



John M.S. Lecky UBC Boathouse
Safety Handbook for all UBC Rowing, St. George's and Community Programs

Introduction

This handbook outlines the safety policies and procedures to be followed by all rowing and paddling participants partaking in said activities out of the John M.S. Lecky UBC Boathouse. Head Coaches, Dragon Boat Coaches, and team captains are responsible for the safety training and enforcement of these safety policies and procedures within their programs.

Safety Factors

Waivers:

Program participants in all programs must provide a completed waiver prior to the commencement of their program. Waivers are valid from September 1 through to August 31 each year. Participants must complete a new waiver each year. It is up to the Head Coach for each program area to ensure that all participants have completed a waiver prior to allowing them access to equipment. The UBC Boathouse provides waivers for all Community Rowing & Paddling program participants. UBC Rowing and St. George's School Rowing are responsible for their own waivers and the collection and retention of these.

Swimming/Medical Requirements – Rowing Only:

All participants must be able to competently swim 100m unaided, tread water for 15 minutes and be able to don a life jacket while in the water. Participants must provide one of the following to prove such competencies:

- Attend a swim test scheduled by UBC Rowing, St. George's or Community Programs
- Certification from a certified swimming instructor on swim school letterhead
- Video of athlete performing the above tasks in a pool. Video must be verified by a Head Coach.

Pleasure Craft Operators Card

All coaches, instructors, participants and volunteers operating a UBC Boathouse coach boat/safety boat must have a valid Canadian Coast Guard Pleasure Craft Operators Card.

All said drivers must:

- Provide a photocopy of their Pleasure Craft Operators Card to the main office for records
- Attend an orientation by a Head Coach or Facility Programs Manager or designated representative prior to operating the coach boat
- Sign the coach boat orientation form

Water Training

- All participants and coaches will receive comprehensive instruction in safety procedures prior to involvement in rowing or paddling. Head coaches will provide a review session of rules and safety procedures at the beginning of each their season/program for athletes and other coaching staff.
- All athletes and coaches will be informed and educated on the river's features including tides, danger spots, obstructions and other safety hazards prior to their involvement in

rowing or paddling. This includes information on safe beaching locations in case of an emergency. Athletes and coaches should use the safety map located on the outside of the Don Rix Community Bay as a safety and course reference.

- Each coach will complete the Connect Online Training Safety Manual Review yearly. All athletes and coaches will respect the rights of other users, including marine life, of the River and obey the course rules and flow patterns.

Hours of Operation

- Dawn: Other than the UBC Rowing Teams, SGS Varsity Rowing Team, and TBRC Gold Team, no rowing or paddling activities shall commence prior to sunrise or 5:45am (whichever comes first). All boats leaving the dock in the dark must be equipped with operating lights. (All rowers practicing before sunrise must be accompanied by a coach boat at all times and must have appropriate lighting on all boats.)
- Dusk: Other than the UBC Rowing Team, no rowing or paddling activities shall be on the water at or past sunset. (UBC Rowers practicing after sunset must be accompanied by a coach boat at all times and must have appropriate lighting on all boats.)

Supervision

UBC Rowing:

All crews heading out without a coach boat must ensure:

- They have informed their coach prior to heading out and their coach has approved them to row solo and has approved the equipment they would like to use
- They sign in and out of the log book which is located outside the washrooms on the upper level
- They have a PFD and whistle in their shell
- Remain between the No. 2 Road Bridge and the Swing Bridge

St. George's School & Community Rowing Programs:

All crews must be under the supervision of a coach on a coach boat at all times while on the water.

Community Paddling:

March through September – Teams are able to paddle without the supervision of a coach boat during these months.

October – February – Teams operating during these months must have a coach boat with them at all times.

Dragon boats must have a minimum of 12 capable adult paddlers or 14 capable junior paddlers plus a steers-person in order to be able to leave the dock.

For all coached programs, athletes must stay in proximity to the coach boat responsible for their supervision.

The maximum allowable coach boat/athlete ratio is 1/18 for experienced crews in a structured program, or 1/10 for less experienced crews in a structured program. There may be no more than 2 people in a coach boat (1 driver + 1 passenger) at any time when coaching.

*Dragon boat programs have a coach/athlete ratio of 1/26.

Coaching Requirements

- All UBC Rowing, St. George's and Community Program coaches must have and maintain valid Emergency First Aid and CPR C certifications.

Equipment Requirements

Note: All vessels must adhere to the appropriate Transport Canada regulations which are paraphrased below. For further details, please refer to the Safe Boating Guide and Transport Canada boating regulations.

Rowing:

All shells on the water must be deemed to be rowable, seaworthy and will contain the following: navigation light(s) in dark conditions, a sound signaling device, and an inflatable personal floatation device (PFD) or lifejacket at each seat. Alternatively, a PFD or lifejacket for each rower may be stowed in the supervising coach boat(s), as per Transport Canada Regulations (as outlined in the Safe Boaters Guide).

Rowing Shell Navigation Lights:

All vessels leaving the dock in dark conditions must have appropriate lighting – at least one bow flasher.

Paddling:

Dragon boats must be deemed seaworthy.

All paddlers are required to wear an appropriately sized PFD at all times.

Each dragon boat must be equipped with a safety kit containing a throw line and sound signaling device.

Coach Boats:

Coach boats must carry (required under section 16.02 of the Small Vessel regulations to the Canada Shipping Act)

- PFD's of the appropriate size for each crew member on board
- PFD's of appropriate size for each member of the crew of the largest shell being attended
- A bailer or pump
- A buoyant heaving line not less than 15m (49'3") in length
- A sound signaling device or a sound signaling appliance
- A watertight flashlight
- A manual propelling device or anchor
- A class 5BC fire extinguisher if the launch has an inboard engine or a fixed fuel tank
- Navigation lights if operated before sunrise, after sunset or in periods of restricted visibility

The UBC Boathouse also requires all coaches to carry a fully charged cell phone on their person.

Weather restrictions

WHEN IN DOUBT, DON'T GO OUT!

All coaches and athletes must be sensitive to the potential danger from darkness, fog, high winds, ice, cold water, storms or any combination of the above.

UBC Rowing, St. George's, Community Program and Dragon Boat coaches are responsible for determining if the conditions are too dangerous to row or paddle due to any of the above circumstances. No athlete will be required to participate against their judgment should conditions be questionable.

All coaches are discouraged from rowing in the following conditions. Only Head Coaches may approve assistant coaches taking out crews within these conditions:

- Temperature is less than 0 degrees Celsius (between 1 degree Celsius and 3 degrees Celsius, only big boats are permitted on the water)
- White caps are forming on the water immediately off the dock
- Thunder or lightning are present
- Visibility: recommended 1000m, coach's discretion

Flow Pattern

All water users must adhere to the flow patterns specified on the Safety Map located on the outside of the Don Rix Community Bay.

Also,

- All novice rowers and paddlers must stay between the No 2 Road Bridge and Swing Bridge. No dragon boats are permitted South of the No. 2 Road Bridge
- Only experienced rowers are permitted beyond the No. 2 Road Bridge and they must be accompanied by a coach boat and follow the flow pattern carefully to ensure they remain out of float plane territory.
- Faster crews have the right of way and slower crews must yield
- Dragon boaters must hug the shoreline
- The 2k course, during peak hours, is to be used for continuous pieces only. No stopping on the course.
- In poor conditions, water priority is given to competitive teams in each program area
- Extra vigilance is required past the Swing Bridge and should only be done by competitive crews with a coach
- Adherence to speed limits and no wake zones is mandatory

Emergency Procedures

Emergency Agencies:

For any emergency requiring external assistance CALL 9-1-1 and state:

- Which agency is required (police, ambulance or fire)
- Your name and location – UBC Boathouse, 7277 River Road, Richmond
- A concise description of the situation
- Any need for water rescue

To reach the Canadian Coast Guard, call 1-800-567-5111 or 1-250-363-2333. All coaches should have these numbers as well as the cell numbers for each program area's Head Coach and the Facility Manager's cell number stored in their cell phones.

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A coach present will assume command in the event of an emergency and will direct and control operations until the arrival of the appropriate authorities. At this time the coach will identify him/herself to the authorities and continue to liaise with authorities and direct other coaching staff accordingly.

- An emergency call should be placed to the Facility Manager at the first available opportunity.
- Incident reports must be filled out immediately following the incident by the coach that took charge. Time is of the essence as the Facility Manager needs to forward this form to UBC within 24 hours of the incident
- Follow up with your head coach regarding all incidents

Extreme Weather Conditions

Should unsafe conditions occur during a water session, all boats are required to proceed immediately to the most accessible and safest location. While this is typically the Boathouse, the Boathouse may not always be the most accessible option. Other accessible options may be a marina or safe piece of shoreline where athletes can get off the water quickly. Please see the map below for safe haven options:

PERSONAL SAFETY IS PARAMOUNT AND SUPERSEDES THE SAFETY OF EQUIPMENT.

Rowing:

Once at a safe spot, if it is possible, remove the shell from the water and place it upside down on shore. Athletes should await rescue from that location unless all athletes are uninjured and hypothermia is not a risk. Do not underestimate the presence of shock.

Paddling:

Once at a safe spot, if it is possible, tie the dragon boat in a safe location. Athletes should await rescue from that location unless all athletes are uninjured and hypothermia is not a risk. Do not underestimate the presence of shock.

Signals

Emergency: International Distress Signal – raise and lower outstretched arms repeatedly. Use only for serious trouble. (In a dragon boat, raising paddles overhead signals the same type of serious distress).

- Daylight – sound signaling device
- Darkness – sound signaling device and wave light over head

Boat Mishaps/Survival Procedures

Rowing:

All athletes must remain as calm as possible and the coach if present, otherwise, coxswain/bow person should assume command and check every athlete continually until rescued. All athletes should immediately put on any available clothing, then put on the PFD's and secure. The coxswain must immediately signal for help using the signaling device and/or light. If the PFD's are located in the coach boat, they must be distributed and put on immediately. Coach boat drivers should judge wind and tide conditions before tossing PFD's to rowers.

Coaches are still responsible for the safety of ALL crews. Send other crews back to safety while dealing with a flipped or distressed crew.

Shell swamped but floating and athletes out of the water: Align the shell to minimize further swamping, then remain upright and in seat awaiting rescue (assume a fetal like position at top of slide). Keep oars stationary and directly perpendicular to the shell.

Shell sinking deeper into water, submerged or capsized: Should a shell fill with water or submerge, and safe harbor is not possible, the following procedures are to be followed:

- The shell should be rolled upside-down to increase buoyancy by trapping as much air as possible. If wind is a factor, roll with the wind. Oars should remain in the oarlocks to increase buoyancy.
- ATHLETES MUST STAY WITH THE SHELL AND NOT ATTEMPT TO SWIM ASHORE. Both the boat and oars usually float and will support the crew. The group shall “buddy up” across the boat with even distribution on either side of the shell (ie. 1&2, 3&4) and huddle towards the middle or high point of the shell. The coxswain must buddy with the seat adjacent pair. Each buddy is responsible for holding onto the other person while they are draped across the shell.

Pairing is essential as it gives added life support to each athlete (each is holding on to the life of another). This facilitates reciprocal communication and positive support. This relationship should be continued until actual rescue, when athletes should be rescued in pairs. This will prevent premature feeling of relief resulting from rescue contact, and letting go before the rescuers take firm hold of the athletes.

Cold water considerations:

- Minimize movement to preserve body heat (no swimming or treading water). Use the HELP (Heat Escape Lessen Position) or a modified HELP position when buddying up across the overturned shell. (HELP Position: legs curled towards chest and arms around chest in fetal-like position)
- Keep clothes on and put on hat/mitts etc
- Get body as much out of the water as possible by getting on top of boat
- Assume fetal position, if possible. Protect groin/armpits/neck and head as much as possible.

Small boat considerations:

- SMALL BOATS, WHERE POSSIBLE, MUST ROW IN GROUPS. If a partner’s shell submerges or capsizes the “buddy” athlete(s) must ensure the other athlete(s) are out of danger (back in shell or on shore) before going to get help.
- The smaller the boat the better the relative buoyancy. It is possible to reenter the shell and get ashore if conditions are not serious.
- To re-enter, make sure the oars are perpendicular to the shell and grasp with one hand. Pull yourself up so you are lying across the bow side of the cockpit. Pivot to seat yourself on the runners. Slowly maneuver your legs into position. (Re-enter one at a time in crew boats, but all oars should be perpendicular).

Paddling

Dragon Boat swamped but still floating:

Dragon boat swamped but floating and athletes out of the water: Align the boat to minimize further swamping, then remain upright and in seat awaiting rescue (assume a fetal like position in the seat). Steers person is to instruct paddling pairs to keep an eye on each other and report to the steers person if problems arise.

Dragon Boat sinking deeper into water submerged:

All athletes must remain as calm as possible and the steersperson should assume command and check every athlete continually until rescued. All athletes should immediately put on any available clothing. The steersperson must immediately signal for help using the signaling device and paddle.

Dragon Boat capsized:

- ATHLETES MUST STAY WITH THE BOAT AND NOT ATTEMPT TO SWIM ASHORE. The boat usually floats and will support the crew. Paddlers must stay in constant communication with their seat partner. If able, paddlers can buddy up across the boat holding hands. If not, each paddler shall reach under the boat and hold onto the seat.
- If paddlers become trapped under the boat when it capsizes, they will likely have an air bubble from which to breath. It is imperative that they be helped out from underneath. Their seat partner or nearby and willing paddler needs to go under and coach them out. All parties must report the status of their seat partner to the steers person immediately.

Cold water considerations:

- Minimize movement to preserve body heat (no swimming or treading water). Use the HELP (Heat Escape Lessen Position) or a modified HELP position when buddying up across the overturned shell.
- Keep clothes on and put on hat/mitts etc
- Get body as much out of the water as possible by getting on top of boat
- Assume fetal position, if possible. Protect groin/armpits/neck and head as much as possible.

Rescue Procedures for Rowing and Paddling

Coach Boat capacity:

- The maximum legal capacity of a coach boat shall not be exceeded in a rescue. In extreme conditions those rescued must be taken directly to the shore or the nearest safe spot. Multiple trips may be required to remove all those involved in the accident as quickly and safely as possible.

Approach:

Any accident shall be approached from the leeward side, into the wind, and from the up current direction to prevent the coach boat from being pushed onto the shell(s) or dragon boat, and to

ensure maximum control. It is best to approach bow first (rather than alongside) and reverse out of the incident

Assessing the situation:

- The conditions of the people involved and the severity of the circumstances must be assessed quickly.
- Verbal contact with those in the water must be established so that they can be talked through the rescue quickly: tell the people in the water what is going to happen so they know what is going on.
- Those in greatest risk (distress) must be rescued first. Rescue must occur in pairs.
- A head count will be conducted upon the launch's arrival and then repeated upon leaving.

Reporting incidents:

All incidents and accidents, including a capsized shell, swamped shell, first aid administered etc must be reported to the Facility Manager immediately following the incident via the incident report form located at <http://ubcboathouse.com/administration-forms/>.

Penalties for Safety Infractions

Safety infractions will be reported to and handled by the Facility Manager.

I have read, understood, and will abide by all of the procedures and rules listed in the most current version of the UBC Boathouse Safety Manual.

Name: _____.

Signature: _____.

Date: _____.