



## 2023-2024 Athlete & Parent Handbook

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

[www.verobeachrowing.org](http://www.verobeachrowing.org)

**Fall Season Dates:** High School Varsity August 14. 2023 - Dec. 15. 2023  
HS Freshmen/Novice August 21. 2023 - Dec. 15. 2023  
Middle School August 28. 2023 - Dec. 07. 2023

**Spring Registration Deadline:** December 29. 2023

**Spring Season Dates:** High School January 8. 2024 - April 28. 2024  
Middle School January 8. 2024 - March 30. 2024

**Physicals Deadline:** Fall Season September 11. 2023  
Spring Season January 22. 2024

**VBR Payment Deadline:** Returning Rowers August 14. 2023  
New Rowers (Fall) September 4. 2023  
Returning Rowers January 8. 2024  
New Rowers (Spring) January 22. 2024

### **People to Know:**

Julio Sanchez	Head Coach	<a href="mailto:julio.sanchez@verobeachrowing.org">julio.sanchez@verobeachrowing.org</a>
Madison Waddle	Coach	<a href="mailto:madison.waddle@verobeachrowing.org">madison.waddle@verobeachrowing.org</a>
Mack Hiden	Coach	<a href="mailto:mack.hiden@verobeachrowing.org">mack.hiden@verobeachrowing.org</a>
Shaian Coughlin	Boathouse Manager	<a href="mailto:boathouse.manager@verobeachrowing.org">boathouse.manager@verobeachrowing.org</a>

### **Practice Times:**

High School Varsity	Mon-Fri: 3:30-6pm, Sat: 8:00-10:30am
High School Freshman / Novice	Mon-Fri: 4-6:30pm, Sat: 8:00-10:30am
Middle School	Mon-Thursday: 5-6:30pm

To minimize disruption, we ask that you please do your best to schedule doctors' appointments outside of scheduled practices. In the event of a weather delay or cancellation you will be notified via Boathouse Connect.

## Vero Beach Rowing

Vero Beach Rowing is thrilled to welcome you to the 2023-2024 Junior Rowing program! We are on a mission to promote and teach the sport of rowing to the community in order to develop physical fitness, personal character, and an ethic of cooperation through competitive and recreational opportunities. As we look forward to a safe and meaningful season of rowing and racing, we're providing this Athlete Code of Conduct to serve as a standard and expectation of behavior reflective of our organization's values and ethics.

### 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 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). This may result in 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:

### Bullying

"Bullying" includes, but is not limited to, the following behavior:

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

## **No Drugs, Tobacco / Vaping or Alcohol**

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 without refund.**

## **Hands Off**

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.

## **Social Media**

Social media is frequently used by all our athletes, parents, and members. It is a forward facing, very public representation of Vero Beach Rowing, our teammates, and the larger VBR family. All official social media accounts will be run from within the employment structure of the organization unless indicated otherwise.

For personal social media accounts:

- Athletes may not “block” one another or use social media to bully or exclude. Teammates are teammates no matter what.
- Athletes may not otherwise use their social media to put VBR in a negative light.

## **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 absenteeism, it may affect other athletes and their ability to train effectively. Therefore, it is imperative that you notify your coach via WhatsApp as far in advance as possible if you need to miss a practice or need to arrive late. Do not communicate an absence or tardiness via Boathouse Connect (BHC).

## **Communication**

- All communication between rowers & coaches will be done through WhatsApp
- If you or your teammates are running late or will not be attending practice send a text to your direct coach via WhatsApp
- In the event of an emergency, or if you or a teammate are in any kind of danger, phone calls are permitted during practice.

## Sickness and Injury

- 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 are able to get you appropriate treatment as quickly as possible.
- Failure to complete a workout because of an injury may need to be followed by a doctor's visit and clearance before you are allowed to return to normal practice. Coach discretion applies.
- Failure to complete a land/erg workout may prevent you from being boated until that workout is completed. Coach discretion applies.

## Practice Uniforms

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.

- Athletes must always wear shirts while on land.
- Socks are not permitted while carrying equipment to or from the dock. Laundry baskets will be provided to safely store shoes while we row.
- Hats/Visors and sunglasses are highly recommended to reduce eye strain and cumulative damage.
- Disposable bottles (water, Gatorade, etc..) 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 a nuisance and is dangerous to wildlife.

## Parking & Pick-up

- To those of you who drive your own vehicle, there is no returning to vehicles after you have arrived at practice.
- Rowers are to park in the boathouse or boatyard parking lot.
- All parents should plan on 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.

## 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.

## **Regattas**

- Parents are responsible for athlete travel & accommodations at regattas.
- When a minor athlete travels to an event/competition or shares a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with an unrelated adult (an adult other than the parent or legal guardian), a written consent form **MUST** be obtained from a parent/legal guardian prior to travel and/or event involving the minor athlete. Please turn in the consent form 2 days prior to travel. This form can be found on the VBR website under **YOUTH ROWING > TRAVEL FORM** & should be submitted by email or in person to the Boathouse Manager.
- 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.
- While under the tent, be respectful of your teammates who want to rest.
- Keep our tent area clean, please dispose of trash & put away belongings
- 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 & coaches dismiss rowers.

## **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 is imperative for their success. It is vital that we trust each other's ability to help these student-athletes become their best selves.

The coaches practice with your athlete on a daily basis and know their strengths and weaknesses in the sport of rowing. Boat lineups are exclusively the decision of the coaching staff. Athletes are encouraged to discuss their strengths and weaknesses with their coaches during practice sessions. We ask that such discussions be limited to practice times only and not to approach the coaches during a regatta. Also, parents should not approach coaching staff during regatta days with questions regarding line-up, race strategies, or boating positions. Should you have questions, the coaching staff will be happy to set up a time to discuss your child's progress. Discussions will be limited to your athlete's performance only. Coaches will not comment on other rower's performances as well as other coach's actions.

## **Communication**

- Initial concerns should be brought up with your athlete's direct coach.\*
- Concerns regarding the conduct or safety of your athlete's direct coach should be brought up with the Head Coach.
- All parent/coach communication should occur either via email, or through the Boathouse Connect application unless it pertains directly to official club matters, including but not limited to chaperoning, fundraising, event planning, recruitment questions, etc.
- In the event of an emergency, ALWAYS feel free to contact your athlete's coach via personal phone.
- Boathouse Connect is a great communication tool for our boathouse. Please be mindful when commenting on chats. Student athletes, coaches & parents can all view comments made. Please keep our communication space POSITIVE!

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

## **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. Rumor-milling, gossiping, or negative comments about teammates, coaches, other parents, volunteers, workouts, or results will not be tolerated. If we need to address these concerns, coach will ask any involved parties to discuss issues.

## **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.

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

## **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 and/or competition.

## **Parent Volunteer Requirements**

We cannot be successful without the amazing, continued support of our wonderful parent volunteers. VBR relies on volunteer service hours to reinforce the efforts and hard work of our coaches and athletes. Volunteering also helps build and maintain a culture of mutual respect, teamwork and community within the organization.

The VBR Volunteer Coordinator oversees the volunteer activities and is the point of contact for volunteer service questions, concerns or additional information. The Volunteer Coordinator can be reached at [volunteer@verobeachrowing.com](mailto:volunteer@verobeachrowing.com).

### **Volunteer Service requirements are as follows:**

High School: Each high school rower family will be required to perform 20 volunteer hours per rower for the whole year (Fall and Spring seasons combined).

High School Volunteer Hours Buy Out Option: A high school rower family may choose to “buy out” their volunteer hours at a rate of \$200 for the fall season and \$400 for the spring season (\$600 for the entire fall/spring season). If you choose the “buy out” option, the fee must be paid in full at the time of registration.

Middle School: Each middle school rower family will be required to volunteer for one Fall regatta and one Spring Regatta. Regatta volunteer activities include tent set-up and take down, food & drink donation and breakfast/lunch duty throughout the regatta day. Families will be notified of needs prior to the regatta by the middle school parent liaison or volunteer coordinator.

Rower families are responsible for self-reporting their hours on a monthly basis, or after a volunteer activity has been completed. Volunteer hours are to be logged via the Boathouse Connect platform.

The volunteer requirement may be fulfilled by any family member and/or athlete. If you are unable to make this commitment, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator to determine the best course of action. VBR offers flexible volunteer opportunities and in some instances, volunteer-from-home opportunities. Failure to complete these volunteer hours may result in a suspension of rowing for your athlete.

### **Volunteer Opportunities include but are not limited to:**

- Regatta prep/planning
- Regatta Hospitality support
- Administrative support/planning
- Fundraising planning/execution
- Event planning/execution

Regatta hospitality opportunities may include the purchasing of snacks, food, ice, and beverages. For every \$20 spent, an hour of volunteer time will be granted. Receipts must be submitted when hours are reported. A photo of the receipt attached to the email is acceptable.

The hours volunteered are expected to support the entire team, therefore, hours will not be counted for carpooling or driving individual rowers to regattas. A full list of volunteer opportunities and descriptions can be found on the VBR website under "Youth Programs."

As good community members, rowers will be given opportunities to participate in fund-raising events, community service days, car washes, maintenance days, Summer Learn to Row camps and Learn to Row events. The dates, times and volunteer needs of these events will be communicated through team e-mails and Boathouse Connect alerts. Rower hours will be verified by VBR staff or the Volunteer Coordinator for their school requirements, however, rowers are responsible for tracking and recording their time. NOTE: Separate from family volunteer hours.

## **Fundraising**

Member families, including those that receive scholarships, are expected to support fundraising events by participating, planning, and leading these efforts. Member families understand VBR dues only cover a portion of the operating expenses. The organization depends on fundraising throughout the year to cover regattas and operating expenses. Therefore, monies raised by fundraisers and corporate sponsorships/donations supplement operating funds.

All team members will be required to participate in team fundraisers to be eligible to compete. A few of this year's fundraisers will include the following:

Erg-a-Thon:

- Mandatory Team Event, rowers will collectively erg 42,195 meters
- Each rower will be encouraged to raise \$500 for the event

Carwash Fundraisers: Assist in washing cars

Chipotle / Chick-fil-A Fundraisers: Spread the word & participate



# Regatta Dates (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

\* Updated Schedule on Youth Calendar on VBR Website

## **Fall 2023**

Oct. 7	East Coast Classic (HS)	Fellsmere, FL
Oct. 20-22	Head of the Charles (Select Crews)	Boston, MA
Oct. 28	Halloween Regatta	Tampa, FL
Nov. 4-5	Head of Hooch (HS & Masters)	Chattanooga, TN
Dec. 2	Fall Middle School Regatta	Fellsmere, FL

## **Spring 2024**

Jan. 8	1st Day of Spring Season (HS & MS)	
Feb. 23	Sarasota Invitational	Sarasota, FL
March 9	OARS Junior Invitational (includes MS)	Orlando, FL
March 30	FSRA East District Championship (includes MS)	Fellsmere, FL
April 12-14	FSRA Sculling States (Select Crews)	Sarasota, FL
April 26-28	FSRA Sweep States (Select Crews)	Sarasota, FL
May 10-12	US Rowing Southeast Regionals (Select Crews)	Sarasota, FL
June 6-9	Youth Nationals (SE Regional medalists)	Sarasota, FL

## **Important Dates**

August 14	First day Varsity HS Rowing
August 19	Learn To Row Day (HS 9-11AM & MS 11-1PM)
August 21	First day Returning Novice HS and Middle School Practice
August 28	First Day MS Rowing
September 2-4	Labor Day; No School/No Practice
September 7	Parent Fall Orientation Meeting - 6PM
September 9	Erg-A-Thon Kick-Off
September 16	International Coastal Cleanup Day (Tentative Date)
November 2	Samaritan Soup Bowl
November 11	Erg-A-Thon - Mandatory Attendance
November 20-24	Thanksgiving Week; No School or Practice
December 2	Vero Beach Christmas Parade (6PM)
Dec. 18 - Jan. 5	Winter Land Training
Dec. 22-26 + Jan. 1	Days Off - No Training
January TDB	Welcome Back BBQ Youth, Parents, and Masters
January 8, 2024	First day Spring HS & Middle School Rowing
March 25 - 29	Vero Beach Spring Break Training (HS)