

Our Team

Explanations, Expectations, and Obligations

Coach's Note

I am never surprised at the amount of people who are drawn to crew because of its beauty and grace – there is something seemingly natural and perfect about a boat of rowers out on a misty morning, gliding along the surface of the water like shadowy ghosts in the early twilight. There are few things more beautiful, I suppose, than rowing, but it is so much more than just this image.

Rowing is a sport, in all definitions of the word. It is one of the most rigorous athletic endeavors most people will ever face, and it is what you make of it. Every rower will tell you “regretfully” of the long hours spent on ergs, and of hauling oneself out of a warm bed at 4:30 in the morning to go and sit on them, or to freeze on a windy river. Every rower will complain about blisters, and how the coxswain isn't making the right calls, and how they seem to be the only one in the boat who's “pulling their own weight.” Every rower knows the pain and struggle associated with the sport, but I have never met a rower who would not do it all over again, who would not drop everything they're doing for a quick row down the river, for the high of flying across the water, if only for a few short, excruciatingly agonizing minutes. I have seen people vomit, pass out, fall off a rowing machine when they're done with a piece, and row so hard I've had to help lift them out of the boat. The great thing is, I have witnessed those people come back the next day, and do it all over again.

This is why I love the sport. There is nothing like having a boat “sing” on the water – the sound of the bow breaking through small waves, the rush of water underneath the shell, and (most importantly) oars turning over in the oarlocks with precise unity and control. There is nothing like feeling as though you're not rowing, but flying, and when everything is right, that's exactly what it's like.

This goal in mind, it would be remiss of me to neglect the fact that it takes a lot of work to get there. In fact, I am going to stress it. If you are serious about this sport, there will be few times you do not leave practice sore, and wake up stiff and aching the next morning. Your hands will blister, sometimes badly, your calves will scrape against the runners in the boat, sometimes until you bleed, and your muscles will feel as though they are being ripped from your bones. You will most likely have times when you work so hard you vomit or get dizzy from the lack of oxygen reaching your brain when you've truly hit your anaerobic threshold. There will be times when you think you're going to die, and I'll probably tell you, “No, you'll pass out first,” and oddly enough, you won't do either. And, even odder still, you, too, will return the next day.

If this is your first athletic endeavor in high school, I am going to tell you now that you have not picked a sport in which you gently wade into the water – you have picked a sport in which you jump in and find out if you can swim. I can almost guarantee that you will have never worked as hard as you are about to this season. You will push yourself past limits you didn't yet know you had, and, looking back on the year, you will realize how much fun you had doing it. This is the destination, and this is the expectation. This is the sport.

Coach Stabile

Explanations

Boating Placement

This is probably the most contested decision made by the coaching staff, and for good reason: placing rowers in a boat is a complex, subjective process largely at the discretion of the coach. The first variable, usually seen as the most important, is the erg score. It is the paramount factor for creating competitive boats – putting the strongest rowers together is always the goal. The base erg score is not, however, the time we use. The original time on an erg allows the coach to find the “on-water” time for that piece; this time is a more accurate representation of strength, as it calculates the rowers weight against his/her strength by adding the coefficient of water friction (i.e. can the rower “pull his/her own weight” in a boat moving on the water itself?). The formula for this calculation is Weight Factor (Wf) x Rowing Time, $Wf = (\text{Body Weight}/270)^{.222}$. So, for example, if a rower weighing 160 lbs pulls a 7:43 2K time, and a rower who weighs 185 lbs pulls a 7:31, the lighter rower is actually a faster addition to the boat itself (6:52 v. 6:54).

On top of erg performance, coaches also must evaluate form, which is just as important as strength. Even if a rower can pull a sub-7:00 2K, if that rower has horrible form – lets say, for instance, has no control at the catch (even on the erg), and consequently will check the boat on every stroke – that rower will then become a liability to the overall speed of the boat, as all the power he/she exerts will be neutralized by poor technique. Bow pair, therefore, is usually picked for having great technique over the fastest time, as they help give the boat balance while the “engine” in the mid-four are laying on the power – they usually also do most of the docking and aligning, so the trade off for maximized strength is normally worth the benefits when put on the water.

Other large considerations include general attitude (a “slacker” or “whiner” can demoralize a whole boat), grade (however, don’t believe that just because a senior rower is present they will necessarily make the varsity eight), attendance/reliability, consistency of performance, and other minor considerations which may turn into concerns on an individual basis as the season progresses.

Favor is always given to the Varsity Eights (the “A” boats), as they compete in every regatta, while lightweights and junior boats may not have enough entries. Fours, lightweights, and doubles/pairs are put together at the discretion of the coaches to make the most competitive team on the water as possible. Rowing in a four – open or lightweight – is usually seen as a privilege to be worked toward, as the coaches are incredibly selective about placing rowers together with the best chances of success when on the water. All boats will be created by placing rowers in the “best fit,” creating opportunity for growth and success.

Bear in mind, however, that not every boat is perfect, and not every decision is flawless. If there are concerns with boat placement, a rower is to discuss this with the coaching staff, preferably the head coach, rather than bicker with his/her teammates (this situation only creates more problems). The process of lodging a concern or complaint is further explained under the section “Conflict Resolution.”

If a parent has a concern with boating placement, they are free to discuss the concern with the coaching staff, realizing the same parameters apply.

Attendance

As crew is not a sport in which one can “sit the bench” there are different expectations for attendance and participation than with other sports. Rowing is a truly a team pursuit – there are always eight other people (including the coxswain) who depend on you to be there, on time, ready to row. If an athlete cannot make the commitment to every practice, the rest of the boat may be unable to go on the water that day, as finding substitutes can be difficult depending on the boats already rowing and the time of the practice. Crew season is not the time for after school appointments of any kind, nor is it the time to find a new job. The coaching staff wishes to stress this point – you must be at practice every day!

From time to time, however, the coaches realize that this is not possible, as there are always unfortunate events or conflicting academic schedules. If this is the case, any absence must be presented in writing through the Absence Request Form (found on the website) in advance – hopefully at least a few days, but as early as possible – of the absence itself in order to secure a substitute rower. Excessive tardiness or absence to practice can result in disciplinary action including, but not limited to, extra workout time, removal of boat placement, and possible expulsion from the team.

Attendance at regattas is an even more stringent matter, as there are often no replacements available, as every rower can only compete in so many races, and many rowers will already be on the water in another race when needed. Therefore, there is an expectation that no rower will miss a regatta. If this becomes a problem, it is not only expected that a rower will submit a request for an absence, but must meet with the coach to discuss why this absence is necessary.

Even in the event of illness, rowers are expected to inform coaches of absences (“events of illness” are serious matters of health-related issues – a mild cold does not constitute illness, you will still be expected to row in both practice and regattas). If you are at school for three hours of the day, you are expected to be at practice (adversely, if you not at school for at least three hours, you cannot come to practice, and must inform the coaches ahead of time). The best manner for contacting the coach in case of illness or sudden emergency is through email as early as possible. Leaving a voice mail is also acceptable, but written verification is preferred (especially as I have my email up throughout the school day, and can normally respond much more quickly).

Attitude

Attitude is perhaps the most important factor in facilitating the growth and success of this team. It is expected that every rower come each day with a positive attitude geared toward helping the team progress as a whole. This is especially true for our returning rowers, as they set an example for the novice.

This year, the first goal of the head coach is to foster an attitude of committed work ethic. The question should not be “are you working hard,” but “are you working *harder*?” Are you pushing yourself more than you did last year; are you pushing yourself more than your teammates; are you pushing yourself more than your competitors? Working *harder* will set a great example for others on the team, and constantly encouraging your friends to test their own limits with positive and reassuring feedback (whether with success or failure) will help foster a truly strong team dynamic which is essential for the strength of this team as a whole.

As attitude is contagious, and bad examples are cancerous, there are also a few items which **will not** be condoned on the team, such as incessant complaining about workouts, verbal abuse of other teammates, vulgar language or behavior, fighting or roughhousing, or refusal to complete a workout. All of these issues will be dealt with through corrective measures depending on the severity of the offense and frequency with which the offender commits the action.

Conflict Resolution

As this sport is truly a team-based endeavor, it is inevitable that there will conflicts which must be resolved in order to strengthen the team. In order to help teach this, rowers are expected to voice their own concerns with a coach as immediately as possible, with calm and mature faculties.

All minor issues which can be worked out without consulting a coach are expected to be handled in the boat first (i.e. 6-seat is consistently early, or the coxswain is not paying attention to the stroke rate). Any personal problems between rowers which can be resolved through a discussion between those athletes is preferable, as this team stresses the ability to learn to “fight your own battles” rather than “gang up” on another athlete, which is a necessary lesson to be learned. Coaches cannot always solve problems

for an athlete, especially on race-day when he/she sitting in the warm-up area. The mature resolution of conflict through discussion and understanding is a key element of this sport and this team.

Major concerns, such as boating placement, issues with a coach, or major issues with another rower, are to be placed through a one-on-one meeting (if a whole boat is concerned with the performance or attitude of one rower, they must elect a spokesperson) and to be presented in a mature manner open for discussion. Concerns will be considered, and decisions will be explained to the best of the coach's ability. Not every issue, however, may be dealt with to the satisfaction of the rower, as the good of the team is often weighed against the wishes of individual athletes. Every concern will be addressed, however, with respect and patience, in expectation they will be returned by the rower.

Apparel

To be blunt, this is a sport, and not a fashion show. As such, all rowers are expected to adhere to an expectation of proper decorum in regards to attire. Baggy clothing (especially shorts) will often create complication when on an erg or in a boat. As such, while on an erg or in a boat, spandex shorts are mandatory. Shirts will be worn at all times – this means that young ladies will not be walking around in a sports bra or bikini top, and young men will not be traipsing around shirtless in spandex shorts. This is not the time for tanning.

In addition, a pair of running or cross-training shoes is required at every practice – flip-flops, sandals, heels, etc. are not acceptable. Land-training is an essential part of our conditioning, and being unprepared due to improper attire is inexcusable. While not mandatory, the coaching staff recommends wearing breathable, non-cotton outer shells during on-water practice (e.g. a “JL” top with a water-resistant windbreaker over it) as cotton provides very little warmth when wet. Layering attire for practice is a must. A change of clothes is also an excellent idea.

On days of competition, athletes may be asked to dress in similar fashion by the coaching staff (e.g. wearing uniforms or dress-casual attire). While traveling, expectations for proper attire still apply. While at regattas, team uniforms are to be worn. Any issues with improper dress will be addressed by a coach.

Safety

Safety concerns for crew are slightly more rigorous than other sports. Because of the serious nature of risk, the utmost respect for the safety of oneself as well as one's teammates is exceedingly important.

In order to participate in this sport, you must first take the US Rowing swim test, which consists of 10 minutes of treading water, 100 yards of swimming, and being able to put on a life jacket in the water, all while fully clothed. This process is used to determine any at-risk rowers who may be weaker swimmers than others. If a rower cannot swim (at all), this may not be the correct athletic endeavor. All rowers must also watch the US Rowing Safety Video in order to prepare them for possible outcomes faced when on the water, such as rolling a boat. In the event of emergency, coaches and shore-parents have been trained to follow procedures to maximize the safe and effective resolution of the incident, but quick, clear-headed action taken by the rowers (such as staying with the boat if it rolls rather than attempting to swim) is essential for coaches to do their jobs.

Aside from this, it is expected that all rowers show the proper caution when on the dock or in the boat. No horseplay is condoned on this team – pushing someone into the lake, for example, will be dealt with swiftly and severely. Proper respect for the equipment is also essential, as damages can result in an unsafe rowing environment.

The Coaching Staff

Like any group of individuals, the coaching staff of EGR Crew has a diverse mixture of experience and viewpoints. Each coach has something unique they bring to the team, and it is expected that every coach be treated with respect. Comparing the strengths and weaknesses of coaches is unnecessary among rowers – picking “favorites” will only lead to negative consequences. If a rower is unwilling to work with any coach or refuses to follow the instructions of a coach, that rower will face immediate consequences, most likely the dismissal from practice, and, if the issue becomes habitual, the team.

Misc. Terms

I am including a basic list of terminology to help familiarize rowers and parents with the jargon of the sport. Rowers should probably begin looking it over – coxswains should have it memorized. See the attached appendix.

I am also including the criteria for obtaining a Varsity Letter.

Expectations

This is condensed version of what was above, as well as a few additions, including possible consequences for unacceptable actions.

General

1. Every rower will adhere and be subject to the rules, guidelines, and penalties of the code of conduct found within the EGR student handbook.
2. All rowers must have a physical form on file with the athletic office before they are allowed to even begin practice.
3. All rowers must have returned the necessary liability and waiver forms before they are allowed to compete with the team
4. Foul, obscene, and vulgar language or gesture is unacceptable while practicing, competing or participating in team and/or school sponsored events. The use of such obscenities will be verbally reprimanded; continued use may result in extra calisthenics.
5. While walking to the boathouse, use sidewalks – cutting through the planted, mulched area will result in the assignment of extra calisthenics.
6. The coaching staff reserves the right to ask for weekly academic progress reports to be printed off by rowers. If the student is failing any class, they must begin the school mandated tutoring program as per school policy. If a student has an excessive amount of grades below a C, the student may be asked to adhere to a temporary suspension until such time as those grades can be improved.
7. Any action of immediate or egregious nature may result in more excessive disciplinary action, including but not limited to dismissal from practice or regatta, forfeiture of athletic letter, and dismissal from the team. The Athletic Director may be included in any meetings and mediate or institute any consequence in addition to those already outlined.

Attitude

1. All rowers are expected to maintain a positive, encouraging attitude toward teammates. Any action which demoralizes or degrades another member of the team will be subject to verbal correction upon the first offense and assignment of calisthenics upon continuance. Habitual offense may incur dismissal from practice and possibly forfeiture of letter.
2. While at practice, all rowers are expected to complete each session with a positive attitude. Excessive complaining or shirking of a workout will result in disciplinary actions as described above. Blatant refusal to follow a coach's instruction will result in immediate dismissal from practice.
3. While at a regatta, all rowers are expected to show good sportsmanship toward others on the EGR crew team as well as athletes and coaches from other teams.
4. If a rower is not currently competing, he/she is expected to be supporting team members who are on the water.
5. Rowers are expected to fulfill all obligations and duties necessary at regattas, including but not limited to rigging and derigging, tent set-up, and "oar duty."
6. All rowers are expected to be polite and courteous to all officials, volunteers, and parents at every regatta, whether from our team or another organization. Without these individuals, it would be impossible to organize and host the regattas we attend, and appreciation for their time and effort is necessary.

Attendance

1. It is expected that rowers will be present at and on time for every practice and regatta.
 - a. Every minute of lateness will result in an equivalent time of calisthenics.
 - b. Unexcused absences will result in the possible demotion of boat placement or replacement in the next regatta.
2. All expected absences must be requested in writing prior to the date of absence by submitting a "Request for Absence" form (found on the website).
3. All unexpected absences due to illness or emergency must be confirmed by the coaching staff through notification as early as possible in order to ensure replacement rowers at practice times.
 - a. All unexpected absences must be of a dire nature (e.g. a common cold or muscle soreness are not serious illnesses of a dire nature; walking pneumonia, mono, sprains, etc. qualify).
4. Rowers are expected to have no more than two absences of any nature (unless of serious medical condition) during the season. Any more than three absences may result in forfeiture of athletic letter and dismissal from the team.
5. Rowers are not expected to have any absences during regattas. Except in the case of serious and sudden illness, missing a regatta may result in forfeiture of athletic letter and dismissal from the team.

Safety and Apparel

1. Any behavior or action exhibited by the rower deemed to be unsafe to either individuals or equipment will result in verbal correction and possibly extra calisthenics.
2. Behavior creating the potential of serious risk may result in dismissal from practice. Repeated offenses may result in dismissal from the team.
3. All rowers are to wear shirts and appropriately fitting shorts (spandex) at all times; running shoes are mandatory as well. Sweatshirts and sweatpants are mandatory for spring practices due to weather conditions. Inappropriate attire, either in fashion or function, may result in dismissal from practice.

Obligations

Every rower participating in Crew at East Grand Rapids hereby acknowledges and accepts the rules, guidelines, and expectations of the team and East Grand Rapids High School, and personally pledges:

1. I will come to practice every day with a positive and supportive attitude.
 - I will not use foul language or obscene gestures, nor will I make comments of an inappropriate nature while representing the team.
 - I will not demean my fellow athletes or show disrespect toward the coaching staff, nor will I complain about the intensity of or refuse to complete the workouts.
2. I will come prepared every day for practice.
 - I will not come underdressed for weather conditions or wearing inappropriate attire or footwear for the workouts.
 - I will not use inappropriate attire or footwear as an excuse from practice.
3. I will conduct myself in a manner fitting to ensure my safety as well as the safety of my teammates and the general upkeep of the equipment.
 - I will not engage in fighting or rough-housing.
 - I will not engage in any behavior which may be hazardous in a boat or launch, on the dock, or near any equipment.
4. I will report any serious injury to the coaching staff immediately.
 - I will not create, exaggerate, or “nurse” any injury which would prohibit me from practicing with the team.
5. I will be mature and proactive in resolving conflicts on the team.
 - I will not ignore or exaggerate problems between myself and my teammates or coach.
 - I will not instigate conflicts within the team between other individuals, nor entangle other individuals in my own conflicts.
6. I will conduct myself in the manner appropriate to best represent my team and my school at all times.
7. I WILL “WORK HARDER” EVERY DAY.

Upon my honor and integrity, I pledge to follow and uphold the expectations listed above.

Rower’s Signature

Date

I have read the expectations for my rower and am willing to assist and support him/her throughout the rigors of the season.

Parent/Guardian’s Signature

Date

APPENDIX: MISCELLANEOUS TERMINOLOGY

The Boat

Boat/Shell – The vessel in which you row.

Bow – The front of the shell, marked with the bow ball

Bow Ball – The rubber ball on the bow to protect it

Stern – The rear of the shell

Port – Your left as you face bow

Starboard – Your right as you face the bow

Gunwale – Pronounced Gun-el, the top edge of the shell on which you would “lay hold”

Strip – The raised area in the center of the boat, between the runners, on which you may step without damaging the boat. Usually marked with a white “strip”.

Seat – Self explanatory: you sit on it

Runners/Tracks/Slides – The grooves that hold the seat in place, and on which the seat moves back and forth

Footboard/Stretchers – The board that has the shoes attached to it, can be adjusted to suit rower height

Rigger – The triangular metal bars on both sides of the shell that hold the oar in place

Main Stay – The center post of the rigger

Front Stay – The front post of the rigger, toward the stern

Back Stay – The rear post of the rigger, toward the bow

Oarlock – The devices which literally holds the oar in place

Pin – The metallic shaft on which the swivel moves, determines the pitch of the oar

Swivel – The black, “U” shaped piece of the oarlock in which the oar sits, it is what allows the oar to rotate

Gate – The top of the oarlock which secures the oar into place

Washer – The removable rings on the pin that allow the height of the oarlock to be adjusted

Top-nut – The nut on the top of the pin; if this comes loose, the swivel may come off

Cox-Rigging – The lines at the stern of the boat which allow the coxswain to steer

Skag/Fin – The triangular piece under the shell that protects the rudder and helps stability and steering

Rudder – The movable piece behind the skag which creates drag and allows the shell to turn

The Oar

Blade – The far, flattened end of the oar (the part that goes in the water)

Spoon – A specific type of blade, it is fairly straight edged blade with a moderate cup, resembling a spoon

Hatchet – A specific type of blade, it has a flat top and extended bottom, making it look more “axe like” appearance

Shaft/Loom – The part of the oar which connects the blade and handle on which the collar is fastened

Collar – The plastic piece on the shaft that holds the button

Button – The circular piece which fastens to the collar and rests against the oarlock

Handle – The part of the oar which the rower holds

Clam – A “U” shaped piece of plastic which slides onto the collar to shorten the outboard of the oar

Inboard – The part of the oar toward the shell of the oarlock

Outboard – The part of the oar toward the blade once placed in the oarlock

The Stroke

Drive – The part of the stroke that applies pressure and creates movement in the boat; the legs move from a compressed state at the catch to a flattened state at the finish, the body “opens” and the arms swing toward the chest

Recovery – The “slide” phase of the stroke at which the body moves back to catch position; the arms shoot away, body achieves forward angle over the hips, and knees bend

Catch – The position at which the blade enters the water, the body is in a fully compressed position toward the stern of the shell. Also refers to the actual entry of the blade into the water.

Finish – The position at which the blade would leave the water, the body is in “Lay-back” toward the bow of the shell

Release – The moment the blade comes out of the water, is intended to be “clean”

Lean/Lay-Back – The body angle of 10-20 degrees toward the bow at the finish of the stroke

Hands Away – The first movement after the finish of the stroke at which the hands are quickly pushed away from the body.

Body Angle – The position after hands away in which the upper body leans slightly forward, shoulders in front of the hips, which will be held throughout the rest of the recovery.

Reach – Arms at a fully extended position at the catch, shoulders forward, “reaching” for an extra inch before the blade actually catches

Timing – The synchronization of blades entering and releasing from the water as well as all of the rowers movements (such as sliding and feathering) between these periods

Square – The blade is perpendicular to the water, ready to enter

Feather – The blade is parallel to the water, feathering is done with the inside hand

While Rowing

Bow (Seat) – Rower in the far bow, also referred to as “One”

Bow Pair/Four – The first two or four rowers toward the bow

Stroke (Seat) – Rower farthest in the stern, facing the coxswain directly, also called “Eight”

Stern Pair/Four – The two or four rowers closest to the stern/coxswain

Slide (Full, Half, Quarter) – The length of the stroke as controlled by the knees. Full stroke comes up to catch, half stroke begins with knees at 90 degrees, quarter has little actual leg movement

Arms (and upper body) – Rowing with only arms, or only arms and “swing,” which is the motion of the upper body with shoulders past hips to a lay-back position

Set – The balance of the boat in the water, the even placement so that either gunwale is not farther toward the water, the boat is not tipping or rocking to one side or other

Tap – A short, light stroke with arms only, a fine adjustment stroke

Let it Run – Stop rowing and let the boat “run” on the water by momentum, the blades will lie feathered on the water

Check – Squaring blades to slow the boat

Hold Water – Squaring and holding the blades in the water to stop the momentum of the run suddenly/quickly

“In 2” – In two strokes, something will be changed about the manner of rowing, for example, a drill will be added

Power 10 – Ten strokes used to focus on power or technique

Back/Backing – The rower will take a “back” stroke, starting at the finish, finishing at the catch. The boat will move backward, toward the stern.

Boat Handling

Weigh Enough – STOP!

“Two Count” – All commands will be given in repetition. Example: Ready to walk (short pause) AND walk

Hands on – Grab hold, to “lay hold” of the shell by placing hands on the gunwale and waiting for a second command to lift

Racks – The shelf-like supports on which the shells are stored

Slings – The movable wooden supports that a shell is temporarily placed in, they fold up and resemble a chair

Racks out – To pull the movable racks toward the center of the boathouse in order to “lay hold” of the shell

Up an Inch – To lift the shell an inch off the racks, usually to be moved a few inches to bow or stern

Over Heads – To press the shell over the heads of the rowers, usually extending the arms until the elbows lock.

Can be called “low over heads” to keep elbows bent when there isn’t enough room

Down To – Rowers will lower the boat to a commanded height (shoulders, waist, water, slings, etc)

Shoulders – The rowers will place the gunwale on their shoulders, holding with one hand

Waist – Rowers will hold the shell with arms straight down at waist height

Walk it... - Rowers will walk together in specified direction (walk it forward, to the dock, etc)

Swing To – The bow or stern will walk to turn the boat in a circular motion

Roll To – The rowers will go from an overhead position turning the bottom of the shell toward the ground/water, ready to place the shell in an upward position. Command usually signifies rolling to a waist height

Toes to Edge – Rowers will move toes to the edge of the dock to protect the boat while putting it “down and in”
Down And In – Rowers will take the shell from a waist position and place it gently in the water, tilting it slightly away from the dock to protect the skag and rudder

Locks and Oars – One side of the boat will go and get oars, the other will undo the oarlocks. A coxswain must signify the sides (Starboards: Locks, Ports: Oars)

Count Off – When the rowers are ready, they will “count down from bow” and when they get to eight, you are ready to get in the boat

Oars Out – Rowers will push oars out so the button meets the oarlock and hold them to steady the boat as the rowers get into it

One foot on the strip – After the rowers count off, they will put one foot in the boat (on the strip) and one foot on the dock

Down and In Together – The rowers will sit in the boat at the same time

Lean Away – Rowers will lean away from the dock so that the riggers will not be damaged

Push Off/Away – The rowers will lean away and push from the dock together

Walk it Off/Away – The rowers will lean away and walk the shell down the dock until it is cleared

Miscellaneous Technique

Skying the Blade – Dipping the hand near the catch so that the blade rises before entry – throws off timing

Missing Water – Entering the drive before the blade is fully in the water

Washing Out – Having the blade come out of the stroke early, before it should release

Digging Deep – “Burrying” the blade too far into the water

Catching a Crab – Having the blade of the oar enter at an angle, which causes it to “dive” – this causes the handle to come up and hit the rower. It is possible to break ribs, a jaw, or even be thrown out of the boat. Usually stops all boat speed and must be worked out. Avoid at all costs.

Puddle – The oval formation of water around the blade. Puddles will indicate correct entry and release

Selection Criteria for Varsity Letter 2009

In order to earn a Varsity Letter, one of the following four criteria must be met:

1. Being a Senior (but not a Novice rower) with no more than three absences from practice and one from a regatta.
2. Representing East Grand Rapids Crew in a minimum of four “Varsity” races in at least four different regattas throughout the season – including Championship Regattas – with no more than three absences from practice and one from a regatta.
 - Novice/Freshman and “2nd Varsity” are not considered Varsity boats. The coach will indicate the “1st Varsity” boat, usually termed the “A” boat.
3. Competing in any boat that earns a medal at a Championship Regatta (based on Regatta rules) in which there are more than three boats competing in that race, with no more than three absences from practice and one from a regatta.
4. Being a third-year rower with no more than three absences from practice and one from a regatta.

All first year athletes will receive a “Rowing Pin,” and all other athletes will receive a Junior Varsity Letter if he/she has no more than three absences from practice and one from a regatta.

Note: Missed practices/regattas due to serious injury will be considered at the coaches’ discretion. The coaching staff reserves the right to make exceptions and revisions to the Letter policy as necessary.