



What HHSRC Parents Want to Know

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What forms/requirements does my child need to join crew?

- Rower Registration form (includes Emergency Medical Release and acceptance of Participation Agreement)
- Florida High School Athletic Association Preparticipation Physical
- Swimming Aptitude Test
- Pay dues and fees by deadline
- US Rowing Waiver

What is expected from me as a parent of a rower?

When a rower joins the team, his or her parents commit to participating fully in the work required to support the HHS Rowing Club. If you have more questions about your new role as a crew parent, call or email any Board member (see hillsboroughrowingclub.org for contact information). All rowers and parents are required to sign the Rower Registration form in which they are agreeing to abide by the Code of Conduct Agreement. A copy of this Code of Conduct Agreement is in this handbook.

- Help ensure your rower attends practices and regattas.
- Be supportive of the team and coaches.
- Respect coaching decisions on boat selection and rowing matters.
- Bring any questions, issues to the board for resolution.
- Select one or more volunteer activities to satisfy volunteer time requirements to support the team. Document your volunteer hours on the web site.
- Pay dues and fees by deadline

Do I need to worry about safety?

Safety is the primary concern of the organization and coaches. No one can join the crew team without passing a swim and undergoing additional water training with equipment. No boat is permitted on the water without the supervision of a coach. The coaches' launch is equipped with life jackets, handheld radios, first aid kit, and cell phones for emergency communications.

Each practice is attended by at least one crew parent who oversees the boathouse area while the rowers are practicing. The practice parent also has instructions on what actions to take in an emergency.

Safety is also the reason there is zero tolerance for horseplay during practice and regattas. Each rower is expected to comply with team rules and to maintain proper behavior at all times. Rowers who do not obey any coach's orders will be subject to disqualification from the team.

How much does it cost?

Rowing at Hillsborough High School, a Hillsborough County public school is a "club" sport. The club status means that the school provides none of the funds necessary to pay the team's coaching, equipment, operations and transportation expenses. Each team member is required to pay dues outlined on the [Fee Schedule](#).

Do you have a refund policy?

Yes within the first two weeks of practice. New rowers may request a refund of all but the non-refundable registration fee of \$75. No refunds are available after the first 2 weeks of their practice.

Are there additional requirements for participation?

Yes. Each family is required to satisfy a minimum volunteer requirement and fund raising obligation.. These requirements vary by season. Please see the [fee schedule](#) for current requirements.

What about the time commitment?

The club has two seasons. The fall season focuses on timed distance races, called a “head race”. The fall season begins in August and ends in early December. The spring season focuses on races usually called “sprints” and begins in January and ends in early May. Rowers may participate in one or both seasons.

When and where are the practices?

When: Monday 2:30 to 6:00 pm, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 3:30 pm to 6:00 pm Saturday 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

Where: Julian Lane Riverfront Park, located on North Boulevard (intersects with Cypress Street), just south of Interstate 275 and just north of Tampa Preparatory School. The boathouse is operated by the Stewards Foundation, and is also used by other schools.

How will my rower get to practice?

Parents of rowers are responsible for providing transportation to and from practices. Carpools are encouraged. Plan to arrange or provide your own child’s transportation to practice on Saturdays and during holidays. You are also encouraged to participate in carpooling rowers to regattas.

How are practices organized?

Practices include both land training (running, stair climbing, erg work and strengthening exercises) and rowing on the water. For novice rowers, the first two weeks of practice include conditioning exercises and an introduction to rowing, including on-water training. Land training is usually supervised either by the assistant coaches under the coach’s direction. On the water, coaches are always present nearby in motorboat launches.

What language is my rower speaking?

Like many parents whose children are rowing for the first time, you might be overwhelmed by all of the new and unfamiliar terms you are hearing. For a quick introduction to some common rowing vocabulary, refer to the Rowing Glossary which can be found in “Perspective Rowers”. Crew is a wonderful sport for parents as well as the athletes.

Can we balance academics and athletics?

Parents often worry that the time and energy spent rowing will have adverse effects on their child’s academic pursuits. In fact, the discipline and commitment that rowing requires often helps students to manage their time better and be more efficient in their studies.

What should a rower eat on race days?

- Eat a nutritious breakfast such as bagels, muffins, granola, fruit and juice. Eat at least 90 minutes before you race.
- Eat plenty of complex carbs, such as vegetables, fruits, hummus, whole grains (not white flour which is simple carb), legumes. Replace proteins after racing with peanut butter (without hydrogenated oil), boiled eggs, legumes, hummus etc.
- Avoid greasy foods, caffeine and dairy.
- Drink plenty of water all day long. If you feel thirsty, you are already dehydrated! Eat plenty of hydrating foods like cucumbers, peppers, tomatoes, celery, apples, oranges, watermelon, cantaloupe, berries, field greens, romaine lettuce (not iceberg lettuce).

What if I have a grievance?

In the course of a season, there may be questions or concerns. Please speak first with the Head Coach (during non-practice hours) and/or the Board President who will hopefully alleviate the concern. If this does not suffice, please file a written grievance with the Board of Directors.

What about athletic scholarships for college?

Click [here](#) to take a look at this ecollege finder brochure, the results may surprise you!

What should I know about Regattas?

HHSRC depends on our fundraisers and club dues to help reduce Regatta expenses. Away regattas require an additional fee to cover the cost of bus charters, lodging, or extra meals. We depend on parent donations of food for meals at the Regattas. HHSRC Hospitality usually provides rowers with breakfast and lunch on Saturday. It is common for carpool groups to stop for dinner or snacks on the way home. Please ensure your rower has money to pay for any additional food desired.

The club arranges transportation and hotel rooms for the rowers at away regattas. The most common mode of transportation is by parent carpools. Email requests for parent drivers will be sent out in the weeks prior to a regatta to identify volunteers. If you volunteer to carpool, more information will be given as the date nears, and the club will reserve a room in the "team block" of rooms, unless you indicate otherwise. You will be advised of the cost of your room and how to reimburse the club.

There are usually a limited number of rooms available for non-carpooling parents also. If you are planning to go, notify the regatta coordinator as soon as possible. If possible, the club will arrange with the hotel for a "team rate" for you as well.

Talk to your rower about accommodations. The rowers' rooms are four people to a room with two double beds. The coaches determine the room assignments, typically based on boatings.

A word about boat selection or "seatings"

Selection of rowers for a particular boat is the coach's job. The decision about which boat any one rower is on is a complicated one, incorporating the rower's strength, personality, technique, which side he or she rows on (port or starboard), attitude, and the nature of the event (whether we are entering a four or an eight, whether it's a novice, freshmen or light-weight event, etc.). Sometimes a coach's decision is unpopular, especially if changes are made late in the season, after a boat has gotten used to each other. Please credit the coaches with doing their best to make choices for the good of the overall team and the rowing program.

General Information about Regattas

A regatta consists of races referred to as events. Events consist of different sizes, classes and configuration of shells. The events that HHSRC races in include:

- Eights: Events are held for boys and girls to race in varsity, lightweight, and novice races
- Fours/Quads: Events are held for boys or girls to race in varsity, junior varsity, 3rd 4s, lightweight, novice and freshmen races
- Pairs/Doubles: Events are held for boys or girls

An event is classified as men's or women's based on the sex of the rowers. All rowers in a shell are the same sex. The coxswain in any event may be either male or female. Each event may include A, B or C boats, depending on the number of rowers available at the time.

Youth regattas are typically scheduled on Saturdays, although some larger events may take place on Saturday and Sunday. Fall is the Head Racing season. These races are three miles in length (5000 meters), so endurance work plays a large part in this training. At large events, the Head Racers compete over the same courses as collegiate crews. This gives them the opportunity to compare their results and establish goals to which to aspire for future college rowing. Typically, HHSRC participates in three to four Head Race regattas.

Spring is the competitive rowing season against other high schools and youth teams throughout Florida, culminating in the State Championships in May. These races are usually 1500-meter sprints. The club typically attends regattas located in Orlando and Sarasota, as well as the Mayor's Cup in Tampa. The spring season culminates with the Florida state regatta which is a qualifier for Scholastic Nationals and the Southeast Club regionals.

Ergatta. One unusual event at the start of the season is "Southern Sprints," an indoor erg competition that occurs in January/February at the Florida Institute of Technology in Melbourne. At this event, individual rowers compete against other schools and clubs in a room full of ergs while being "coxed" by a teammate and cheered on by the rest of the team. Southern Sprints is a qualifying event for the National competition known as the "Crash Bs" and can be important to qualifying for the Southeast Junior Development camp and Talent ID camps for those pursuing scholarships. Southern Sprints is also a good place to buy a new erg at a good deal at the end of the event.

We're here! What now?

Regattas are all day, outdoor affairs with many races in several categories. This is not something where your rower turns up a few minutes before his/her event and goes home. Because of the considerable equipment involved in crew, it takes all rowers to unload and rig the boats in the morning, and then de-rig and load in the afternoon. All rowers arrive as a team at the time specified by the coaches, and stay for all races. Parents set up and take down the hospitality tents, and help with many other things that are needed during the day like refilling water coolers, bringing water and food to the boat trailers, setting up a tent for shade at the boat trailer, chaperoning the rowers at the hospitality tent, keeping up with the race schedule to cheer the rowers, etc.

Parents and observers may come early for the entire day or for their rower's race, if the time is known in advance. However, schedules are tentative and can be changed. Look for the HHSRC tent to find the other HHSRC parents. We encourage you to come early, enjoy the camaraderie of other rowing enthusiasts and support the BIG RED. Spectator conditions vary considerably from one regatta to the next. Be sure to bring a "spectator kit" including a portable chair, camera, binoculars, a regatta race schedule and something to keep you occupied while waiting for events. On hot sunny days in Florida, it is wise to bring sunscreen and protective clothing. You are welcome to serve yourself water and Gatorade from the 5 gallon coolers at the team tent, as well as our "spread" of regatta food after the rowers have eaten according to their racing schedule. Most of the larger events also have concession stands.

Scope out the course. Ask other spectators if you are unsure where the race starts and where the finish line is located. It is often good to sit near the finish line, but other interesting perspectives might be found further up the course, or on a bridge overlooking the course.

Race appreciation depends in part on knowing which boats are racing, whether a Hillsborough boat is in a particular heat, and the order and times of the finish for the heat. Races are numbered and usually announced as being "on the water" for example, "heat number 4, boys novice 8 is on the water." A schedule helps as it lists the events and corresponding number of each race. If you don't want to print a schedule off the Internet the night before a regatta, one is usually posted in front of regatta headquarters, the judge's area or in the program. We also try to keep one posted at the hospitality tent. All times and scheduled races are subject to change. If all else fails, ask the person next to you. Somehow, someone nearby always knows which race is in progress. Final results of race placement and times are posted at regatta headquarters. Regatta behavior, while fairly relaxed and social, is a serious business for our rowers and coaches. Boomboxes, horseplay, offensive language, or inappropriate displays of affection (PDAs) are not permitted in the tent area, or elsewhere during the regatta. As your rower's event approaches, this is not a time to talk to or distract your rower – treat this period like the demanding athletic competition it is. Additionally, **coaches are NOT available on regatta days to discuss parent concerns or issues.**

Please contact the coach or coach liaison by email to arrange a private conversation.