



2021-2022

Athlete & Parent Handbook

**Toffey Rowing Center
310 Acacia Road
Vero Beach, FL 32963
(772) 261-0747**

www.verobeachrowing.org

Fall Season Dates: Aug 23 - Dec 18 (HS V)
Aug 28 - Dec 18 (HS N)
Sep 7 - Dec 18 (MS)

Spring Season Dates: Jan 3 - May 16 (HS)
Jan 3 - Apr. 29 (MS)

VBR Registration Deadline: First day of Season

Physicals Deadline: One week after start of season

VBR Payment Deadline: Two weeks after start of season

People to know:

Paul Mokha	Director of Rowing/Boys Varsity	dor@verobeachrowing.org
Brian Colgan	Immediate Past Director of Rowing	brianecolgan@gmail.com
Julio Sanchez	Girls Varsity/Community Outreach	julio.sanchez@verobeachrowing.org
Heidi Sutherland	Novice Coach	heidiwsutherland@yahoo.com
Mack Hiden	Novice/Middle School	danhiden@gmail.com
Todd Young	Middle School	sddlbrk@bellsouth.net

Practice Times:

High School Varsity	Monday thru Friday (Wed off) 4:00pm-6:30pm Saturday: 8:00am-10:30am
High School Novice	Monday thru Friday (Thurs off) 4:00pm-6:00pm, Saturday: 8:30am-10:45am
Middle School	Tues/Thurs OR Wed/Fri 4:00pm-6:00pm

HS Parents: Please do your best to schedule doctors' appointments on your day off to minimize disruption. In the event of a weather delay or cancellation you will be notified via Team Snap Alerts.

Vero Beach Rowing is thrilled to welcome you to the 2021-2022 Junior Rowing program! We are looking forward to a great season of rowing and racing. Please be sure to read this document thoroughly and click the check box on the Regatta Central link.

Steps to complete Junior Rowing registration:

1. Thoroughly read this document as we have made some changes for the new season
2. Sign in to Regatta Central and complete the registration information [here](#).
3. A first payment installment plan can be completed [here](#).
4. A scholarship application and description can be found [here](#). Please complete by the due date.
5. If you need to pay by cash or check, contact the Director of Rowing.
6. You will be asked to read and complete our liability waiver, COVID-19 waiver, swim attestation, and handbook agreement when you register.
7. Sign up on the TEAM SNAP communication application, be sure to update birth date, school and grade information. If you haven't gotten an invite, please contact Beth Bonvie at bethbonvie@gmail.com.
8. Provide the coaches with your most recent and up to date physical information on or before the first day of the season. (We will allow a one-week grace period as we know doctors' offices have been busy these last few weeks)

Athlete Code of Conduct

Rowers have a tradition of excellence on and off the water. We expect all our athletes to uphold this tradition, not only here at the boathouse, but also in school and at home. We know this is a rigorous sport and that the training and competition can be mentally and physically taxing. We also know the rewards and positive by-products of this hard work and training. You must trust that upon completing a season like this, you will be a better, stronger, happier person than the day you began. Anything worth doing is worth doing well.

We, the coaches, are here to help you learn the best ways to maximize your training, competitive success, studies, and peer to peer interactions. We, the coaches, are willing to do whatever it takes to help you succeed. If you, the athlete, ever need clarification about technical feedback, workouts, or selections, please feel free to ask us for some extra time.

To best support you in this endeavor, we need all athletes to hold themselves to certain standards of decency, excellence, and commitment. Below, you will find our Code of Conduct. Any violations of the Code of Conduct shall be dealt with in the following order of warning and review. **First**, a verbal warning from coach to athlete. **Second**, a written warning from coach to athlete, and a conversation with a parent(s). **Third**, an official write up and conversation with both the athlete and a parent(s) followed by a suspension from training and competition for at least one competitive season (fall, spring, or summer) without refund.

This policy may be subject to change dependent upon the infraction. The Code of Conduct includes the following:

- I. **Bullying**
"Bullying" includes, but is not limited to, the following behavior:

- a. Cliques behavior (non-inclusive team behavior or speech).
- b. Rude comments or actions from one teammate to another.
- c. Rumor-milling, gossiping, or negative comments about teammates, coaches, parents, volunteers, workouts, or results.

II. **NO DRUGS, TOBACCO/VAPING, OR ALCOHOL**

- a. At home, team functions/regattas, or any other venues. As well as it being illegal, it is also tremendously detrimental to your training and growth. **Any student-athlete in possession of or using will be immediately suspended with the possibility of being dismissed from the team.**

III. **“Hands Off”**

- a. In accordance with Indian River Public Schools, we expect that all athletes refrain from inappropriate physical contact of any kind. This includes the following behavior or contact: public displays of affection, massaging, fighting, and any other contact deemed inappropriate by the coaching staff.

IV. **Social media**

- a. Social media is frequently used by all of our athletes, parents, and members. It is a forward facing, very public representation of our club, our teammates, and the larger VBR family. All official club social media accounts will be run from within the employment structure of the organization unless indicated otherwise by the Director of Rowing.
- b. For personal social media accounts:
 - i. Athletes may not “block” one another or use social media to bully or exclude. Teammates are teammates no matter what.
 - ii. Athletes may not otherwise use their social media to put VBR in a negative light.

V. **Attendance**

Rowing is a big commitment of time, energy, and money. It is imperative that all rowers and parents take this commitment seriously. Absences (defined as non-emergency and no prior coach notification) are never acceptable. Absences are, however, inevitable, and sometimes necessary. It is important to understand that rowing is a sport in which boats require certain numbers to be able to train. If the coach cannot adequately prepare for the absenteeism, it may affect other athletes and their ability to train effectively. Therefore, it is imperative that you notify your coach via Team Snap or text as far in advance as possible if you need to miss a practice or need to arrive late.

NOTE: High School Spring Break two-a-day workout attendance is mandatory for all athletes to increase their fitness and finalize crew selections for the championship regattas. Do not plan Spring Break family vacations!

VI. **Practice Uniform**

- a. Members of the Vero Beach Rowing team will always wear at least a tank top and spandex shorts. No shirtless rowing for the guys, no “sports bra only” rowing for the girls.

- b. Varsity Boys and Varsity Girls are required to wear spandex shorts whenever they are in the boat. Tennis/basketball shorts are not allowed on the water or the erg. Novice rowers can discuss this with their coaches.
- c. Stocking feet (socks) are not permitted while carrying equipment to or from the dock. Laundry baskets will be provided to safely store shoes while we row.
- d. Hats/Visors and sunglasses are highly recommended to reduce eye strain and cumulative damage.
- e. Disposable water/Gatorade etc. bottles are banned from Vero Beach Rowing premises. **Only re-usable water bottles are allowed, with socks or other soft padding around them to prevent scraping boat cockpits and causing equipment damage.** We rely on the health and beauty of our Intercoastal Waterway and plastic trash is not only a nuisance but is dangerous to wildlife.

VII. **Parking/Pick Up**

- a. To those of you who drive your own vehicle, there is no returning to vehicles after you have arrived at practice.
- b. Rowers are to park in the boathouse or boatyard parking lot.
- c. All parents should plan of picking up their athletes in the boathouse parking lot rather than directly in front of the boatyard gate on the street as we have received complaints about blocking the street.

VIII. **Communication**

- a. If you or your teammates are running late, send a text or phone call to your coach.
- b. In the event of an emergency, or if you or a teammate are in any kind of danger, phone calls are permitted.
- c. **Call your coach directly if you need to cancel your attendance on the day of practice.**
- d. All meetings outside of normal practice time will include at least two coaches.

IX. **Regattas**

- a. Only family members and fellow VBR team members are allowed under our tent at regattas. Members of other teams, significant others, or visiting friends can meet you in public areas around the regatta.
- b. While under the tent, be respectful of your teammates who want to rest.

X. **Workout Completion**

- a. Failure to complete a workout because of an injury must be followed by a doctor's visit and clearance before you are allowed to return to normal practice.
- b. Failure to complete a land/erg workout will prevent you from being boated until that workout is completed.

Parent Code of Conduct

We have an incredible group of parents on this team who support and encourage their kids to be the very best they can be. We also have a strong core of coaches who are prepared to handle the day-to-day operations and the necessary training required to provide your children with the safest and most rewarding experience on and off the water. Our partnership, then, is imperative for their success.

It is vital that we trust each other's ability to help these student-athletes become their best selves. This year's training may be an adjustment for some of them. They will have tough days now and again. They may even have a tough week or two during championships or selections. It is our collective responsibility to support them, listen to their concerns, but also to remind them that **not every rower gets every seat or every medal every day**, no matter their seniority. The primary responsibility of each athlete is to try their best and to support their teammates, so we ask that you help support that mindset first and foremost.

I. **Communication**

- a. Initial concerns should be brought up with your athlete's direct coach.*
- b. Concerns regarding the conduct or safety of your athlete's direct coach should be brought up with the Director of Rowing.
- c. The Board of Directors agrees that any and all matters should first be discussed with the Director of Rowing. They will direct you to communicate with the Director before any other escalation is allowed.
- d. All parent/coach communication should occur either via email, or through the "Team Snap" application unless it pertains directly to official club matters including but not limited to chaperoning, fundraising, event planning, recruitment questions, etc.
- e. **In the event of an emergency, ALWAYS feel free to contact your athlete's coach via personal phone.**

*Direct Coach denotes the specific coach for your rowing category: Novice Girls, Novice Boys, Varsity Girls, Varsity Boys, and Middle School.

II. **Positivity**

As role models, it is important that we all must model positive behavior for our athletes and children. As a result, please adhere to the following guidelines at practice and/or regattas.

- a. Rumor-milling, gossiping, or negative comments about teammates, coaches, other parents, volunteers, workouts, or results will not be tolerated.
- b. In the event that we need to address these concerns, coach will ask any involved parties to sit down to discuss their concerns.

III. **Parents at Practice/Regattas**

Please think of our practices and regattas like any other athletic practice or competition. Please let the kids practice, play, and learn how to develop communication skills and healthy peer-peer relationships. This is their time to be an athlete.

- a. Parent are asked to stay clear of the boat bays, dock and fitness areas during practice time.
- b. No parents are permitted within the "athlete section" at regattas.
- c. Parents may not negatively affect athlete performance by sequestering, prioritizing, or isolating their athlete during a practice or competition.

IV. **Parent Volunteer Requirements**

We cannot be successful without the amazing, continued support of our wonderful parent volunteers. To spread the work out more evenly, we have the following mandatory requirement:

- a. Like the Indian River County School District, all parents are expected to volunteer. **Every athlete's parent group must volunteer at least 20 hours for the whole year (Fall and Spring combined).** If you are unable to make this commitment, please contact the Director of Rowing to determine the best course of action. Failure to complete these volunteer hours may result in a suspension of rowing for your athlete.
- b. Volunteer Opportunities include but are not limited to:
 - i. Regatta prep/planning
 - ii. Hospitality support (MOST IMPORTANT)
 - iii. Administrative support/planning
 - iv. Chaperoning at over-night regattas
 - v. Fundraising planning/execution
 - vi. Event planning/execution
- c. Chaperoning Details – We need vetted Chaperones for our away regattas for when the team is not actively competing or practicing. Vetting includes a Background Check and completing the free on-line USRowing Safesport training. Interested parties please contact the Director of Rowing.

V. **Review and Warning**

If we encounter problems with conduct from a parent or group of parents, we will request a meeting between all coaches and parents involved. If the situation persists, the parent and athlete may be suspended from training or completion.

Athlete Transportation Policy

- Athletes are not permitted to drive themselves to any activity that takes place outside of Indian River County.
- Parents are responsible for arranging travel to and from events for their own athlete.
- Coaches are not allowed to drive athletes to any event or practice.
- Athletes are expected to remain with the team throughout the entire regatta or event unless special arrangements have been made in writing prior to the event or regatta.
- No student-athlete is permitted to leave a regatta until the boat trailer loading has been completed.

Sickness and Injuries

- In the event of sickness, athletes must remain away from practice until symptoms subside.
- Please report all injuries to a coach immediately so that we may try to get you the appropriate treatment as quickly as possible. If an athlete is unable to complete workouts as assigned due to pain or injury, they will NOT be permitted to return to practice until they have clearance to return from a doctor. We want to be very careful about not furthering any pain or discomfort.

Fundraising

Fundraising is a necessary part of keeping our program running. All team members will be required to participate in team fundraisers in order to be eligible to compete. This year's fundraisers will include the following:

1. Erg-a-Thon: 3/4-person teams rowing an erg marathon (42,195 meters) (Oct 16th)
2. Chick-Fil-A fundraiser (TBD)
3. Applebee Flap Jack Fundraiser (TBD)
4. Chipotle fundraiser (Date TBD)
5. Car Washes (TBD)
6. Boat Washes (TBD)

Regatta Dates (subject to change)*

Fall

Oct. 9	East Coast Classic (varsity only)	Fellsmere, FL.
Oct. 30	Halloween Head Race (Full HS team)	Tampa Bypass Canal
Nov. 13	Head of the South (Varsity only, tentative)	Augusta, GA
Dec. 4	Middle School Race	Fellsmere, FL

Spring

Feb	Southern Sprints Erg race (virtual)	Boathouse
Feb. 25	Sarasota Invitational	Sarasota, FL
March 12	OARS Junior Invitational	Orlando, FL
April 2	FSRA East District Championship	Fellsmere, FL
April	FSRA Sculling States	Sarasota, FL
April	FSRA Sweep States	Sarasota, FL
May	US Rowing Southeast Regional Championships	TBD
June	Youth Nationals (SE Regional medalists)	TBD

Important Dates

August 13, 2021	Returning Rowers & Parents Meeting
August 16	First day Varsity HS Rowing
August 21	Learn To Row Day
August 28	First day Novice HS Rowing
September 6	Labor Day; No School/No Practice
September 7	First day MS Rowing
September 11	New Parent Fall Orientation Meeting
November 22 – 26	Thanksgiving Week; No School/ Practices Monday & Tuesday
December 20	Winter Break begins- No Practice
January 3, 2022	First day Spring HS Rowing
January 4	First day Spring MS Rowing
March 7 - 11	St. Ed's Spring Break

March 21 - 25

Indian River County Schools & Master's Academy Spring Break
Spring TRAINING Week, ATTENDANCE REQUIRED

*** We will add dates of all events and regattas to Team Snap as they become more solid on the calendar.**

NOTE: High School Spring Break practice attendance is mandatory for all athletes who want to compete at the State Championship regattas. Do not plan Spring Break family vacations!