



# STONINGTON CREW: TEAM POLICY

**Academic Performance:** Rowing is a sport that relies on self-discipline and personal commitment. SHS Crew expects that athletes will demonstrate this both on the water and in the classroom. While SHS requires that athletes have passing grades in at least four classes for sports eligibility, SHS crew expects a C average with no grade lower than a D+ for continued eligibility. Grade sign-off sheets will be circulated to teachers at the end of the third quarter to ensure these academic standards are being met.

**Attendance at Practice:** Rowing is perhaps the ultimate team sport. There are no superstars in crew – a 100% contribution from each rower is essential to winning a race. This commitment to the team begins at practice. We cannot row the racing shells with less than 9 individuals – if one person fails to show up for practice, the entire boat loses valuable training time. Team members must plan on being at practice every day of the season unless the rower is ill (requiring absence from school) or injured. Rowers are expected to arrive on time for practice each day and be ready to row at 3:00 p.m. sharp. Rowers are expected to stay at practice until 6:00 p.m. to ensure that equipment is cleaned and secured, and the coaches have an opportunity for a final meeting with the team to review the day's practice and discuss the schedule for the rest of the week. Exceptions (coming late or leaving early) must be cleared a day in advance with the coach.

All rowers must accept that during crew season, outside of academics of course, the primary after school commitment must be to crew. This means that participation in other extra-curricular activities or employment cannot interfere with crew. In addition, during spring break, athletes must remain in the area and not spend the week on vacation, as we will be in the middle of the competitive season. The coaches will endeavor to set aside two days during the vacation week for visiting colleges. Otherwise, athletes are expected to be at practice and compete in the weekend races.

**Mutual Respect:** Crew is a sport that demands appropriate respect, sportsmanship and exemplary conduct. This respect starts between coaches and rowers. The SHS coaches make an extraordinary commitment in time and energy to make the SHS Crew Team possible. They strive to treat each and every rower as an individual and coach to help every athlete achieve their best possible performance. Although they are demanding and will never shirk from providing constructive criticism, they will never berate or belittle an athlete for their performance. In return, the coaches expect the mutual respect from the athletes. Coaches should always be referred to as coach and not by their first or last name alone. Athletes must also follow the coach's direction during practice. If you disagree with a coach's training approach or boating decision, discuss it with him/her after the practice in private. However, remember that the coach must consider the success of the team over the wishes of the individual, and in the end the coach's decision is final.

Respect must also extend to fellow teammates and competitors. Arguments and conflicts between teammates on and off the water are totally unacceptable as they detract from the team effort that is essential to success. This applies specifically to coxswains and rowers. On the dock and in the boat, the coxswain is in charge. If you disagree with a coxswain's approach, take it up with the coach in private, not in the boat or on the dock. As for interaction with competitors from other schools, remember rowing is a sport that is noted for fierce competitiveness but also exemplary sportsmanship and camaraderie. If incidents arise on the water or on the dock, under no circumstances will an SHS rower engage in an argument or conflict with a member of another team. Inform your coxswain and coach of the incident and it will be dealt with either with the race officials or the opponent's coach.

**Being Prepared:** The success of a crew depends heavily on being prepared for a race. This includes having waiver forms submitted in a timely manner and always having proper clothing for practices and the race. Weather conditions in rowing can be harsh and can change rapidly. Hypothermia is a real and serious risk to rowers. Rowers must always bring clothing for wet and/or cold weather rowing on the water, and a change of clothing for after the race. Rowers showing



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up to practice without proper clothing may be pulled from the boat at the coach's discretion. Rowers must also arrive on time at the Mystic Seaport for travel to away races. Team members arriving more than 5 minutes late may be left behind. This will result in the athlete losing their seat in the boat to another rower.

**Safety on the Dock and Water:** Any activity on the water can be hazardous if proper procedures and precautions are not followed. In addition, our success depends on the integrity of the shells we row, which are valued at \$10,000 or more. For this reason, on the dock and in the water, rowers must focus their complete attention on the boat and on the practice. No idle conversation or fooling around can be tolerated from the time the boat is taken off the rack, until the time it is back on the rack.

**Representing Stonington and Stonington High School:** All rowers must remember that SHS Crew represents the Town of Stonington, Stonington High School and the entire team while in Stonington and away at regattas. The team has worked diligently to establish a positive image within the Town of Stonington and throughout Connecticut. This image has benefited the team greatly as reflected in the generous donations we receive from the local community to keep the program running. Members of SHS Crew must present the best possible image when participating at practice and at regattas. In particular, rowers must remember that we are guests at Mystic Seaport and that without use of the docks at the Seaport the crew program would be in serious jeopardy. While at the Seaport all rowers must behave in a mature and responsible manner. No horseplay, or inappropriate dress or language can be tolerated on the Seaport grounds. All spare clothing and personal possessions must be kept in or near the dock boxes while practicing on the water.

**Care and Maintenance of Equipment:** For the SHS Crew to be competitive, the racing shells and oars must be properly maintained. This requires a concerted effort from the coaches, the volunteer parent supporters who help maintain the boats, and most of all, the athletes who row the boats. Athletes must make themselves available before and after practice, and at other times as required, to help load, unload and maintain the boats, oars and associated equipment.

**Participation in Fundraising Activities:** Stonington Crew exists largely because of the fundraising efforts sponsored by the Friends of Stonington Crew. Rowers are expected to actively participate in these fundraising activities when they are scheduled to the same degree that participation at practice and regattas is expected. These fundraising events include the Golf Tournament( October), Pancake Breakfast & Basket Raffle (March), and the annual Row-a-thon. Without these fundraising efforts, there would be no practice or regattas.

**Health and Conditioning:** Competitive rowers are always in excellent physical condition. This means that all rowers must be in top shape by the beginning of the competitive rowing season (about March 15). To ensure this, athletes are encouraged to participate in the winter conditioning program or be engaged in a winter sport. Although athletes are not expected to work out every day, they should plan on attending workout sessions at least 3 days a week. Rowers must also pay attention to proper diet and proper rest. And finally, rowers must not use alcohol, drugs or tobacco products. Any athlete found using these substances will be cut from the team.