



## Mission Statement of Freedom Rowers

Freedom Rowers provide youth and adults of the Eastern Shore opportunity to learn the skill of rowing for pleasure and for competitive encounters with other rowers.

We believe rowing:

- ❖ builds self-confidence
- ❖ fosters team work
- ❖ contributes to health of mind and body
- ❖ offers youth the opportunity for advanced education through scholarships
- ❖ offers opportunity for participation to people who might not be interested in ball-oriented team sports
- ❖ offers the opportunity for a deeper appreciation for nature and hands-on education about the physical world (fluid dynamics)
- ❖ will build lasting friendships with others who participate in this sport
- ❖ will offer opportunity for travel and adventure to young people

## Core Values of Freedom Rowers

As an inclusive organization, we value the skill, strength, and intelligence of everyone in our diverse community and we will strive to have a team that is representative of this diversity. Realizing that this community has a wide range of ages, we hope to foster relationships between adults and youth in which young people will learn from the experience of the adults, and the adults will appreciate the gifts of young people. As a group, we value higher education and are committed to offer a program that will hone the skills of participants so that they can be candidates for institutions of higher education. We believe that this skill benefits health, fosters mental discipline, improves confidence and heightens appreciation for the beauty of the world in which we all live and work. We are committed to cooperative work and play; integrity in relationships and responsibilities; total commitment on the part of participants to the purpose of his/her team and the mission of this organization; and respect for the leaders of this organization.

## Vision Statement of Freedom Rowers

The goal of Freedom Rowers is to help youth and adults become all they have the potential to be through the sport of rowing. We will encourage young people to strive and succeed. We will create an environment in which they are free to fail. Free to challenge others. Free to appreciate the beauty of nature, the wind on their faces, the blisters on their hands, the splash of their oars in the water and the feeling of power that comes from the propulsion their strokes provide.

In a world of noise and chaos we will encourage people to experience the silence of the world of water at rest. We will encourage them to exult in victory and to understand that they may cry in defeat because they are free to reset their goals and strive for triumph another day. Participants in our organization have opportunity to do what can only be done in a free country where people use their wealth and vision to make an experience free to those who would not otherwise have it. Here, young people can develop strong bodies disciplined minds, and a camaraderie, which will lead them to be good defenders of the freedoms we cherish.

We offer freedom to stand tall, freedom to stoop low, freedom to raise people up. Celebrating what we have freely received, we are committed to giving.

## Goals of Freedom Rowers

Provide the opportunity for all rowers who choose to train competitively to race in a regatta.

Develop a program of mentoring for the youth program.

Continue discussions with the YMCA for potential partnership.

Assist all youth and adult rowers with seeking excellence.

## Administrative Information

The spring 2008 season

March 17-May 23 on Monday –Friday from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. and Saturday mornings from 7:30-9:30 a.m.

All youth are to meet at the back doors of the Y (by the vending machines) before getting in the bus. Youth rowers are NOT allowed to drive themselves to Evergreen Cove. Only rowers that meet at the Y will be allowed to participate in practice.

We do not charge a fee for the youth rowing practice sessions. If families of youth rowers could make a donation to the team, we would be grateful. A donation of \$250.00 would help to cover the costs of the program.

## Forms for Freedom Youth Rowers

All youth need to provide signed copies of the following forms. Youth that are returning to the program do not have to fill out every form each season.

Rowers Contract – Sign and return each season

Emergency Contact Information – Sign and return if there are changes

Release of Authorization and Obtain information for schools

Freedom Rowers Fact Sheet

Medical Form

Photograph Permission

Release for Transportation

Release of Claims Liability Form

Rules of Evergreen Cove

Sexual Harassment Form

Contacts and Volunteers (please see the enclosed team roster for contact information)

Coaches – John Hill, Head Coach and Diana Lobien, Learn to Row Coach

Coaching Assistants – Sarah Mackenzie, Jane Holman

Mentorship Coordinator – Susie Leight

Team Administrator– Diana Lobien

Team Manager, Youth – To be determined

Team Manager, Adult – To be determined

Forms Administrator – Susie Leight and Sarah Mackenzie

Tent Maintenance – Ethel Armstrong

Boat Maintenance – Mike Moore

Financial Recording – Robbin Hill at MidShore Community Foundation

Web Site Administrator – Al Cheezum

Party Event Coordinator – To be determined

Parent Liaison – Kathy Stone

Y Transportation – Diana Lobien, Sarah Mackenzie, John Hill

Daily Communications and Team Writer – Ann Dorbin

Regatta Committee – Susie Leight, Diana Lobien, To be determined

Fund Raising Committee – Rev. Abigail Crozier-Nestlehutt, Susan DuPont

Team Photographer – Richard Dorbin

Team Greeters, Youth – Ian Mackenzie, Sienna Chupek

Team Greeters, Adult – Patti Nash

Team Prayer Leader – Debi Whitehead

Team Thank You Notices – Debi Whitehead

## Recreational and Competitive Rowing

At the beginning of the season, the coaching staff will interview each rower to identify their individual goals for training. We will offer competitive and recreational levels of rowing. We encourage the parents to be involved with the rower's decision. Both levels of rowing are demanding as it is necessary to show up for practices on the water and be engaged in the learning process. Competitive rowers will be advised to training both on and off the water to maintain strength and endurance.

Competitive boat line ups may have to change at the last minute. Stuff happens! Each regatta can potentially have a different line up as one of our goals is to give all rowers interested in participating in a regatta the chance to compete.

The boat lineups are set 24 hours in advance for all practice sessions. It is REALLY important to let us know in advance if a practice session has to be missed so that the lineup can be changed BEFORE the rowers arrive on site. There is not enough time to re-work the line up once practice has started. If a rower does not show, the boat they were assigned to will not go out on the river. That group of rowers will stay at the Y for that practice session. We encourage the rowers to use their time wisely to get their homework completed so as not to disrupt their practice sessions.

#### Coaches Notes

-WELCOME TO ROWING-

Rowing is not a widely known sport, so it may be useful to offer this primer to parents of novice rowers who do not know what to expect.

The central thing to understand is that rowers are endurance athletes. In addition to the skills the new oarsman will develop with oars and shells, he/she is undertaking a highly competitive sport that also requires great strength and fitness. Like races in running, swimming, and other sports, a rowing race is a fierce contest that takes long preparation and a supreme effort to win.

A beginner's first few days of training are confusing, strenuous, uncomfortable, require spontaneous cooperation with people they don't know and take place in an alien environment. Practices will be exhausting and will not always go well. The first days may convince your youngster that this sport is not for them. If they express this doubt, hear them. Most youngsters immediately find the joy in the sense of speed and strength and grace that is the essence of our sport. They will soon begin to look towards their time in the boat as the best part of their day.

#### The care and feeding of young athletes

As your child progresses, please be aware that he/she is becoming an athlete and will need your help to succeed. Training successfully requires attention to rest and nutrition. For their health and happiness, regular balanced meals are essential, as is regular and sufficient sleep.

Oarsmen burn a lot of calories in practice and can be expected to come home hungry. Whereas most of us are trying to limit carbohydrates, they are an essential source of energy for an athlete. Do pay attention to the foods they eat, and acquaint yourself with the concept of the "glycemic index" of foods. Refined sugar and carbohydrates should be avoided in favor of complex carbohydrates from grains, nuts, fruits and vegetables that digest more slowly and keep blood sugar levels more steady.

Rest is a key element in the training of an athlete and this is especially true during the competition period when the athlete is preparing for a race. Two or three nights ahead of the event, early bedtimes should be enforced. The night before the race may be spent traveling, in a hotel or just so keyed up that sleep is difficult. Not starting out with a sleep deficit is an advantage.

On race day, a diet with a low glycemic index is in order. A moderate breakfast and frequent light snacks keep the body ready. When the rowers are in heats, they are well advised to feed and hydrate between races.

## Rowing attire

Rowing will put your athlete out in all sorts of weather. They will need to pay attention to predictions of temperature, wind, sun and rain. They should dress appropriately, in layers, preferably in fabrics that wick perspiration away from the skin. Clothing should fit close to the body but allow freedom of movement. Loose clothing can become entangled in the oar or in the wheels of the seat. A wind resistant jacket is very useful in the early season.

The members of the team who are coxing the shells (steering the boat) should dress in layers to keep warm. A water resistant wind breaker is advisable. Warm hat and gloves are also advised. It is colder on the water than on land.

In the late spring and summer, heat and sun are the main issues. Light colored wicking fabrics are very helpful, as are hats, sunblock and sunglasses. The latter should not be seen as a fashion item, but as an investment in long-term vision health. Water bottles are likewise essential, year round; polycarbonate bottles work well.

## Blisters

Though you may be anticipating complaints about sore muscles and exhaustion, you should be warned about blisters. For the first few weeks of the season, new rowers are invariably alarmed by the many blisters that turn to open wounds on their hands. Eventually these will skin over and become protective calluses. Until then, a topical disinfectant such as hydrogen peroxide and cleanliness should suffice. Trainer's tape can be helpful during practice while the blisters heal, but tape and gloves are to be avoided in the long term.

## Team Considerations

Ability and performance in rowing are developed by persistent, dedicated hard work by the athlete individually and by the crew collectively. More than in many other sports, these efforts are rewarded by quantifiable results. This puts a premium on attendance, cooperative attitude, maturity, and dependability. Remember that your youngster is part of a team that depends on him/her. Failure to attend practice impacts all of the team and should be avoided.

## Rowing and Beyond!

### Resources available to the rowers

Freedom Rowers will help find tutors or mentors for the youth. Please contact Susie Leight, Mentorship Coordinator if you have any questions.

We will develop resumes for each of the rowers at the end of the season provided they have supplied us with their personal information. Several of the adult rowers have offered to set up informational interviews so that the youth can practice their job/school interviewing skills. Several members of the community (and beyond) have offered to volunteer their time for an office visit to our youth rowers if they are interested in a particular field of study.

The coaches and staff have provided letters of recommendation for several rowers. We will gladly contact any college or university that offers a rowing program on behalf of the youth rowers. Please consider using the regatta trips as recruiting tools.

## Volunteer Opportunities

There is always room for volunteer work at Freedom Rowers (no amount of time is too small)! Please consider the following opportunities:

- ❖ Regatta preparation and attendance
- ❖ Videotaping practice sessions – a valuable coaching tool
- ❖ Carpool for youth who do not have transportation home after practice
- ❖ Providing bottled water, trash removal, washing towels and recharging the cox boxes
- ❖ Fundraising

If you have any interest in assisting in these areas, please contact the team administrator or a team captain.

## Partnerships

Freedom Rowers leases the waterfront from Evergreen Cove. Our lease agreement is that we maintain the area that the rowers use, keep the shoreline clean, do not use their parking lots for more than one or two cars and respect their missions and programs. Evergreen Cove offers quiet meditation, yoga, therapy and massage to their clients.

For the past few seasons we have had great success with the exception of car traffic. We can NOT have rowers dropped off or picked up from Evergreen Cove on a regular basis on the Monday –Friday practice sessions.

This season we will be using the YMCA vans to transport the youth. All youth are to meet at the Y and be picked up at the Y following practice. The bus will leave the front parking lot at 3:30 p.m. If a rower is late and misses the van, they miss the practice. If we need to adjust the start time to accommodate all of the rowers from the different school campuses we will. Youth rowers CAN NOT drive themselves to practice.

We can not jeopardize use of Evergreen Cove's site over the issue over the issue of transportation.

Freedom Rowers is not affiliated with the YMCA.

## Comments to the Coaches and Staff

If any parents or youth rowers have a comment or question that you would like addressed in an anonymous manner, please send us a note to Freedom Rowers, P. O. Box 3086, Easton, Maryland 21601. All comments will be reviewed and will be answered in a positive manner to the entire team.

## Last Note

Freedom Rowers is energized through grace. The donations that are suggested do not cover the costs to run the team. Our head coach attends 11 practice sessions per week and weekend regattas WITHOUT any compensation other than 'Thank You'. We encourage the youth to give back to the team by having a cheerful and optimistic attitude. Offering a thank you to the coaching staff at the end of a practice as well as taking care of their fellow team mates and the equipment is appreciated.

Thank you for participating with the team! Please let us know how can serve you better.