



# **NEWPORT ROWING CLUB**

## **Code of Conduct**

Regulations and guidelines for conduct of NRC athletes and parents/guardians.

Updated 2019-08

## **Mission Statement**

Newport Rowing Club (NRC), Delaware's premier youth rowing club, and its staff works towards the following missions:

- ... to provide education, training, instruction, and participation in amateur rowing while developing the healthy minds, bodies, and character of student athletes.
- ... to encourage sportsmanship, teamwork, and the principals and standards expected of participants in national and international sports.
- ... to advance the sport and the art of rowing on the Historic Christina River in Newport, Delaware.
- ... to educate the public about the benefits of lifetime participation in rowing.

To achieve NRC's mission, it is essential that our student athletes train, work, compete, and represent the club positively on and off the water. NRC parents / guardians should also strive to embody the core values outlined in the mission statement above. By modeling these values, parents / guardians help to foster a healthy, happy, and fast team.

This Code of Conduct has been prepared to provide policies and guidelines for acceptable behavior for members of NRC. In addition to these guidelines, all members and families are expected to comply with USRowing rules and regulations, as well as local, state, and federal laws.

Newport Rowing Club grants the Head Coach and Executive Director, John Cohn, broad discretion in choosing and imposing disciplinary actions on athletes or members who violate the Code of Conduct. He may consider input from the coaches, board, other administrators, USRowing referees, and parents when applicable.

## **The NRC Team Culture**

**The team culture at Newport Rowing Club is centered around respect, hard work, and reliability.** When the team acts and works with these values in mind, the individuals and the team excel together. When they cease to be a priority, the team suffers and the individual athlete regresses.

**Respect** is defined as due regard for the feelings, wishes, or traditions of others. NRC athletes should show respect to their teammates and coaches through their language and behavior within and outside-of the boathouse. On race day, respect for competitors should be upheld at all times. This includes but is not limited to creating a safe and competitive environment at the trailer that allows other teams to prepare to race, being on task and efficient getting to the start line, and congratulating teams at the finish line regardless of the race outcome. Athletes should also show respect to any equipment and facilities used by NRC, whether owned, leased, or borrowed.

**Hard work** is essential to success in rowing. All NRC athletes should put their best effort forward both physically and mentally at practice every day regardless of the type of workout or the proximity to race day. NRC athletes should leave the boathouse after each practice knowing they gave the best effort they could that day. Understand that your best effort may not be the same day to day but be honest about what your best effort looks like. Working hard also means taking recovery seriously by hydrating, stretching and rolling out sore muscles, icing when needed, and being open with coaching staff about atypical pain.

**Reliability** is the main factor that differentiates the fastest junior teams in the US. NRC athletes should strive to be reliable in all aspects of the sport including being on time to practice, attending practice regularly, and working consistently from day to day. When you make a commitment, you are not only making it to yourself, you are making it to the team. Your decision to follow up on those commitments also effects the team.

### **Practice Expectations for Athletes**

**Athletes will be prepared to begin practice promptly at the specified start time.** Being prepared for practice includes the following:

- Water bottles are full and out of the locker room.
- Any clothing or layers needed for practice are out of the locker room.
- Any prehab exercises prescribed by a physical therapist or recommended by a coach have been completed.

Athletes will wear appropriate attire to every NRC practice, whether that practice takes place on the NRC campus or not. Clothing may not contain explicit language or content. All athletes must wear shirts during practice.

**When practice starts, athletes should be ready to learn.** For some athletes, this means building a routine at the beginning of practice to get into the right mindset. Some athletes prefer to keep a notebook or journal that they write in at the end of each practice. Rereading notes from the previous day can be a good way to prepare. If you had a particularly challenging day, mentally preparing may mean erging or biking before practice to clear your head. Before practice begins, get your head in the right space to focus and learn as much as possible.

**Be coachable on and off the water.** Coachable athletes advocate for themselves by speaking up and giving visual cues like head nods and hand raises when they hear and understand a comment from a coach or coxswain. They make visible changes and are willing to make mistakes. They ask for help when they don't understand and discuss their progress regularly with the coaching staff.

Athletes who are consistently unprepared for practice and by doing so interfere with the success of the team may be subject to disciplinary actions as defined at the end of this document.

## **Expectations of NRC Parents / Guardians**

The safety and well-being of our athletes is of primary importance to the NRC coaches and staff. NRC families are expected to share in this responsibility by working cooperatively with coaches and administrators to ensure the safety and well-being of the student athletes in our mutual care. To that end, parents and family members are encouraged to bring any issues to the attention of coaches or, when appropriate, to the board of directors. However, personal verbal attacks are forbidden and may result in appropriate sanctions.

Families must comply with local laws, the regulations, codes, and programs that NRC has instituted, and USRowing, FISA, and IRA regulations to ensure the safety of our athletes. This includes and is specific to laws concerning substance abuse (alcohol and drugs) as well as illegal performance enhancing substances.

NRC expects that parents, families, and legal guardians, will use common sense and responsibility as designated chaperones during NRC events as well as at non-NRC events in which NRC athletes participate.

## **Drugs, Alcohol, and Illegal Performance Enhancing Substances**

The use of drugs, alcohol, or illegal performance-enhancing substances by student athletes prior to, following, or while involved with any NRC-related event, practice, competition, banquet, while traveling with the team, or during any other NRC team-related activity is strictly prohibited. This includes the use of alcohol by parents at the parent tent during regattas.

Individuals acting in defiance of this policy will be subject to disciplinary actions as defined at the end of this document

## **Bullying, Harassment, and Hazing Policy**

Bullying, harassment, and hazing (collectively referred to in the Code of Conduct as “bullying”) by student athletes, masters athletes, parents, family members, guardians, or friends associated with NRC (hereby referred to as “the NRC team”) is strictly prohibited. Bullying is defined as an act that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of an individual, with the intention to cause personal degradation or humiliation, or that damages or may damage, destroy, or remove public or private property for the purpose of initiation in, admission to, or as a condition of continued membership in NRC, a specific boat, or a squad.

Bullying activities include but are not limited to the following:

- Physical punishment, contact, exercise, or sleep deprivation that causes excessive fatigue and/or physical or psychological shock.
- Forced or coerced consumption of food, drink, alcohol, tobacco, and/or illegal drugs.
- Forced or coerced transportation of individuals.
- Public humiliation, ridicule, or indecent exposure of any kind.

- Coercing or forcing of illegal acts of any kind.
- Coercing or forcing acts that are immoral or unethical.
- Blocking an individual's academic, athletic, or personal success.
- Interfering with an individual's health.
- Personal servitude.
- Mental harassment.
- Sexual harassment.
- Using electronic media (including cell phones, the internet, social media sites, and the athlete group chats) to harass, denigrate, or otherwise comment negatively on an individual, a group of individuals, or a class of individuals.
- Deception.
- An act of, or threat of, social exclusion.
- Conduct that is deliberately detrimental to team morale or cohesiveness.

If a person engages in any of the acts below, he or she shall have committed the act of Bullying:

- Engaging directly in bullying.
- Soliciting, encouraging, directing, aiding, or attempting to aid another person in bullying activities.
- Intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly permitting bullying to occur.
- Having first-hand knowledge of the planning or execution of an incident or event of bullying and failing to report the incident or event to NRC administrators or coaches.

Individuals involved in any form of bullying will be held accountable for their actions and will be subject to disciplinary actions as stated at the end of this document.

### **Social Media**

No member of NRC will use any social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.) as a venue to denigrate, harass, or bully any teammate, competitor, coach, administrator, board member, parent, or other member of the NRC family. See the section above for a detailed definition of bullying.

No member of NRC will use any social media to post content which negatively reflects on an individual's or group's race, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Information placed on social networking sites may become available to coaches, parents, family, administrators, college admissions offices, or future employers. The image you present on the internet must reflect the values stated in this Code of Conduct as well as the values of inclusion, respect, and civility.

Inappropriate postings on any social networking site may result in any disciplinary actions as stated at the end of this document.

## **Regattas and Travel**

Participation in regattas is an earned privilege. While at regattas, members of NRC are expected to conduct themselves with proper decorum, to act courteously, and to use good judgement. Each member must accept responsibility of their own actions and actively encourage their teammates to do the same. The actions of the individual reflect on the entire NRC organization.

While at regattas, the following expectations are to be upheld by the individual and insisted upon by the team:

- Appropriate NRC uniforms are to be worn while at the regatta venue. Appropriate uniforms include the NRC unisuit pulled all the way up. Unisuit straps must stay on until the athlete leaves the regatta. Outside layers should contain the NRC logo.
- Members of NRC are expected to observe all USRowing rules and regulations.
- Race officials, regatta volunteers, coaches, and members of other rowing programs will be treated with respect and courtesy at all times.
- Crews must be on time for their events, including arrival time at the trailer, pre-scheduled weigh-ins, boat preparation, or other pre-race activities. It is the responsibility of the individual members of the crew to assure that all race requirements have been met.
- It is up to the individual members of the crew to assure their boat is properly rigged and ready to race.
- Crews, with proper instruction from the coaches, are expected to de-rig each boat they race in and load all equipment onto the boat trailer in preparation for the return trip to the boathouse. Any equipment not stored or secured properly in the trailer or left at the venue is the responsibility of all the athletes who used that equipment.
- All members of the NRC team (athletes, parents, family members, and legal guardians) will act in a sportsman-like manner. Sportsman-like conduct includes but is not limited to the following scenarios:
  - The outcome of regattas and rulings of race officials will be accepted graciously.
  - Protests, if required will be coordinated between the crew, their coach, and the Head Coach as appropriate. (NOTE: Parents, guardians, family members, and friends are not permitted to participate in the protest process of any regatta event in which an NRC boat participates.)
  - Athletes, parents, guardians, and family members will speak about and to other teams with respect regardless of race results, the actions of other teams, and any other factors.
- When traveling to and from regattas, athletes are expected to conduct themselves with proper decorum, to act courteously, and to use good judgement. While at overnight accommodations, athletes will follow the direction and instruction of their coaches.

## **NRC Equipment & Facilities**

**The use of NRC equipment and the NRC facilities is a privilege, not a right.** Each member of the NRC team recognizes that the success of the team is dependent on well maintained, properly

functioning equipment. The following expectations must be upheld by all individuals on the NRC team and enforced not only by the coaches, but by the athletes as well:

- Treat all equipment with care.
- All malfunctions recognized by NRC athletes while on the water should be reported to a coach immediately upon returning to the boathouse and before the end of practice. Repairs can be made quickly when coaches are informed in a timely manner.
- Any minor repairs (re-attaching a shoe or footboard, tightening bolts, replacing spacers, etc.) should be done by the athletes before getting on the water. Athletes should feel free to seek guidance from any NRC coaches if they are unsure how to make these repairs.
- NRC equipment including but not limited to boats, oars, cox boxes, and speed coaches are not to be removed from NRC grounds without express permission from a coach.
- Any equipment that is willfully or negligently damaged or lost will be paid for by the individual(s) responsible.
- Any property owned or leased by NRC that is willfully or negligently damaged will be paid for or repaired by the individual(s) responsible.

### **Reporting Violations of the Code of Conduct**

Any athlete, parent, guardian, family member, or friend may file a grievance or report any violations of the NRC Code of Conduct through the process stated below. The rights of the individual reporting a violation must be respected. All information shall be kept confidential to the extent reasonably possible to handle the issue in question. If witnesses are to be interviewed, they will be informed of the confidential nature of the issue and instructed not to discuss the matter with others. Such discussion would also be considered a breach of the NRC Code of Conduct.

#### ***How to Report a Violation***

- 1) **Contact a Coach** – An athlete’s coach should be the first point of contact. The coach may choose to resolve the issue or escalate it to the next level of action.
- 2) **Contact the Head Coach / Executive Director** – The Head Coach may be approached directly or through another member of the staff. The Head Coach may choose to resolve the issue directly, work with another coach to resolve the issue, or raise the issue to the next level of action.
- 3) **Contact the Board of Directors** – The board is the highest level of review for any infractions of the NRC Code of Conduct or grievances that cannot be resolved through direct contact with a coach. The board, working with the Head Coach when appropriate, may ask for additional information and interview athletes, parents, or any NRC staff members in trying to resolve the issue.
- 4) **Code of Conduct Disciplinary Board** – If required, a coach, the Head Coach, or the Board of Directors may request an *ad hoc* Disciplinary Board to review an infraction of the Code of Conduct or a disciplinary ruling. The Disciplinary Board shall at a minimum include the Head Coach and one member of the Board of Directors. Additional members may be asked to serve on the Disciplinary Board as required. If called, the Disciplinary Board must report its findings in writing to the Board of Directors.

- 5) **Contact the Appropriate Legal Authorities** – If a law is broken, it is the right of the coaches and staff to reach out to the appropriate legal authorities. The disciplinary actions of the local authorities will be placed in addition to any disciplinary actions agreed to by the board, coaches, and staff.

### ***Retaliation***

Individuals who become aware of a violation to the NRC Code of Conduct are encouraged to report that matter to the NRC coaches or staff. It is a violation of the NRC Code of Conduct to engage in retaliation for such reporting.

### ***Wrongful Accusation***

Any individual accused of violating the NRC Code of Conduct has the right to challenge that accusation by following the same procedures listed above to appeal the accusation to their coach, the Head Coach / Executive Director, or the Board of Directors. No individual shall be considered in violation of the NRC Code of Conduct without due process.

### **Attendance**

The attendance of each individual athlete can have a large impact on the success of the team. The following attendance policy must be adhered to:

- 1) Each athlete is permitted 5 absences per season.
- 2) Athletes with more than 5 absences in a single season may be considered a “spare” for regatta line-ups. If the number of NRC athletes or the regatta schedule do not allow every athlete to race, the “spares” may be removed from race line-ups before athletes with better attendance.
- 3) Athletes who miss practice during the week of a regatta may be removed from their racing line-up. This will also be taken into consideration for future race line-ups.
- 4) Special considerations will be made for family emergencies (i.e. death in the family, hospitalization, etc.) on a case-to-case basis. If an athlete believes special considerations should be made for their absence, the athlete should speak to their coach either in person or via email within 2 days of the absence.
- 5) If there is a chance an athlete will be tardy (i.e. not present and ready to begin practice promptly at the appointed start time) the athlete will contact their coach directly prior to the start of practice. Athletes who do not notify their coach prior to the start of practice will be removed from their practice line-up. Repeated tardiness without notice may result in further disciplinary actions including but not limited to removal from a race line-up.
- 6) If an athlete is tardy without providing notice as stated above, the athlete will spend 1 practice on land.
- 7) If an athlete is absent without providing notice as stated above, the athlete will spend 2 practices on land.

**Disciplinary Actions**

Student athletes and members of NRC who fail to adhere to the Code of Conduct will be subject to disciplinary actions. Depending on the severity of the violation, disciplinary actions may include, but are not limited to:

- A verbal or written warning of the offense.
- Discussion of the infraction with the offender and parental guardian.
- Temporary suspension from the NRC team.
- Temporary or permanent loss of eligibility to participate in practices and/or regattas.
- Dismissal from the NRC team without refund.
- Reporting to local, state, or federal authorities when appropriate.
- For offenses relating to drugs, alcohol, and illegal performance enhancing substances, required chemical dependency assessment and/or treatment program.

***Athlete / Parent Acknowledgement:***

I have read the Newport Rowing Club Code of Conduct and agree to act in a manner consistent with its policies and requirements.

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Print Athlete's Name

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Athlete Signature

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Date

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Parent / Guardian Signature

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Date