for the benefit of rowers; the complete list is available on the Jericho web site.

- You, and only you, are responsible for your safety on the water. Get all the safety knowledge you can and use it.
- Always wear your P.F.D. on the water.
- Sail powered craft have the right of way over power craft, paddle and ***rowing powered craft***.
- All non-commercial vessels shall keep well clear of commercial vessels.
- It is illegal and extremely dangerous to pass between a tug and its tow.
- The area south of the orange can buoys is for training or transiting only.
- Stay well clear of groups of beginners.
- Stay well clear of the end of the Jericho Pier as fishers cast lines as far as possible
- Be cautious of pathway traffic when launching/retrieving.
- Do not leave your craft on the shoreline for extended periods of time.
- Beware of underwater hazards on the sea bottom between ramps 3 and 4.

In False Creek, always keep to the right side, coming and going; i.e., rowers keep their **LEFT HAND CLOSER TO SHORE**. Avoid mid-channel, which yachts and tugs like to travel.

### *Steady state rowing*

Once you are warmed up and underway, set the boat on the desired course, then pick a navigation point directly behind you. If you continue to keep this point behind you, you will remain (more or less) on course, until the effect of the wind, the waves and the tides push you sideways far enough to require a correction. Note that if you select two points, one far behind the other, and keep them lined up, you will track dead straight.

Navigation does not require that you look over your shoulder, but safety does. You should be continually checking over both sides, watching for logs, for other vessels and occasionally checking your position relative to the shore and other solid objects (rocks, sandbars, buoys and lights, docks, etc.). Competitive rowers will usually turn during the drive when the boat is steadiest. This must be a quick glance, as you should be sitting straight again before the finish if you are to retain your balance. An open water sculler has the luxury of time; it is often easier to pause briefly with the blades feathered, take a good look over one or both shoulders, and then resume. Your ability to judge the

distance to approaching logs, boats and other hazards will be enhanced considerably if you can look ahead with both eyes at once.

Frequent rowers may want to consider buying a sculler's mirror from POTOMAC ROWING, a mail-order store in Michigan that specializes in rowing gear--call 1-800-444-3333. Bear in mind that the mirror will alert you to approaching boats and the shore, but will not always allow you to see deadheads (usually logs). There is no substitute for a regular look over your shoulder, and if done on both sides it will help you to develop excellent upper back and neck flexibility.

### ***Use of automatic bailer***

At the first sign of water splashing into your boat, you should pause briefly and open the automatic bailer. Several of the shells have very free-moving bailers; the movement of the boat through the water will push them shut, rendering them ineffective. This is why you brought along the batten; once the bailer is open, slide the batten over the bailer and the catch, and it will stay put.

Try to remember to close the bailer when you are landing, and each time that you stop for a break, as the bailer tends to work in reverse once your speed drops below about 2 kts (i.e. the boat will start filling with water).

## Potential Problems

### *Rain and cold*

Rowers have many ways to describe wind and waves, but no words for rain or cold. If you are properly dressed and prepared for the conditions, you can row all year round, rain or shine, and enjoy each and every day.

Bear in mind that the water temperature is considerably lower in the winter, and the combination of cold, wet clothing and low air temperature will make it difficult to stay warm if you have capsized. Plan your journeys accordingly.

### *Fog*

Fog is to be avoided by rowers. In addition to presenting the same general difficulties as it does to other boaters, it offers a special challenge to the sculler; when objects suddenly appear out of the fog they appear behind rather than ahead, and it will only be through good fortune that you happen to be looking over your shoulder when they do. If there is even a hint of fog when you are heading out, take a compass (there is one in the table in the shack if you didn't bring your own) and pay close attention to the changing conditions. If you are not adept at using a compass or have any second thoughts, choose that day to do wash one of the shells, and row another day.

### *Powerboats*

The most serious hazard facing a sculler on English Bay is being run over by a fast moving power boat or sailboat steered by an inattentive or sun-blinded skipper. If a power boat, or any vessel, is heading toward you, watch her course. If she is coming straight on, change your course to one 90 degrees from hers. If the threatening vessel is a sailboat under sail, consider where she will go if she changes tack. Most sailboat skippers underestimate the speed of a rowing shell, thinking that we are proceeding at kayak speed.

### *Unable to row back to shore?*

The techniques for self-rescue are covered in the Open Water Scullers' Guide, and practiced in training and check-outs. You should be confident in your ability to get back into the boat and be rowing again quickly in the event of a capsize. This is a prerequisite to taking out boats without a buddy rower.

**INTERNATIONAL DISTRESS SIGNAL**

Both arms outstretched and raised and lowered from 1 o'clock to 5 o'clock and 7 o'clock to 11 o'clock. This means, "I need help". This is an international distress signal and should be given from as high as possible on the boat (recognizing that your options in a rowing shell are limited).

To attract attention - lacking a flare or signalling mirror or smoke bomb - nothing attracts attention like detaching one of the blades from the oarlock and swinging it high over your head. However, before resorting to that de-stabilizing trick of waving an oar, try simply sitting in the shell and, after tying the oar handles together, waving both arms above your head, waving SLOWLY & STEADILY, whenever another boat comes into view.

If you are unable to attract any help, and cannot safely return to shore, you will be glad that you packed a radio or cell phone. You have two options:

**Jericho Rescue****604 224-4177****VHF 80A**

Jericho Rescue is a volunteer service operated by the Jericho Sailing Centre Association. They operate between May 1 and September 30 subject to the availability of volunteers and apparent need for their services (i.e. they may shut down for the day when there is little or no activity at the Centre). They are very helpful, and will make every effort to bring home club and private boats along with members. Do not assume that they will be on duty however, unless you have checked before your departure. This is an emergency service, and should be used as such.

**Vancouver Coast Guard****Cellular \*16****VHF 16**

Vancouver Coast Guard is a professional service concerned with boat safety and risk to life and limb. They will respond quickly to calls, but may choose not to recover the boats. They represent an effective solution for serious problems.

Locarno does have a rescue boat, but its main purpose is to be used as a safety boat during club races and regattas, when the club is responsible for the well-being of the participants. There is little chance that it will be on the water when you need help outside these events.

A final word on water safety and the hazards of sculling: if you ever find yourself in a damaged or disabled boat, or swimming beside your rowing shell and unable to re-enter it for any reason, **STAY WITH THE BOAT**. Do not leave the boat; do not try to swim to shore. The cold water will sap your energy surprisingly quickly. A big boat will be easier to see than your little head bobbing alone in the big ocean.

## Returning

### *Beach Landing*

Landing is the opposite procedure to launching. Once you have picked a suitable spot (sheltered and relatively rock-free) spin the shell and slowly back toward shore until you can step out. Ship the sculls, gently beach the shell if conditions prevent you from leaving it afloat, and retrieve the dolly conveniently left above the tide line. Roll it down until the tires touch water, then pick up the stern of the shell and pull it over the sling and up to the handle of the dolly. Most rowers find it easiest to pull rather than push up the slope of the beach, and there is a reduced opportunity to ground the bow. Remember to turn it around at the top and head into the compound bow first.

### *Cleaning and stowing boat and rigging*

#### **Locarno Policy**

Log in upon return  
 Rinse and clean the equipment  
 Log any incidents or equipment damage  
 Repair any damage if you have the skills  
 Tie flagging tape to any damage which you cannot repair  
 Log damage on the notice board, and notify [rowing@clublocarno.com](mailto:rowing@clublocarno.com)

#### **Locarno Practices**

Boats touch nothing but water  
 Log any interesting observations or achievements

Everything that you took with you must be thoroughly rinsed with fresh water to prolong the life of the equipment and keep it functioning well. Pay particular attention to all moving parts; the oarlocks, the wheels on the sliding seats and the bailers – they must all be clear of sand and salt water.

Loosen all of the fasteners that secure the adjustable footstretchers, to ensure that the next rower will not find them stuck or seized.

Once the Oarmaster is cleaned and has been stowed in the shed, place the shell on the stretchers (bow stretcher ahead of the coaming) and flip upside down. In this position, you can remove all of the sand from the cockpit, and can wipe down the hull to remove oil and other stains. The cockpit is easily cleared of water by lifting the bow. Open the drain plugs and lift each end in turn to drain any water from the buoyancy chambers. Return it to the upright position and replace it on the dolly bow first. Close the bailer.

The riggers on the Echo should be folded into the boat, taking care not to catch the oarlocks on the seat. Fasten the retaining strap around the riggers but DO NOT

TIGHTEN; this strap serves only to keep the riggers from falling open at an inopportune moment, and loose works just fine.

The seat from the Hudson must be returned to the shed, and the flotation bags must be deflated; hold the valves open until they stop hissing on their own – no need to squeeze.

Unless the shell must be placed on a high rack, you will be able to put it up single-handed; the procedure is basically the reverse of unracking. Position the sling of the dolly next to the rack that the bow will go on, then slide the shell toward you until the coaming clears the sling. You can now flip the shell upside down on the dolly and place the stern onto the rack. Keep a hand on the shell as you walk to the bow and then lift the bow onto the rack. If you rest the Aldens on the coaming you will avoid getting scratches on the deck, but they MUST sit 4" from the bow end (at the mark) or the coamings will crack. If you cannot do this, set them on the deck. The Echo should sit with the stern rack just behind the foot stretchers. Last, ensure that the drain plugs are still open.

When hanging the oars, try to avoid touching the rubber handle covers on anything. Small scratches will eventually become large tears, and there will raise blisters.

If you have used an inflatable PFD, it must be unpacked, hung on the cable and locked. If there is any trace of water on it, you should rinse it in fresh water before storing it. If you have used the cartridge, this would be the time to replace it.

While you are logging back in, check the log to see whether there are rowers still out on the water. If so, return the dolly to the beach when you are finished using it (see dolly etiquette above).

The logbook is the most effective means of communicating with your fellow rowers. Log anything of interest; time to destination, conditions, sightings – anything that you believe others should know.

Any damage must be noted in addition to being flagged. Please put it in the log, and on the white board as well.

If you have been out doing buddy rowing or a checkout, please note this next to the entry of your trainee, so you will be credited for the volunteer hours and they for the achievement.

A little bit of maintenance goes a long way. If every rower does something each time they return a shell, our fleet will continue to be in top condition and will last longer.

Things that you could do:

- While a shell is upside down in the stretchers, use a bit of boat wax/cleaner (in the shed), a rag, and lots of elbow grease to restore a hull to its original colour
- Replace missing cords on drain plugs
- Tighten loose bolts on the Oarmasters (all except the anchor sleeves used to fasten the Oarmaster into the shell – these are meant to have some play)
- Sweep sand from the shed
- Hang up anything that has fallen
- Rinse anything that is dirty or salt-stained

Any other suggestions for maintenance are more than welcome – drop a note to [rowing@clublocarno.com](mailto:rowing@clublocarno.com) with your ideas, and please get in touch prior to undertaking any major work or making significant changes to the equipment.

## ***Locking and leaving***

### **Jericho Practice**

Relock the gate after dusk if you found it locked
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## Maintenance and Volunteering

Locarno is run, supported and operated entirely by the volunteer efforts of its members. Somehow each year, everything gets done and we all get along. Here are some of the behaviours that help make this happen.

### *Stewardship*

- Treat boats like your own
- Do a dummy check
- Pick up after others
- Help others (to remember good practices)
- Lock the doors
- Protect our combinations

### *Care and repair*

- This isn't Club Med
- Clean it, stow it, better than you found it
- Fix it yourself if you are able
- Flag and report it if you are not
- Don't use it if it is already broken

### *Guests*

- Know your limits; manage the risk
- Respect fleet rules
- Watch the wind
- Keep bringing fresh faces

### *Volunteering*

- Everyone donates four hours
- Some donate a lot more
- Those with official responsibilities enjoy a member that is sponsored in full or in part

# Checklists

Under development

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Vancouver  
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