



SAFETY MANUAL

Revised Sept 2016

Welcome to the GAR Safety Manual. Safety considerations will take priority over every activity we undertake. It shall be the responsibility of the Rowing Director to keep the safety rules, policies and procedures (collectively "safety rules") up-to-date and to ensure that all coaches have annually reviewed them. The safety rules will be maintained on the GAR website.

Background Checks

GAR will conduct a background screening of each current and prospective athletic coach annually against state and federal registries of sexual predators and sexual offenders in accordance with Florida law. GAR will disqualify any person from acting as a coach in accordance with state law.

Rower Safety

GAR rowers have the responsibility to meet certain basic requirements.

- ❖ USRowing Safety Video -- All athletes, youth and masters, must watch the safety video administered by a GAR Coach. This is generally done within the first two weeks of one learning to row.
- ❖ Ability to Swim -- While it is not essential that a rower be a strong swimmer, it is critical that a coach be aware of anyone on his or her squad who is a weak swimmer. Such rowers will get the coach's foremost priority in the event of an emergency. A swim test will be given to all GAR Youth and adult rowers as soon as possible their first year, generally in September. This test will consist of treading water for five minutes, a 200 meter swim, and demonstrating competency in putting on a life-jacket in deep water, and is administered at a local pool. You do not need to pass the test to row, but you do need to attempt it so the coaching staff can identify swimming abilities.
- ❖ Ability to get back into one's boat from deep water -- Anyone rowing in GAR's single or double sculls without a coach in a launch alongside shall first prove to a GAR coach by demonstration in the water that he or she can safely climb back into a single scull from

deep water. This rule applies most often to adult rowers. Dump training sessions are conducted several times during the year.

- ❖ Cold Weather Sculling -- Due to dangers of hyperthermia, GAR rowers shall not go out in club singles or doubles unless there is a coach on the water if the temperature is at or below 35-degrees. Those going out in small boats without a coach must have a personal flotation device on boat.
- ❖ Boathouse Workouts -- Rowers shall not be permitted to work out in GAR facilities alone. Youth rowers shall not be permitted to remain in the GAR facility area without a coach present. This means that if a squad splits its rowers, some on the water, some on land, another coach must remain on shore with those rowers. A coach must remain present until all athletes have left the facilities. Adult rowers must notify another rower when they enter and leave the facility if working out alone.

GAR rowers have the responsibility to report any incidents to the coaching staff present.

GAR will educate its coaches, rowers and their parents or guardians of the nature and risk of concussion, head injuries, and heat illnesses. The parent or guardian must sign and return an informed consent that describes the nature and risk of concussion, head injury, and heat illnesses. Any youth suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury during a practice or competition will be immediately removed from the activity and may not return to practice or competition until a written medical clearance is submitted to the Rowing Director.

General Safety

Traffic Patterns

- ❖ Traffic Pattern – In order to minimize the possibility of collisions between rowing craft, a traffic pattern shall be followed by all coaches and coxswains. The traffic pattern on Newnans Lake shall be as follows: All along the west shore of the lake, northbound traffic stays far enough out from the weed line to allow the safe passage of southbound boats. Southbound traffic sticks as close as possible to the weed line (shore side). This is especially critical around Palm Point, which is a blind turn for fast moving boats. Before sending a boat around the Point at speed, the coach shall move ahead and position his or her launch in such a manner as to assure there is no oncoming traffic. In a nutshell: if you are going clockwise stay away from shore, if you are going counterclockwise stay along the shore!
- ❖ Race Course – When a course has been set on the lake, it is generally on a north-south axis. Southbound boats have priority on the course over northbound boats. In no event shall boats run the course simultaneously in opposite directions, no matter how many lanes exist. Coaches shall coordinate their use of the course before practice and on the water with cell phones.

- ❖ Right-of-Way – “Blind” boats have the right-of-way over boats having coxswains. Longer, less maneuverable boats have the right-of-way over shorter boats that can be turned and stopped more quickly. In canals only wide enough for one boat at a time, boats coming off the lake to dock have the right-of-way over boats that have just launched. Coaches should position their launches in such a way as to eliminate any guesswork in the canals.

Rowing Director’s Safety Responsibilities

Purpose: To outline the responsibilities of the Rowing Director with regard to the personal safety of the rowers. He/she may delegate various portions as needed. The Rowing Director’s primary responsibility is to ensure that the team is trained in a safe manner by well trained coaches in proper facilities. Key responsibilities include the following:

- ❖ Training and documentation of training the coaching staff on emergency measures and athletic safety program;
- ❖ Coordination of CPR/First Aid certification and documentation of staff;
- ❖ Documentation of Boating Certifications of launch drivers (boatus.org is an example);
- ❖ Scheduling First Aid Box inspections by coaching staff and documentation;
- ❖ Ensuring emergency medical information and contacts for all rowers, both Youth and Masters, is available;
- ❖ Training of coaching staff on use of cell phone for weather ap, emergency contacts, etc. (e.g. Storm);
- ❖ Trailer loading and check list (Attachment 1);
- ❖ Training the driving of the trailer to haul boats (see incidents in 2013);
- ❖ Ensure Driver Permission Forms are completed semiannually by parents (Attachment 2).

SAFETY EQUIPMENT

First Aid Boxes, Fire Extinguishers, and AED

Locations: a) Indoor Facility (2 first aid boxes, 2 fire extinguishers, 1 AED).

b) Shipping container north (1 first aid box, 1 fire extinguisher).

1. Ensure that all medications are not expired. Notify coach for replacement if expired.
2. Check that all contents are present and are within expiration dates.
 - a. Minimum contents will include:
 - i. Band-aids (assorted sizes)
 - ii. Antibiotic (Neosporin)
 - iii. Cortisone cream
 - iv. Ibuprofen
 - v. Ace wrap
 - vi. Cloth tape
 - vii. Triangle bandage, safety pins (for sling)
 - viii. Non vinyl gloves
 - ix. Scissors
 - x. Coban
 - b. Optional additions can include:
 - i. Diphenhydramine
 - ii. Hand Sanitizer
 - iii. Gauze
 - iv. Q-Tips
 - v. Wipes; Purell
 - vi. Face Shield
 - vii. Emergency blankets (for Powers Park First Aid Kit)
3. Test AED (check with Jacob?)
4. Ensure that all fire extinguishers have been inspected.
5. Ensure that there are ice packs in the freezer in the Indoor Center.

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

A variety of emergencies can occur during workouts both on land and water. These might include a snake or insect bite or getting hit by a tree limb or an oar (the proverbial catching a “crab”). Medical emergencies can range from having chest pains or nausea from heat exhaustion or difficulty breathing to something more serious. Youth rowers are always accompanied by a coach, so if he/she is not feeling well, the rower needs to notify their coach. The coach is CPR/AED certified. ALWAYS ERR ON THE SIDE OF CAUTION. IF YOU ARE NOT SURE, CALL 911.

A coach may have to deal with an emergency out on the lake. He/she should notify another coach or call 9-1-1. If the injury is serious enough to warrant taking the injured rower out of the boat into launch, and there is not someone else in the launch with the coach, then also take another rower out of the boat to help stabilize and be a resource on the way to the ambulance pickup point. Take the (two) rower’s oars into the launch to enable the coxswain to get the rest of the boat back to the Boathouse safely. (The oars will also help attract attention later).

EVACUATION POINTS

There are two primary evacuation points that can be used for emergencies: Powers Park’s dock and the Rowing Center. Most practices are currently held on the eastern shore or the southern cove and the evacuation point would be Powers Park dock, (Powers Park on SR 20, Hawthorne Road). Although the Rowing Center is still under construction, it can be accessed by ambulance and the coaches and rowers know its location on the water and can wet dock if necessary. From the northern half of the lake, the evacuation point will be the new Rowing Center, (151 SE 74th Street).

Two other evacuation points are available if needed: just south of Palm Point and Windsor Boat Ramp. The clearing south of Palm Point does not have a definite address for ambulances to reach however.

The tip of Palm Point is not accessible to an ambulance, so if you were in the central half of the lake, you would direct the ambulance to the point on Lake Shore Drive (CR 329B) just south of Palm Point Park. The ambulance can pull right up to the launch there.

If on the eastern shore of the lake, an alternate point is the Windsor boat ramp.

SEVERE WEATHER EMERGENCY PLAN

- ❖ Rowing conditions may change rapidly due to weather. Coaches will monitor weather conditions with their cellphones during practice to ensure rowers can return safely to the dock in case of deteriorating weather and plan practices accordingly. Storm is the preferred app to monitor storms and lightning activity in the Newnan's Lake area. If thunderstorms are within 10 miles of the lake, or lightning is visible, rowers will be taken to the dock. If a sudden storm appears, the alternate evacuation point will be used.
- ❖ Avoid any metal conductors (metal fences, power lines, etc.). Avoid standing in water. The restrooms in Powers Park can be used as shelter. Avoid standing under trees and assume the lightning position until the storm has passed if no other shelter can be found. (Lightning position: squat or sit, ball up feet together and wrap arms around legs)
- ❖ Coaches will maintain supervision of all rowers until an all clear is announced.

MEDICAL RESCUE

- ❖ Rescue emergencies occur when a rower becomes sick or injured offshore during practice. The coach will determine whether the rower needs to be transferred to the launch or can continue to row. Depending on the severity of the medical emergency, 911 should be called. The rower's condition, which evacuation point they are heading for and the approximate time it should take to get there should be communicated. (The 911 call usually will want to keep someone on the line.)

SWAMPED/OVERTURNED BOAT and other situations

- ❖ If a boat gets swamped (fills with water) or should overturn, rowers should stay with their shell, as it serves as a flotation device. The coach will either talk them back into the boat or arrange a safe rescue back to shore.
- ❖ Should a launch breakdown, the coach will call another coach and they will devise a plan. The rowers' safety will be the first priority and will be accompanied by a coach.

NIGHT AND ROWING IN THE FOG

- ❖ Any rowing done during hours of limited visibility will comply with the following rules: All rowing craft shall use a bow light. Craft not having a coaching launch alongside shall also use a stern light. Each coach working with a boat or boats during limited visibility rowing shall have lights on its bow and stern.

Attachment 1

GAR Trailer Loading Checklist

- ❖ Connect trailer to truck and check brakes, lights, and directional signals for proper operations
- ❖ Create a checklist and loading diagram for all equipment to be placed on the trailer. Bows first for 8's. Nothing should be placed past the vertical post on the bottom two racks.
- ❖ For each shell, the following steps need to be taken:
 - Boat is de-rigged; hardware reapplied and tightened with a wrench;
 - Riggers are secured together and placed into the trailer;
 - All seats have a bungee applied or are taken off the boat and put in the trailer;
 - All foot stretchers are tight and meet regatta safety rules;
 - A flag is applied to all sterns that create an overhang.
- ❖ Create an assembly area for all equipment to be loaded on the trailer.
- ❖ Compare checklist with assembly area to be sure nothing gets left behind.
- ❖ Check all straps and replace those in poor condition.
- ❖ Evenly distribute the weight of the equipment on the trailer.
- ❖ Plan the travel route. (Make a note of easily accessible fuel and meal stops)
- ❖ Before leaving and at all stops, drivers should re-check everything about the vehicles and make needed corrections (boat straps, lights, directional signals, brakes, flags, tow hitch, etc.)

Safety Equipment

Launch Checklist

- Cell phone (make sure it is charged)
- Rope (long and strong enough to tow a launch or rowing shell)
- First Aid Kit
- Tool Kit (7/16" wrench, adjustable wrench, screwdriver, spare parts)
- Tape (Electrical tape a must, but duct tape a good idea)
- Emergency Blankets (when temperature below 50 degrees)
- Life Preservers (bagged in 9)
- Paddle
- Whistle
- Gas