

Coxing for Rowers

Thoughts from Desiree Boucher, Rock Creek Rowing, May 2012

- ❖ Show up and be prepared
 - Lineups depend most on coxswains
 - Dress appropriately, use layers, always keep clothes in the car/bag

- ❖ Getting on/off the water
 - WHEN IN DOUBT SAY **“WEIGH ENOUGH”**
 - Most importantly, make sure somebody has their eyes on the skeg getting the boat out or in the racks (also be aware of the skegs of other boats)
 - Calls to get boat out:
 - (F9) **“Hands on”** (May be with or without arms across)
 - **“Up an inch. And up.”**
 - **“And out (of the rack).”** (Make sure the boat is not going to scrape on the riggers above.)
 - **“Go under.” “Hands on your own side.”** (If you were at arms across).
 - **“Boathouse side up to shoulders. And up”** (Always try to keep the skeg farthest from harm)
 - Singularis has the same calls except that you WILL definitely be started from arms across, you will be at ankles so the call **“Up to waist”** will have to be made before anybody can go under, fence side will go up to shoulders, and make sure that the riggers are straight up and down so they do not hit the pole of the gate coming out.
 - To get the boat in the racks, reverse previous calls.
 - Be aware of others trying to get on or come off the docks.
 - Be assertive about your position in line.
 - Be loud, use your boat’s name (“F9 up to shoulders”).
 - Getting in the water:
 - **“Up over heads. And up.”**
 - **“Toes to the edge.”**
 - **“Roll to waist. And down.”**
 - **“Push it out and set it in.”**
 - **“Oars across.”**
 - **“One foot in, and down.”**

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- Getting out of the water:
 - **“One foot out, and up.”**
 - **“Oars in.”**
 - **“Hands on.”**
 - **“Up over heads. And up.”** (Do NOT stop at waist, go right to over heads.)
 - **“Split to shoulders. And down.”**
- I find it easier to use people in bow to pull away from the dock and those in the stern to bring it into the dock.

❖ Safety on the water

- WHEN IN DOUBT SAY **“WEIGH ENOUGH”** usually followed by “check it down” if necessary.
- If you see something in front of you that looks like it might hurt the boat, STOP and DON’T hit it.
- Stationary things to watch out for:
 - Rocks (even if the water is high) (3 Sisters, Hens and Chicks, Fletcher’s, disappearing rocks between Roosevelt and Memorial)
 - Shore (especially if the water is low) (Turn right in front of TBC at Roosevelt Island, between Memorial and Roosevelt on DC side)
 - Trees that jut out from the shore and are always there (Past Hens and Chicks up to Fletcher’s, Roosevelt Island)
- Moving/floating things to watch out for:
 - Other boats, especially ones without coxswains.
 - Yachts
 - Trees/logs/branches (boat killers)
 - Potomac (Port) Monster (looks like the Loch Ness one)
- Things you may hit:
 - Sticks/twigs
 - Plastic bags
 - BIRDS!
 - Paddlers
- If you cannot tell what is floating in front of you and it looks like you will hit it, WEIGH ENOUGH!
- Give yourself enough room between you and the closest rock so that a boat could fit between you and the rocks. When the water is low (hint: the dock was really steep) then give yourself even more of a cushion.

- Be verbal with other boats (tell them where you are going to go if possible)
- The river is like the road:
 - Drive on the right.
 - Pass on the left.
 - Slower on the right and faster on the left.
 - If you are going to stop, make sure that nobody is immediately behind you and, if possible, pull over to the right.
- If other boats or coaches are yelling and waving their arms, stop the boat if you cannot immediately understand what they mean. Most likely there is a boat breaker right in front of you.
- WHEN IN DOUBT SAY “**WEIGH ENOUGH**” usually followed by “check it down” if necessary.

❖ Steering

- Put the hand of the direction that you want to go forward.
 - Right hand forward, you are going right.
 - Left hand forward, you are going left.
- In a bow loader with the handle on the side:
 - Handle forward to go right.
 - Pull handle back to go left
- Make slight adjustments to avoid ping ponging between the VA and DC shores
- Different boats handle differently
 - Smaller boats have a smaller turning radius, handle easily, and only need slight adjustments.
 - Singularis turns better than the F9 (with steering) and the F9 needs slightly more in steering for the boat to make the adjustments.
 - Usually steering takes one or two strokes to notice in any boat.
 - If rowing by arms only or arms and body, steering the boat will not work as well. Either add another rower in on the side you need or stop, get your point, and then restart.

❖ Calling practice.

- Make sure you understand the drill.
- Count in 10's and count sets of 10's on your fingers.
- If you mess up counting in your head, pick a number, and finish the count.

- If you are unsure about something and cannot get the coach's attention, just make a decision.
- Most drills you do not need to stop between drills or between switching people in and out. Even those drills that you might stop between, if your boat is behind, don't stop and just switch through on the fly.
- If you are ahead of the other boat and finished with the drill, add a pause until the other boat catches up.
- If you are very far ahead and done with the drill, stop.
- When turning, turn 90*, stop, go directly across the river, finish turning the remaining 90*.
- It is your boat, don't let other people in the boat talk or tell you what to do, unless you need them to.
- Discuss things with your stroke seat (this is best with the mic turned off). But you can always ask your stroke seat to be quiet if you do not wish to discuss things.
- Calls:
 - **"Weigh enough"** – stop rowing
 - **"Check it down/Hold water"** – to stop the boat
 - **"Stern 6 sit ready at the catch(or finish). Ready, row."**
 - **"In 2 bow pair in and three and four out. One. Two"**
 - **"Pressure starboard side."** (Move to coxswain's left.)
 - **"Port side pressure."** (Move to coxswain's right.)
 - **"Even it (pressure) out."**
 - **"No talking in the boat....Please, be quiet....STOP TALKING!"**