



www.RidgewoodCrew.com
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Ridgewood Crew Novice Parent Guide

Welcome to Ridgewood Crew! We are a not-for-profit club that exists because of parental involvement. During the course of your child's experience with crew you will be called upon to support your child both financially and emotionally.

Crew is an opportunity for both you and your child to share a sport that develops an intense sense of camaraderie. Athletes involved in Ridgewood Crew have found it a character-building sport that many continue long after high school.

Ridgewood Crew is managed by a Board of parent volunteers, who can be reached by either phone or e-mail.

Regatta rules require that all rowers attend the same high school so all Ridgewood Crew Rowers must attend Ridgewood High School.

The rowing season begins in early January with tryouts. The team is announced shortly thereafter and land practices begin. A General Meeting of rowers and parents is held in late January where pre-season forms are submitted and uniforms ordered. The Row-a-thon fundraiser is held in early March, and on-the-water practices begin in late February/early March. Our annual pasta party kicks off the regatta season in late March/early April. All rowers are required to attend all scheduled practices and regattas including during Spring break. The season ends for novices in mid-May, while the racing season for junior varsity and varsity rowers continues through May. Our final fundraiser car wash is held in June. The season closes in June with our end-of-year banquet.

Practices:

Parents are responsible for transporting our rowers to and from practice. Land training will take place at F.O.R.C.E. Performance Training, 22 Hollywood Ave, HoHoKus, NJ. On-the-water practices take place at PRRA (Passaic River Rowing Association) which is located in Riverside County Park South, off of Riverside Avenue in Lyndhurst, NJ. Practices typically begin at 3:45 pm and rowers are expected to be dressed and ready for the water. Practices end at 6:00pm early in the season, and later

when longer daylight allows. While the team practices on-the-water through most weather and temperature conditions, practices are occasionally changed or cancelled due to severe rain or wind. While changes/cancellations are rare, every effort is made to keep you informed through our web site, via e-mail or Text message. The Board and coaches do their best to post practice schedules on the website as early as possible, when in doubt **DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK QUESTIONS.**

Practice Attire:

Rowers should bring cold weather attire (extra clothes/shoes/socks/hats) and rain protection (Campmor sells inexpensive, lightweight, clear-plastic rainsuits). Keep in mind that the pen area at PRRA is not secure. Valuables such as i-Pods, sunglasses, cell phones and cash left there during practice are at the rower's risk unless placed in an oarbox that is locked by a coach.

Carpool and Driving Arrangements:

Parents make every effort to carpool to and from practice. The team roster will contain contact information to help with carpooling arrangements. Many find the fastest route to PRRA to be the Garden State Parkway South to Rte 3 East to Rte 21 South to the Lyndhurst/Nutley exit. Others use Rte 20 South to Rte 21 South to the Lyndhurst/Nutley exit. From that exit, two left turns take you under the Rte 21 overpass and over the Park Ave. bridge. Take your first right after the bridge onto Riverside Avenue for about a quarter of a mile, and turn right into the Riverside County Park South parking lot. You will see PRRA and the boat pen from the river side of the parking lot.

Rowers attending regattas:

Regatta participation is just one aspect of the Ridgewood Crew experience. Other aspects include extensive practice sessions, team social events, volunteer opportunities and fundraising campaigns.

Rowers are transported by bus to most regattas, leaving from the Graydon Parking lot as early as 5:00am. Rowers are given bagels and juice for breakfast on the bus and spend their entire day with the team. They return on the bus, first to PRRA to unload boats, and continue to Graydon, sometimes arriving as late as 9:30pm.

Novice participation in regattas is generally limited to 3-4 regattas and not all novices will race at every regatta. Seasoned rowers generally participate in 6-7 regattas. It should be noted that athletes are not guaranteed to race at every regatta. Regatta participation is based on individual athlete performance, dedication and attitude and is decided entirely by the coaches. The two end-of-season regattas are Stotesbury Cup (Stotes) and Nationals. These are very competitive events where only the most focused and dedicated boats compete. While Stotes may allow certain novice boats to compete, it is up to the coaches whether RC enters any novice boats. Because participation in these regattas is so selective, both Stotes and Nationals are "self-funded": rowers who compete cover all regatta costs, typically \$300 per rower per event in addition to yearly fees.

Parents attending regattas:

Once the coaches have decided on race line-ups (which rowers will compete in which boats) for a particular regatta, RC enters these rowers and boats with the regatta's organizers. RC then receives a preliminary racing schedule with *approximate* times for each boat entered. This schedule is immediately forwarded to parents and rowers, typically on the Thursday or Friday before each regatta. Parents can use these *approximate* times as a guide for when to be at the regatta to see their rower compete. Races are short – rarely more than 10 minutes from start to finish – so leave yourself plenty of time to arrive and make your way to a good observation point (often near the Parent Tent explained below).

Regattas are family events; they are a time to get out and cheer on the team and meet the other parents. Some items you may consider bringing are additional clothing, water and or special snacks. Binoculars, cameras, folding chairs, rain gear, and blankets are all good ideas. Reading material can be useful as there is sometimes a long wait between races. Directions to regatta locations are available under the “Links” tab on ridgewoodcrew.com.

Parking at the Schuylkill River in Philadelphia is located at the adjacent park, up the hill from the Parent Tent and spectator area. This can be a fairly long walk, so plan additional time. If you have a grandparent or other relative or friend with walking difficulties, please send an email to row@ridgewoodcrew.com so a parking pass can be reserved (subject to availability) near the Parent Tent and spectator area.

Hosting a Regatta:

Each regatta is treated as an event, and we strive to make them all enjoyable regardless of the weather. The Team Tent, which provides a resting and hosting area for rowers and spectators, is central to the experience. The Team Tent Coordinator recruits a roster of different parent volunteers to co-host the TeamTent at each regatta. Hosting responsibilities include food and drink purchases (within coaches' dietary guidelines and a per-regatta budget), setting up the food tables, keeping hot water on for coffee/tea/hot chocolate, and grilling burgers and hot dogs. Please see the Team Tent Coordinator to find out how and when you can help.

Uniforms:

Ridgewood Crew supplies each novice rower with his or her uniform (unisuit). Rowers pay for any replacements. Team sweatshirts, t-shirts, jackets and other accessories are extra items that may be purchased.

Fundraising:

Fundraisers are held to help defray the costs of, and therefore reduce rower fees for, the sport.

Row-A-Thon – Held in early March, this event showcases our athletes in a friendly competition for the greatest distance rowed on the rowing machines, or “ergs.” Rowers sign up sponsors who donate a fixed amount or an amount based on the total distance rowed by the entire team. Each RC family is obligated to raise at least \$200 for this event.

Car Wash -- Held at Ridgewood High School on a Sunday in early-mid June.

No matter how well planned things are, problems and questions may arise that leave your rower uncertain or frustrated. Encourage your rower to speak with his/her coach with any issues or concerns. Our coaching staff wants to hear of any issues that are getting in the way of your rower's reaching his/her goals or potential, or enjoying the program. That said, the Board is available to address any of your concerns as a parent. With your help we will all have a successful season and again we welcome you and your child to Ridgewood Crew.

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