

Orange County Rowing Association Safety Rules

INTRODUCTION

The Safety Committee shall consist of:

- A member of the Board of Directors or designate
- Director of Safety (if there is one)
- A representative of one of the major tenants (San Miguel, etc.)
- A representative from one of the other programs using the Boathouse
- OCRA Head Coach (if there is one)
- Other interested Members and Program Representatives

The Safety Committee shall:

- Meet at least once per year to review Safety matters.
- Recommend any Rules/Guideline changes once per year.
- Respond to requests by OCRA administration for assistance in interpreting rules, assessing penalties and the like.

OCRA Administration shall be responsible for:

- holding a spring and fall seasonal safety meeting with mandatory attendance by coaches and crew leaders, scullers, coxswains.
- responding to breaches of the Rules and Guidelines or other unsafe practices as set out in the Rules.
- Maintaining and posting as appropriate, listings of crew leaders and certified scullers.
- Alert Safety Committee to reported incidents as necessary.
- holding a Safe Boating Course once a year.
- holding a Coxswains' Training and Scullers meeting once a year.

SECTION 1 SAFETY RULES

1.1 Go/No Go Decisions

Rule 1.1.1 When the docks are closed, no member of OCRA or of any affiliated group or any individual may launch any type of boat.

Rule 1.1.2 All rowers and paddlers must abide by the provisions of the published safety matrix, which represents minimum acceptable standards for water temperature and flow for safe rowing and paddling conditions.

Rule 1.1.3 OCRA owned equipment may not be taken to other river launching locations to avoid these guidelines.

OCRA docks are available for the purpose of launching boats unless they have been closed by the President. When closing the docks, the President shall take under consideration criteria affecting boating safety as specified by the Board. When the docks are closed, no boats may be launched

from OCRA by any user or individual. When the docks are closed, they shall remain closed until 5:30 AM the following day unless the President has opened them.

When the docks are open, it does not necessarily mean that it is safe to row or paddle. It is the responsibility of every rower, paddler, coxswain, steersperson, and coach to assess all the conditions, including weather, which may affect safety and to act in a manner consistent with the Rules and Guidelines of OCRA (including the Safety Matrix), USRowing.

The Safety Matrix, included as Appendix A, may be updated and adjusted from time to time. The most current version will be posted on-line and in both boathouses. The safety matrix does not cover all conditions relevant to safety, and each rower, paddler, or coach is responsible to assess all conditions and decide whether, even if permitted by the Matrix, it is advisable to launch.

Rule 1.1.4 All decisions on whether it is safe to launch, even if permitted by the Matrix, is at the discretion of the most senior OCRA coaching staff member on site.

1.2 Traffic Patterns

Rule 1.2.1 All watercraft must be in compliance with the relevant boating regulations including General Marine Right of Way as promulgated by the NYS Department of Parks and recreation, and other agencies.

Rule 1.2.2 All OCRA boats should comply with the posted OCRA traffic patterns. Any boat not complying with the posted traffic patterns must yield right of way to boats in the pattern, except in the case of emergency.

Rule 1.2.3 Boats traveling in the channel may not do slow drills, such as pick drills, if there are other boats behind.

General Marine Rules of Right of Way

- Vessels with the least maneuverability have right-of-way, but should be cautious and take action to avoid all other types of boats.
- Non-powered boats have right of way over powered boats.
- Barges, have very limited maneuverability, so that they always have right of way over rowing shells, kayaks, or dragon boats. Also, barge pilots cannot see small craft easily and their radar will not pick up rowing shells, kayaks, or dragon boats. Be aware that there is a significant 'blind spot' (the line of sight from the pilot house to beyond the front-most barge) in front of a barge. When in doubt, always yield the right-of-way.
- Powered boats such as launches must be operated at a rate of speed that will not endanger the life or property of any person. Power boats must maintain a slow, minimum height swell speed when operated within 100 feet of the shoreline, floats, docks, launch ramps, swimmers, downed skiers, anchored, moored or drifting boats, or in areas marked with 'Slow - No wake' buoys. You may wish to take the bow number (NY registration) of any boat violating these rules and report the incident to OCRA or the NYS Department of Parks and recreation.

River Buoys

- River buoys generally mark the navigation channel for larger commercial traffic.
- Striking buoys, particularly in combination with fast current, is a significant safety hazard and is likely to cause serious equipment damage. Care must be taken by all persons responsible for

course to locate the buoys well in advance of reaching them and planning safe passage past them.

Traffic Patterns at OCRA Docks

- Launch with bow to the north (Newburgh-Beacon Bridge).
- Land with bow to the south.
- Before launching and after landing, place all oars clear of the dock.
- After launching, paddle upstream to the Regal Bad Building. No boat will travel further than .250m from dock without the accompaniment of an OCRA approved launch boat.
- Incoming (docking) boats have right of way over launching boats.
- When launching and docking, always use the most upstream section of available dock space and walk the boat up as space opens up.
- Boats may not turn in front of or between the docks, unless there is no other traffic.
- When other crews are waiting for dock space, tie in and adjust foot stretchers on the water.

Traffic Patterns

- Keep to the left hand side (from the coxswain's or paddlers' perspective) of the river, the port side of the channel (close to shore) while traveling North.
- Keep to the right hand side (from the coxswain's or paddlers' perspective) of the river, the starboard side of the channel (out shore shore) while traveling South. Be sure to stay out of the shipping channel.
- Boats are to travel through the openings in the Newburgh-Beacon Bridge that are on the left hand side (from the coxswain's or paddlers' perspective) of the shipping arch (largest arch).
- Boats are never to travel in the shipping arch.
- Boats are never to row through the arch that is closest to shore (rocks present)
- Observe right of way.
- Boats doing power pieces must yield the right of way.
- Boats without coxswains have right of way over boats with coxswains.
- Coaches and all paddlers and rowers should be aware that the center of the river is a federally designated commercial waterway, used by barges.
- All boats are to stay out of the main shipping channel whenever possible. The channel is marked by large navigation buoys on both the north and south sides of the Newburgh-Beacon Bridge.

1.3 Safety Equipment Requirements

Rule 1.4.1 Coaching and escort launches must be equipped with all required safety equipment

Rule 1.4.2 All rowing and paddling boats shall be equipped with required safety equipment.

Rule 1.4.3 It is the responsibility of the person in charge of each watercraft to ensure that it is in proper operating condition and that all required safety equipment is on board and properly deployed.

Motorized Launches

A launch **MUST** carry all equipment required by federal and state regulations and other equipment by good safe boating practices, specifically:

- A Coast Guard Approved Personal Flotation Device (PFD) for each person in the launch and each person in a boat not already carrying one.
- A throwable rescue device such as an approved floating seat cushion.
- Lights if before sunrise or after sundown. All boats will have standard red/green bow lights and all-around white stern light. A spotlight must also be available and used while in a launch in the before sunrise or after sundown.
- An efficient noise making device.
- An anchor with at least 50' of anchor line attached to launch.
- At least one oar or paddle.
- Valid registrations.
- Medical Kit.
- "Space Blankets" as required by the safety matrix.

Paddling Boats

PFD's must be worn by all paddlers or children age 12 and under, steerers, drummers, Corporate, Program, and Summer League Participants and special needs paddlers/rowers.

All kayakers must wear PFD's

Rowing Boats

Coxswains must wear or have available a PFD

The status of rower's needs for PFD's is unclear under present law. Oars, not including the adjustable handle type, have counted as PFD's for rowers, but it is not clear if this will continue. When in doubt, carry a PFD such as an auto-inflate pouch or a regular life jacket. Children under 12 and any adults not having passed their swim tests must wear a PFD.

Lights for Rowing Shells and Paddling Boats

All rowing shells, sculls and kayaks shall exhibit properly functioning lights before and after sunset. These times are posted daily in and around the Boathouses.

These lights must be large enough to be clearly visible from a distance of 2 miles.

Bow light: solid or flashing red/green lights

Stern light: flashing white light

All bow lights shall be mounted on the rowing shell. On sculling boats, the stern light shall be mounted on the rowing shell. In stern-coxed boats, it shall be permissible for the stern light to be worn by the coxswain, provided that it faces in the appropriate direction, does not hang down, and is not obscured by the coxswain's hair or clothing.

1.4 Behavior at OCRA Facilities and on OCRA Equipment

Rule 1.5.1 No rowdy behavior, horseplay or any behavior likely to cause injury to persons or damage to property is permitted

Rule 1.5.2 No alcohol is permitted to be brought to or consumed on the premises or in any OCRA boat, except in connection with Club sanctioned events and parties.

Rule 1.5.3 No weapons, knives (over 4 inches), or firearms of any description are permitted in OCRA facilities or equipment.

Rule 1.5.4 No Public Displays of Affection (PDA) of any kind (boy/girl, boy/boy, girl/girl).

Rule 1.5.5 We are a substance free facility. Smoking, the illegal (i.e. underage) consumption of alcoholic beverages, and the use of illicit substances of any kind on OCRA property will result in the immediate termination of your access to the facility and participation in any, and all OCRA rowing programs.

Rule 1.5.6 Personal Belongings (bags, clothing, etc.) are not to be left in the boat trailer.

Rule 1.5.7 No foul language (i.e. curse words, derogatory remarks, etc.) at practice and regattas.

Rule 1.5.8 All damage to equipment (large or small) is to be reported to a member of the coaching staff ASAP.

Rule 1.5.9 No rower is to make repairs or adjustments to equipment without the authorization from a member of the coaching staff.

Rule 1.5.10 Equipment and tools must be returned to their designated areas (oars, boats, gas, tools, etc).

Rule 1.5.11 Dispose of garbage (water bottles, food wrappers, etc.) properly

Rule 1.5.12 No rower is to be on OCRA property when practice is not in session, unless he/she is under direct supervision of a coach or authorized adult.

Rule 1.5.13 The OCRA, and the HVRL have banned "dock jumping" due to numerous safety concerns. Any rower that purposely enters the water off an OCRA dock will be subject to immediate disciplinary action.

Rule 1.5.14 Rowers must report any problems they see (equipment damage, behavioral problems, bullying, rule infractions, etc.). If you see something, say something!

Rule 1.5.15 No boat will row further than 250 meters past the dock without a launch boat present.

Rule 1.5.16 Rowers will not operate motorized launch boats.

Rule 1.5.17 Rowers are to be appropriately attired at all times.

Rule 1.5.18 Rowers must possess the swimming ability pursuant to the USRowing guidelines.

Rule 1.5.19 It is the responsibility of the rower to arrange transportation to and from practices and regattas.

Rule 1.5.20 Athletes will show the upmost level of respect for members of the coaching staff. Arguing, and other forms of disrespect will not be tolerated.

Rule 1.5.21 Anyone in a motorized launch must wear a PFD from November 1st – May 1st pursuant to NYS Nav. Law Section 40.1e

1.5 Incident Reports

Rule 1.6.1 All occurrences of personal injury, property or equipment damage, collision with other boats, and equipment maintenance required must be reported immediately to the Head Coach, Staff member or a member of the OCRA Safety Committee.

Rule 1.6.2 OCRA Incident Report and/or Damage Maintenance Forms must be filed as required. See Appendices for Incident Report Form, Equipment Damage/Maintenance Form, and Equipment Damage policy, for current Safety Committee members.

Should reports of such incidents be required by any governmental authority, such reports must be filed in timely fashion and OCRA must be copied.

1.6 Infractions

When the Head Coach, Board of Directors, and/or the Director of Safety becomes aware of a breach of the Rules and Guidelines or of an otherwise unsafe practice, the person(s) in question will be given: a reminder of the Rule/Guideline or safety principle in question (in writing if necessary), and/or conduct a meeting in person or on phone which shall be documented.

If a person shows a blatant disregard for a Rule/Guideline (once reminded), OR an incident report form is filed which raises serious safety concerns, then, the Director of Safety and/or the Head Coach shall ask the person to meet with them to discuss the incident. The meeting shall be structured as follows:

- (a) the facts will be reviewed (with reference to the IRF), then
- (b) the relevant Rules/Guidelines/safety principles will be reviewed, and
- (c) the meeting will discuss how to avoid future incidents of this kind
- (d) the meeting shall be documented.

Following such a meeting, the Director of Safety and the Head Coach shall, if they see fit, consult with the Safety Committee and/or recommend further action to the Board of Directors, including, but not limited to:

- (a) Modification of OCRA's Rules and Guidelines,
- (b) Suspension or revocation of access to OCRA
- (c) Withdrawal of use privileges to OCRA equipment and/or facilities
- (d) In the case of High School and College programs, give notice of the matter to the parents' group, Athletic director or other appropriate persons.

The person concerned shall be given notice of any such recommendation prior to the Board meeting at which it will be considered.

SECTION 2 SAFE PRACTICES

2.1 Equipment Checkout

1. Each rower, paddler, and sculler should take personal responsibility for:
 - a) being fully aware of the weather conditions and possible safety hazards. Listen to the weather forecast and observe the information posted on the Weather/Safety board located inside the boathouse.
 - b) being physically conditioned for the sport of rowing or paddling. Consult a physician before starting any form of exercise. Before beginning to paddle or row, go through a warm up and/or a basic set of stretching exercises.
 - c) Adhering to the Equipment Classification System which indicates that certain rowers may use certain restricted equipment.

Launches should carry:

- PFD's Appropriate to the number of rowers/paddlers not already wearing or carrying PFD's
- 9 emergency blankets in a water tight container (in cold conditions)
- Tool kit
- First Aid Kit
- Lifeline or throwbag
- Fire extinguisher
- Flashlight and Spotlight before sunrise and after sunset
- Bailer
- Communication device (radio or cell phone)

Defective or damaged equipment must be reported in writing on the Damage/ Maintenance Report. (See the Appendices for blank copy of the Damage/Maintenance Report. Copies are also located in the file folders at the entrance to the boat storage areas).

Good Rowing and Paddling Procedure

The greatest danger while on the water is collision caused by limited vision or carelessness - either yours or another boat's. Great care should be taken when rowing or paddling in darkness or near darkness. Take extra care to look and listen. Do not get too close to shore and known hazards. Only paddle or row in familiar waters under these conditions. **The safety of life is more precious than a few more minutes of practice.** Make sure your lights are working and very visible. Spotlights in the launch are required while rowing/paddling in the dark and can be used to illuminate hazards, such as buoys and debris, and to signal other craft on the water, including barges and motorized craft.

2. Outings should gradually and safely build up to full intensity. Under no circumstances should a crew race or sprint upon initially entering the boat.

3. Rowers in multi person boats should always be quiet and attentive to the Coxswain, and Coach. All users of OCRA equipment must comply with instructions given by a Coach.

4. Keep oarlocks locked until the boat is securely alongside the dock.

5. Keep at least one hand on the oar while on the water.

Always `paddle-down' at the end of your workout. It is important to your health that you do not race up to the dock. Once the boat and oars or paddles have been stored, it is important to take another few minutes to go through your basic stretching exercises to heal any unnoticed strains or sprains that began during your paddle or row, thus eliminating soreness and unnecessary pain.

2.2 Commands

4. Before getting into the boat, be sure you know:

a) which seat and which side you are paddling or rowing- by number, and whether you are in the bow or stern pair/four.

b) for rowers, the following basic rowing terminology :

BOW and STERN; PORT and STARBOARD

TIE IN and UNTIE; READY ALL , ROW; WAY ENOUGH; HOLD WATER

PORT (OR STARBOARD) TO ROW, STARBOARD (OR PORT) TO BACK

The terms WAY ENOUGH - HOLD WATER are used when the Coach, or coxswain wants a crew to stop immediately because of danger.

2.3 Clothing

2. CLOTHING

- Wear several layers of clothing in cold weather.
- Wear flexible clothing (no jeans).
- Polypropylene is best next to the skin. It wicks moisture away from your skin.
- Wool is the next best material in cold weather, since it also dries from the inside out.
- Wear a hat in cold weather. Heat is lost quickly from the head.

- A windproof jacket / windshirt helps to reduce wind chill.

3. Rowers should know that the shell and oars have been designed to provide flotation. They are not Pfd's (Personal Flotation Devices), they are only EMERGENCY flotation devices.

Note: It has recently come to the attention of US Rowing that the adjustable oar can no longer be regarded as a dependable emergency float and rowers using such oars are advised to wear or carry an approved alternative personal flotation device.

2.4 Coxswains, and Scullers

a) All coxswains, kayakers, and scullers should know the hazards and traffic patterns of the Hudson River.

b) Stay clear of bridge abutments, barges and other man-made or natural obstacles. Do not turn near any such obstacles.

c) Make frequent checks on both sides of the boat and to the rear and listen for other river traffic.

Each rower is responsible and accountable for his/her own rigging, foot stretcher, seat, slide and blade, and must check to ensure that all equipment is functioning properly before leaving the dock. If in doubt, ask the Coach.

Any deficiencies that may result in further damage to the equipment or endanger safe operation must be repaired before launching.

Check the following:

- There is no damage to the hull, steering mechanisms, or structural support sections of the boat.
- the shell is equipped with a bow ball, heel tie-downs, and any other safety equipment appropriate to the shell.
- you have the correct oar and the collar is tight.
- nuts on the rigging are tight, the position of the foot stretcher and the smoothness of your slide are correct.
- rigging is not too high.
- forward ends of the slides are blunt and will not gouge your calves.
- people behind and in front of you have sufficient room for their complete stroke.
- you are wearing socks. Shoes should not be worn in any boat.

clothing cannot become entangled in your seat or oar handle, and water bottles, gloves, tape, sun glasses, sun screen, extra clothing and hats are in the boat, if needed.

2.5 Inclement Weather, Waves

WEATHER CONDITIONS - be aware of them. Always listen to the weather report before going out.

Watch for gathering clouds, changes in wind speed and direction, temperature changes, other boats returning home and debris. The speed of the current (measured in cubic feet per second – cfs), air temperature, water temperature, river stage and wind speed are all posted in the boathouse during the spring and fall seasons.

(a) Do not row in whitecaps or winds of 12 knots (14 MPH approximately) under any circumstances.

(b) If sudden winds come up, return to the boathouse if the trip is safe (look for the calmest water), or take

the boat to the nearest suitable shore and wait for the winds to die down.

(c) Try to minimize equipment damage, but remember that you are more valuable than your boat.

(d) Do not row or paddle in fog, unless your visibility is at least 100 yards. Be sure to have land reference points in front and at least one shore in sight. If fog sets in while you are on the water, move slowly and be prepared to stop quickly. In situations of poor visibility, use your sound-making device (horn, whistle) to advise other boats of your location. Use the following signals:

- Shells, and kayaks - at intervals of not more than two minutes, one prolonged blast, followed by two short blasts.
- Power launches making way through the water - one long blast at least every two minutes.
- Power launches underway, but stopped in the water - two long blasts with two seconds between blasts, every two minutes.

Follow the shore back to the boathouse, as far as possible.

(e) Do not row or paddle in an electrical storm. If you are on the water and see lightning, hear thunder, or notice your hair standing on end with static electricity, head for the nearest shore. If the storm is not yet upon you, stay close to the shore and quickly return to the boathouse. If the storm is upon you, take the boat ashore and wait for the storm to pass. Wait 15 minutes or more after hearing thunder before launching boats.

7. WAVES are generated by winds, tides, currents or wakes from passing boats. Because shells are so vulnerable to high waves, special care is needed by shells in dealing with wakes. Paddlers should turn their boats into the wake and keep paddling at a steady pace.

- If approaching wakes are higher than the gunwale, the shell should be turned parallel to the wake to avoid having parts of the shell unsupported by the water (shells can split under these conditions). Rowers should stop rowing and lean away from the approaching wake, lifting the gunwale on the wake side slightly.
- If wakes are lower than the gunwale and widely spaced, continue to row without course adjustment. Deep and closely spaced wakes that are lower than the gunwale may be taken at a 90 degree angle.

When turning in waves, take particular care. Spend as little time as possible perpendicular to the current or wind direction, since the boat is very vulnerable in this position. Keep the boat absolutely level through the turn. If need be, use half the crew to set the boat level and the rest to turn.

2.6 Emergencies

Calls for Help - To EMS (Emergency Medical Service)

1. DIAL 911, or CHANNEL 16 (Marine Radio)

2. You will be asked, "What is your emergency?"

You should report the nature of the accident. For example, "There has been a boating accident and there are rowers in the water"

You may be asked:

- your location (name of river, land marks)?
- how many people are involved and is anybody missing?
- age and gender of people?
- are victims conscious or unconscious
- are victims breathing or not breathing
- is CPR being performed
- is CPR required
- time of incident
- how many boats are involved?
- the name of a contact person and the contact information?
- will there be someone to meet the paramedics?

If you are at the boathouse or on shore that a land based crew will be sent.

If you are in the middle of the river and need to have rescue sent by water, you need to request this.

An EMS supervisor will make the decision.

IDENTIFY YOURSELF AND YOUR LOCATION:

If you are at the boathouse, you may say,

" I am calling from the Three Rivers Rowing Boathouse. The boathouse is located at the upriver end of Washington's Landing (Herr's Island) on the Allegheny River, accessible from the north end of the 31st. Street Bridge. The boathouse docks are located in the channel between the island and the north shore of the river" or "I am calling from The Orange County Rowing Association located just past Blue Point Restaurant on the Regal Bag Property."

3. IDENTIFY THE MEANS BY WHICH EMS WILL CONTACT YOU:

You may say,

" My portable telephone number is _____.

4. IDENTIFY WHICH TELEPHONE YOU WILL BE ATTENDING:

* Cell Phone * Pay phone * Marine Radio

5. REQUEST AMBULANCE AND/OR RIVER RESCUE AS REQUIRED

2.7 Additional Safety Guidelines

1. Under no circumstances should a rower or paddler in the water leave the floating boat. Even if a swamped boat seems to be a swimmable distance from shore, the rower or paddler should swim the boat to shore. Do not leave your flotation, even if you consider yourself to be a strong swimmer. The only exception to this would be if you are faced with a worse life-threatening danger by staying with the boat - for example if you are in the path of a barge and cannot swim the boat away fast enough to avoid being hit.

Remember that an oar can be an emergency flotation device, although the new oars with adjustable handles are not designed to float.

2. Someone should give the command "Hold the boat" or `WAY ENOUGH - HOLD WATER'. Don't ask questions; just respond immediately by stopping all forward body movement. Square the blades quickly into the water to bring the boat to a halt.

3. Use these distress signals to communicate to other boats: wave your arms or a shirt above your head, raise one oar or paddle in the air (this method preferable only in eights or doubles and quads), use air horn/whistle, or marineradio.

4. MAN OVERBOARD

If a rower or paddler, or coxswain, is unexpectedly thrown from a boat, immediately call the command "Hold the boat" or `WAY ENOUGH - HOLD WATER' and signal the safety launch. In an eight or quad, stroke removes an oar from the oarlock to throw to the person in the water as an emergency flotation device. This rower should lie across the oar, remain close to the shell and not try to swim away, but tread water, moving no more than necessary. When the safety launch retrieves the rower, the Coach determines whether the rower will return to the shell.

5. ROWER or PADDLER INJURED.

Immediate command "Hold the Boat" or `WAY ENOUGH'. Signal launch if first aid needed.

6. SHELL DAMAGED BUT AFLOAT AND NOT TAKING ON WATER.

Immediate command - `WAY ENOUGH'. Make adjustments or signal launch for assistance.

7. SHELL SWAMPED

Immediate command - `WAY ENOUGH' or Hold the Boat. A boat is swamped when the interior water reaches the gunwales. If rowers stay in the boat, the flotation in the bow and stern ends may cause the boat to break apart.

(a) Rowers: Command - `UNTIE'. Be prepared to assist someone who is having difficulty releasing his or her feet from the foot stretchers.

(b) If the boat is taking on excessive water, signal the safety launch and decide whether to get the paddlers, rowers and coxswain out of the boat. This decision will depend on various factors, including water temperature. If the decision is made to get the crew out, then unload by pairs - starting in the middle of the boat - as soon as possible to avoid damage to the boat. Pairs should form `buddies' and keep watch on each other, Be certain all are accounted for. The Coxswain should buddy with the stern pair.

(c) If rescue is not imminent, take the following steps :

i. Remove oars or place them parallel to the shell. All persons should move to the ends of the shell (it is dangerous to roll a shell near riggers).

ii. Roll the boat to form a more stable flotation platform, so rowers can either lie on top of the hull or buddies can hold onto each other across the hull. Remember that body heat loss occurs 25 times faster in water. Do not attempt to roll the boat if rescue is on the way as a launch can shuttle rowers to the nearest shore. If the ends of the shell have filled with water, they must be drained before the boat can be

removed from the water. Remove the shell carefully to avoid injury or damage. A boat full of water is very heavy, so bail first, then roll it slowly and remove it from the water.

8. If a sculler falls out, the rescue launch can stabilize the re-entry. Entering the shell directly from the water can cause splashboard damage, so if re-entry is difficult, swim the boat to shore, lying on the stern, using the shell as a paddleboard. In cold weather, you can abandon your shell and lie on the stern deck of your buddy's boat to be taken to shore. Loss of muscle control can occur very quickly and dramatically in cold water - stern deck rescue may be your only option.

9. SHELL CAPSIZED

Immediate command for shell - 'UNTIE'. For all boats: be sure that all paddlers, rowers and coxswain, are accounted for. Stay with the boat until assistance arrives. Follow same procedures as for swamped shell.

10. SHELL BROKEN AND SINKING

Immediate command - 'UNTIE'. Get out of the boat and follow the same procedures as for a swamped shell. Do not leave floating boat. Hold onto your oar and use it as a flotation device if boat sinks.

11. ANOTHER BOAT IN DISTRESS

If a distress signal is seen and insufficient assistance is nearer that craft, maneuver your boat to the distressed boat. Attempt to summon other launches or stable boats with distress signal. Assist in any way that does not jeopardize the lives in your boat.

12. The launch should approach rowers or paddlers in the water from the leeward side, keeping the propeller away from any one in the water. The engine should be turned off as soon as contact with boat is made. Avoid overloading the launch.

13. Shells should stay within hailing distance of the launch (or within radio contact). The launch has been outfitted to provide assistance to rowers and/or the shell if needed. Most frequently, the tool box and coach's expertise are available for small equipment adjustments or breakdowns, which allow the shell to continue rowing after a short stop. If more serious needs arise, the launch and expert are there for rapid transportation.