



DOLPHIN



SWIMMING & BOATING CLUB

2015 ROWING TRAINING GUIDE



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Rowing Commissioner: Jay Dean - jay@gadean.com

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Dolphin Swimming and Boating Club Rowing Training Program

Basic Rowing Training:

The Dolphin Club's base training program prepares members to row our classic, "heritage" wooden boats (singles and doubles). To be certified to row our boats members must complete the following:

1. Attend a monthly rowing training class
2. Make at least six practice rows in the cove
3. Attend at least one Tuesday "Boat Night" (see pg 11)
4. Complete a short written test and an on-the-water practical test

Areas covered in the base training include:

- Review of the fleet, parts of a boat
- Club procedures and rowing rules
- Rowing stroke, boat maneuvering
- Launching and recovery
- Predicting tides and currents and safe route planning

Other training: The club offers separate training or certifications for other classes of craft

- Vikings (special class of wooden boats)
- Rowing Shells
- Kayaks
- Powered Boats
- Wieland

Rowers with significant prior rowing experience can be offered accelerated programs or special certification opportunities. Speak to the rowing commissioner or boat captain.

The Classic Rowing Boats of the Dolphin Club

The Dolphin Club is very proud of its fleet of historic rowing boats. The backbone of the fleet is the group of Whitehall-style wooden rowing boats. These boats are all hand-made and lovingly maintained at our clubhouse. They are a unique asset and a great pleasure to row.

The "Whitehall"

This classic boat style was developed and used around Whitehall Landing on the lower tip of Manhattan, as early as the 1850's, and quickly spread to other cities, including San Francisco, on large trading ships. Whitehall's were the principal vessel used for drayage and as a water taxi around the harbor. The design was, and still is, treasured for its seaworthiness, carrying capacity, tracking ability, and good looks.

The design is characterized by its rounded sides, strong flat keel, lapstrake planking and distinctive "wineglass shaped" transom. A workhorse design rather than a racer, the Whitehall is the "Jeep of the sea", handling rough seas or heavy loads with ease.

The Dolphin Whitehalls differ from their workboat ancestors in that they are equipped with a “sliding seat”. The moving seat was a 19th century innovation for racing and pleasure rowing that increases stroke length and distance per stroke.

Meet the Boats:

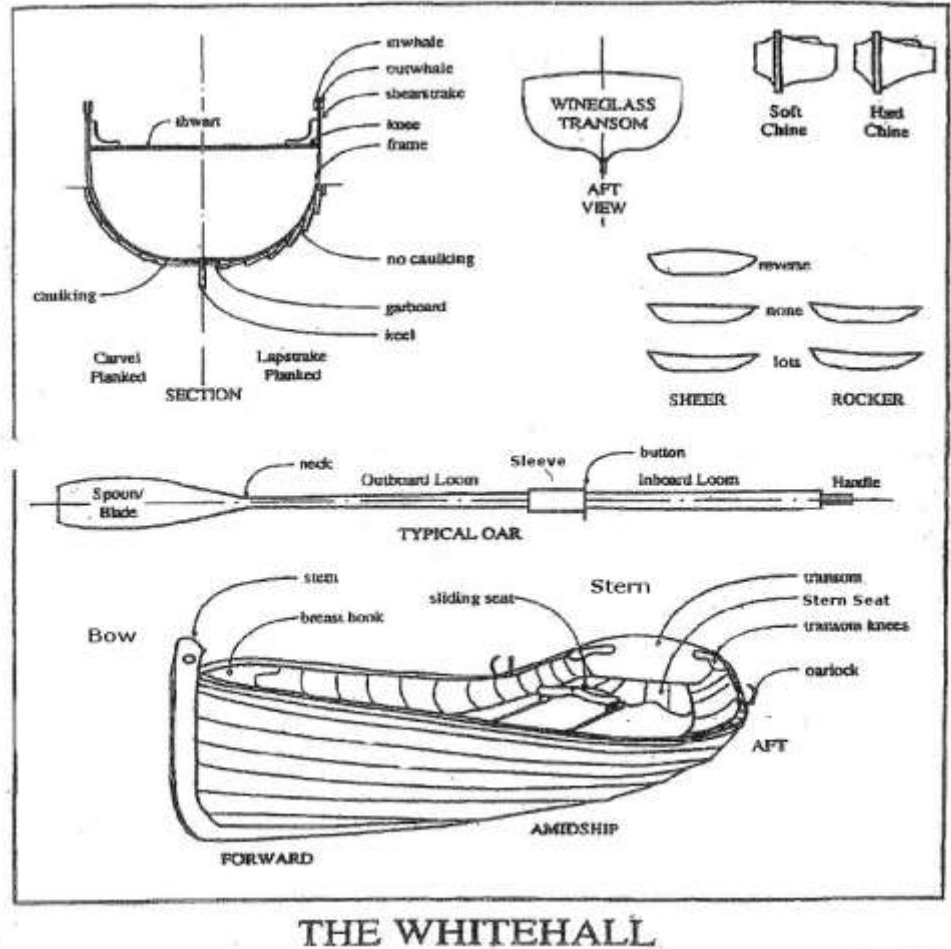
Heavy Singles: Eight modified single Whitehalls built mostly of Port Orford cedar and oak. Length 14’9”, Beam 4’2”, Weight: 175 to 225 lbs. In 2015 we will add a ninth single to the fleet.

Heavy Doubles: Three modified Whitehall doubles also of Port Orford Cedar and oak. Length 19’, Beam 5’, Weight; approx 375 lbs.

Vikings: A variation on the Whitehall design, sometimes called a “cable-car gig”. The *Viking* was built in 1915 by two carpenters at the cable car barn. Narrower than the other doubles and sporting short outriggers, the Viking has been replicated in more recent years as the *Lifthrasir*, and a single version, the *Kohlenberg*. (The South End Club also has Viking replicas). These challenging boats require a special certification class and test and rowing experience (at least 30 rows) in Dolphin Club boats.

Other Singles: Austin, Ring, Howard,. The Austin is a fiberglass replica of a traditional Whitehall. The Howard is a “peapod”, and Ring is a “dory”, non-Whitehall designs.

Wieland: This 125 year-old, historic six-oared barge is named after a charter member of the club, local beer-baron John Wieland. Port Orford cedar, mahogany, oak and other woods were used in the original construction and subsequent repair. Length is 40’, uses sweep oars 13 feet long, and weighs an estimated 670 lbs. Each fall a crew of Dolphin women race the Wieland against a similar crew from the South End club. Certified rowers may participate in Wieland rows when they are scheduled. Watch the bulletin board or speak to the rowing commissioner.



Small-boat Terms

Knowing and using the correct terms for your sport adds to the enjoyment, and you are encouraged to learn about them and use them. Here are a few that are especially important to know.

Bow and Stern: the bow is the front of the boat and the rear part is the stern. The line (rope)

Keel: The strong structural element at the lowest point on the hull, running the length of the boat. On Dolphin wooden boats the keel is protected with a brass strip.

Gunwale: (*Pronounced "Gun'l"*) The upper edge of the boat's sides.

Transom: The flat planking across the stern. On a Whitehall boat the transom has a distinctive "wineglass" shape.

Burden Boards: The flooring boards laid in the bottom of the boat. These elements are designed to "bear a burden", such as the weight of the rower. *Do not step on the outer planking of the boat.* You may step on burden boards, thwarts, and seats.

Thwarts: The transverse or crossways bracing of the boat.

Foot Stretcher: A specific thwart that includes foot braces and straps.

Oarlocks: Fittings that hold the oars when rowing, are the pivot that allows them to swing, and transfer the rower's power to the boat. The oarlock is set in place with a "pin" inserted into a hole in the gunwale.

Button and Sleeve: The button is a flat plate on the oar that sits against the oarlock when the oar is in place. The button should be on the *inside* of the oarlock, preventing the oar from sliding outwards. The sleeve protects the oar from damage by the oarlock.

Bilge Guards: Also called bilge stringers, these are wooden strips running along the boat about 1/3 of the way from the keel towards the gunwale (upper edge). When the boat is sitting off of the dolly, it can be leaned over to rest on the bilge guard. Do not allow the boat to slam down onto these guards when it is sitting on its keel. Let the boat lean over slowly and carefully.

Dolphin Club Rowing Rules:

- Boats are rowed by **QUALIFIED members only**. Guests pay the standard guest fee (\$10.00) and sign the guest waiver
- Club boats are rowed when **wind is below 15 knots, between sunrise and sunset**
- No Club boats are rowed **west of the Golden Gate Bridge**
- Make a complete entry in the rowing log prior to launching and upon return. Report any damage or maintenance issues in the log
- Prior to use, inspect boat for damage. See that boat's gear and required safety equipment are on board. Do not row boats marked as under repair.
- After use, boats are properly loaded on the dolly. Boats, oars and oarlocks are cleaned, wiped down and stowed in the boathouse
- All club boats are reserved for pilot service in Dolphin Club scheduled swims
- Dolphin Club boats and property may be used to assist swims or triathlons **ONLY** of the Dolphin Club or the South End Club, in SF Bay waters.

- “The Boat Captain shall recommend to the Board of Governors the imposition of fines for any violation of boat rules and may recommend assessments” -- Article V, Section 7 D.S.B.C. Constitution

The boat captain this year is J.D. Durst. If you have any questions related to club rowing rules or the use of our boats speak to J.D.

Rowing Procedures

Before you Row:

1. Sign out in the Log; Check currents and winds
2. Check the condition and readiness of your boat, oars and equipment
 - a. *Coast Guard Required:* “Personal Flotation Device” (PFD) aka Life Preserver, and “Signaling Device” aka a loud whistle.
3. Lubricate the oarlocks, oar sleeves and buttons
4. Move both oars to the far side of the boat (away from where you will board). Clear away any equipment *to open a clear path* into the boat

Launching:

5. Use the blue chock to block the wheels of the boat dolly.
6. If the ramp angle is steep, bring the ramp approximately level with the fixed pier
7. Slide the boat off the dolly, remember to...
 - a. Place dolly upside down on the side of the pier
 - b. Tie-off the boat before lowering the dock
8. Shove off carefully. Watch for swimmers or other boats as you do.

Landing and Recovery

9. Returning from your row, *slowly* approach the end of the ramp with your bow into the direction of the current and/or wind.
 - a. Stop a short distance out to look for other boats or swimmers
 - b. Arriving into the wind and current allows you to come in slowly and control your forward progress. If the wind or current are pushing you into the dock you can be forced into a dangerous situation.
10. Place both oars inside the boat on the side away from the dock. Clear a path for exiting the boat
 - a. Keep a hold of the bowline as you exit the boat.
11. Pull the boat, bow first, onto the ramp.
 - a. Secure the bowline to a cleat to keep the boat from sliding back into the water.
 - b. Raise the ramp level with the pier
12. Go retrieve your boat’s dolly and place the blue wheel chock *behind* the wheels to block the dolly from rolling back on to the pier.
13. Look for signs that other Dolphins are still out rowing (in wooden boats or shells). If others are still out, lower the ramp back to the water.

Wipe-down and return to Boathouse

14. Return your PDF (Life Vest) to the rack
 15. Retrieve boat rags from the bar area in the boat house, and wipe down the boat and oars.
 - a. Wipe lubricant off the oarlocks and oars (paper towel just inside kitchen door)
 - b. **Do not lean the oars against a wall** while you wipe down the boat. A gust of wind will result in shattered oar blades,
 - c. *Do not hose down the wooden boats with fresh water*
 - d. Place the oars inside the boat, on either side of the seat, with the blades in the stern and facing up. Coil the bow and stern lines
 16. Carefully wheel it back into an open spot in the boathouse.
 17. Log the boat in by completing your entry in the Rowing logbook. Note any damage or maintenance issues in the log (and/or notify the boat captain)
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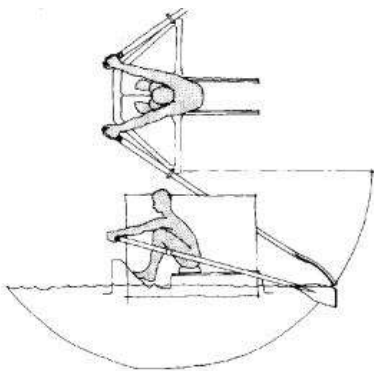
The Rowing Stroke:

The rowing stroke is a natural motion, although it may take a few rows to get the sequence learned “on the body.” When you are tested for certification you should row naturally and confidently, without confusion about hand and body position. Use your six practice rows (and more if needed) to make this motion “automatic” in your muscle-memory.

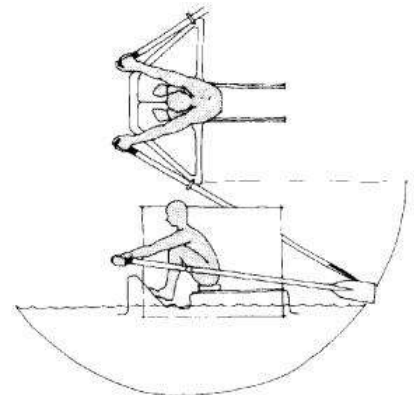
Parts of the Stroke: The rowing motion can be broken into four basic parts; Catch, Drive, Release (or Finish) and Recovery.

1. The Catch

The rower is compressed, reaching out over the toes. Knees are bent, arms straight, and body tilted forward. The oar blade should be square to the water.



The rower lifts his or her hands slightly to drop the blades into the water. This step is called “the catch” because the rower feels as if he or she is reaching out to “catch the water” with the blade of the oar.

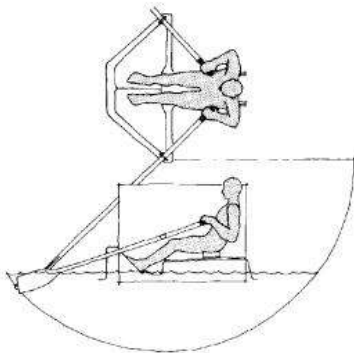
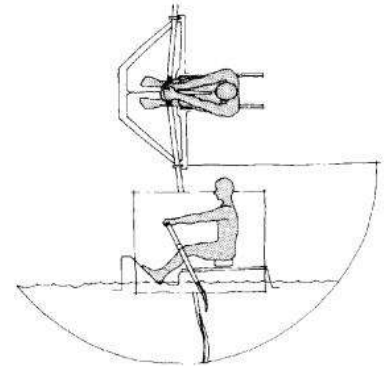


2. The Drive

The rower pulls the oar handles “back” (towards the body), unfolding his body in a particular sequence

- First: Drive legs down. Transfer power to the oar through straight arms and strong, “locked” body
- Second: Angle body back from a slight forward lean to a slight back lean
- Finally, complete the drive with the arms. Bring the oar handles into the chest area.

Rowing coaches generally ascribe 70% percent of the drive’s power to the legs, another 20% to the back/mid-section, and only 10% to the arms. Beginners often try to do too much with the arms. The role of the arms in rowing a sliding-seat boat is largely to control the oars.



3. The Release or Finish

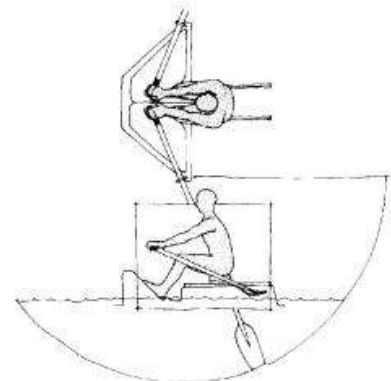
The rower presses the oar-handles down just a bit, a couple of inches or less, to bring the oar blades out of the water. Some rowers will also “feather” the blades, rolling the oar (tops toward the rower) to make the blades parallel to the water. You need not feather in our wooden boats, though it is a good technique to learn eventually.

4. Recovery

The rower returns to the catch position by reversing the motions of the drive. Oar blades are held out of the water.

- Push the oars away from the chest with the arms
- As the arms become straight, angle the body forward
- As the oars clear the knees, bring the knees up to compress the legs

If you have feathered the oars, remember to roll the oars square again in preparation for the catch.



Now, just repeat these four steps and you are rowing!

Summary: The rowing stroke has four elements: Catch, Drive, Release and Recovery

And the **Drive** has 3 parts...

1. Drive down the legs (straight arms!)
2. Swing the body back
3. Bring in the arms

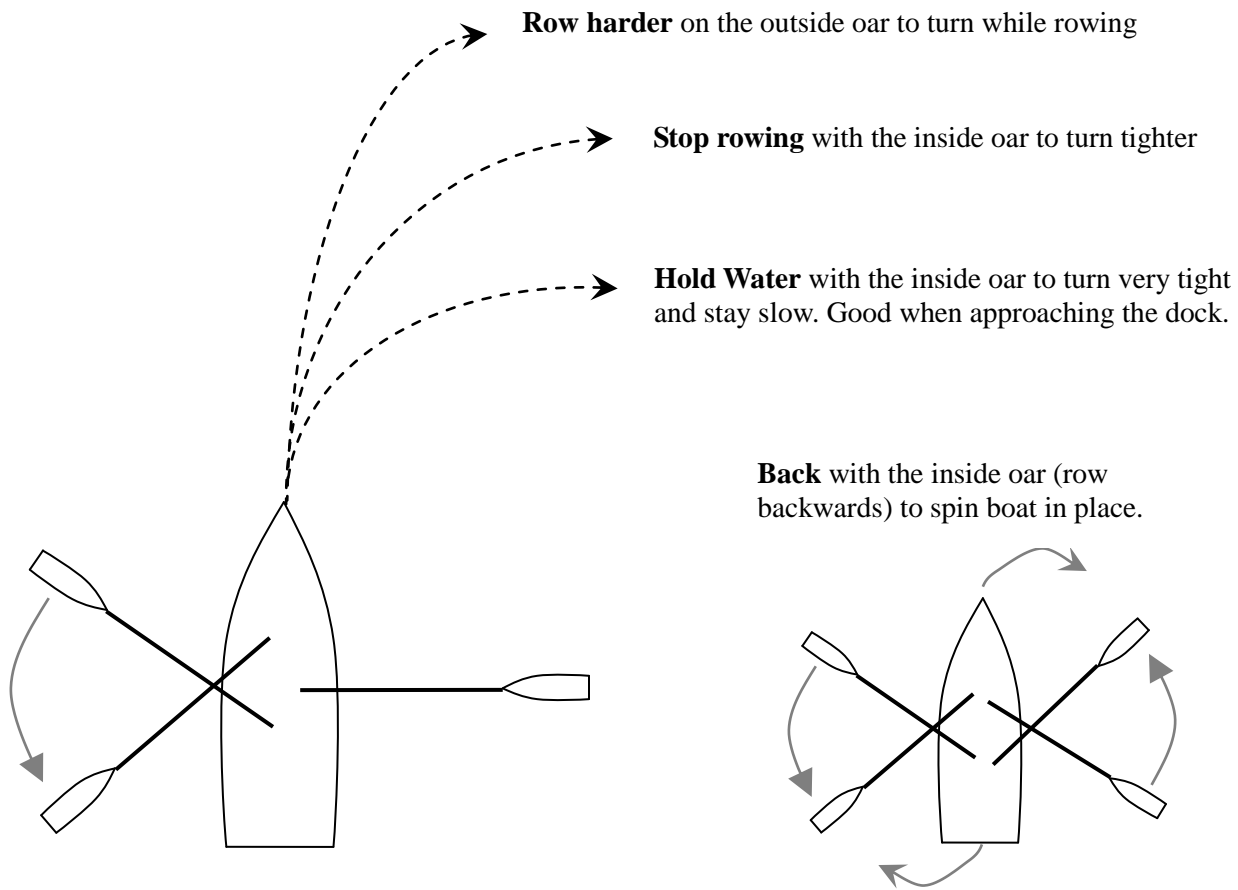
Make sure you do those in that order, the reverse the order on the recovery. The real power comes from that leg drive. Don’t make the mistake of trying to pull with your arms before the legs drive is complete.

Maneuvering

Stopping the Boat: To stop the boat's forward motion put the oar blades into the water squared (not feathered) with the oar handles braced in front of you. Since the boat is moving, the oar handles will try to come back at you. Push back on the oar handles to resist their motion (it can be quite strong) thereby slowing and eventually stopping the boat. If you hear an instructor, or another rower shout "hold water!" it means that you are headed into danger; such as a collision with a boat, dock, or swimmer.

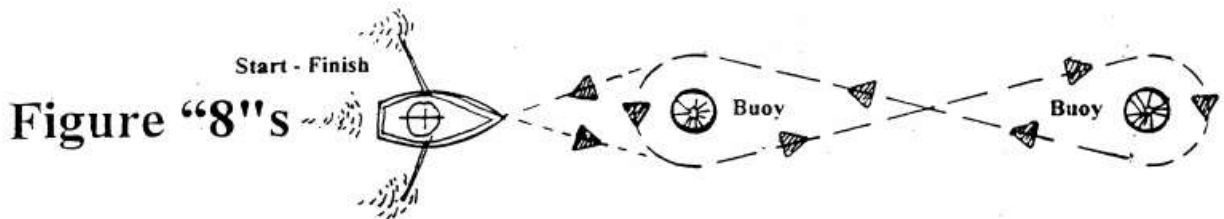
Turning: Rowing boats without rudders (like our singles) are turned by creating different forces on the oars, and hence different forces on either side of the boat.

Rowing with one oar causes the boat to turn **away** from that oar. You can tighten the turn, or keep the boat moving slowly, by "holding water" with the inside oar while you take strokes with the outside oar.

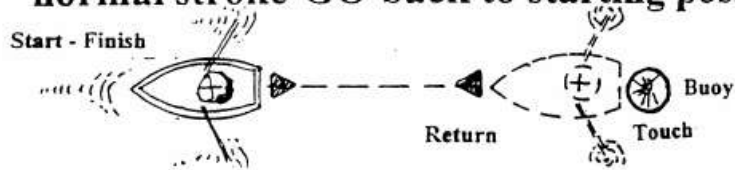


If the boat is moving, you can *turn while slowing* by **holding water** with the inside oar while doing nothing with the outside oar. This is important approaching a dock or a swimmer. Practice using one oar and the two oars against one another to perfect careful slow maneuvering.

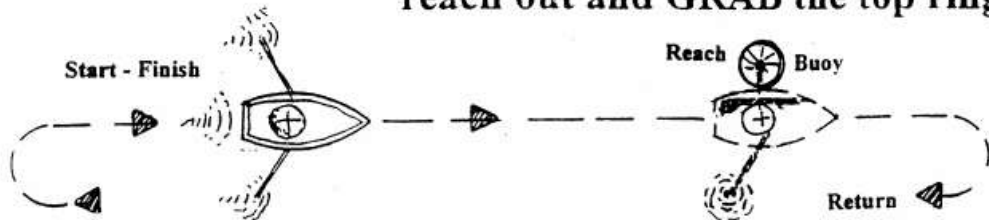
Dolphin Club: Rowing Training Maneuvers:



Touch and Go (backoar-touch stern "gently"
and
normal stroke-GO back to starting position



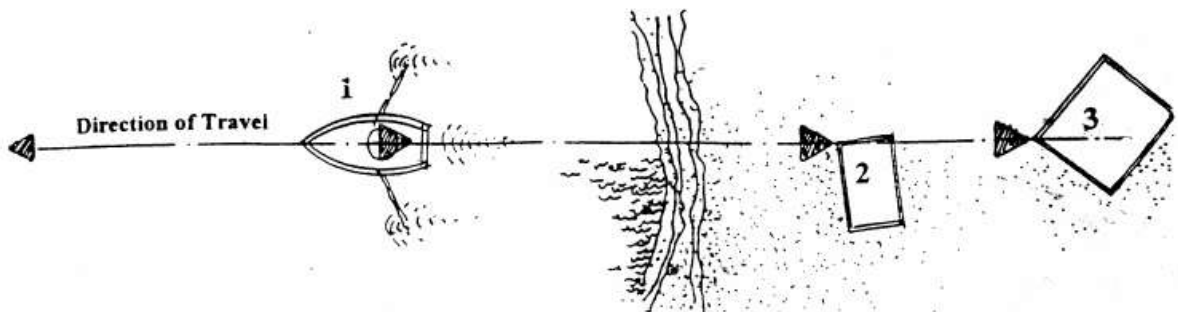
Parallel "Parking" (slow controlled forward speed;
ship "dockside" oar;
reach out and GRAB the top ring)



"Straight Line Navigation" with Three (3) Bearing Points

(THREE points of reference "connected" form the "Straight Line" when they are superimposed along the line of travel

1. Rower in the boat
2. Stationary Foreground-Edge of Vertical Structure
3. Stationary Background-Edge of Vertical Structure



Miscellaneous Notes:

Oar Damage: Our wooden oars are easily damaged, and difficult to repair or replace. Take care to guard against the most common causes of oar damage,

1. Sliding the oar into the boat too violently can cause the oar blade to hit the oarlock, putting “notches” into the blade. When you “ship oars” *place* the oar behind you, don’t throw it.
2. Pulling the oar handle high on the rowing stroke makes the blade go too deep, which is inefficient, but it also twists the oar in the oarlock, scoring and perhaps cutting the oar sleeve.
3. Oar blades get chipped or split when blades collide with obstacles on the water, or when oars are leaned against a wall, and then blown over by a gust of wind. Lay oars flat in a safe place when they are out of the boat.

Right-Of-Way: Power boats and sailboats will usually try to avoid you, and should, but it is best to make things easy and try to...

- stay easily visible
- keep your course predictable
- and stay out of everyone’s way as much as possible

Don’t cross the shipping lanes when there are large ships in-between the bridges (GGB and Bay Bridge). Wait until they pass. Look for traffic before crossing in front of marina entrances and the piers where ferries dock. Be especially careful around the ferry building.

Do your best to avoid sailboat races, non-Dolphin swims, and other events. Large inflated buoys are probably marks for a race, don’t go near them. If a fleet of sailboats heads for you, either stop before they get to you, or row a consistent speed and direction. Make it easy for them to see and avoid you. *Common sense and courtesy* are your best tools in the sometimes crowded waters on the bay.

Wildlife: Enjoy the creatures you see, but don’t go chasing after them, or otherwise harass the local fauna. Do not disturb the nesting bird colonies on Alcatraz, or seal nurseries on Angel Is.

Other Rowing Opportunities

Fourth Thursday Row: On the 4th Thursday of each month, a rowers group meets at 6:30 am at the boat house to enjoy a group row out of the cove. All Dolphins who have taken the Rowing Training (whether or not they have completed certification) are welcome to join. Beginners may be placed in a double with an experienced rower to get extra experience. This is a chance to meet other rowers, get some good practice, and get some experience outside the cove.

Mentoring: If you would like to get some additional one-on-one or small group instruction under the supervision of one of the trainers, email one of the club rowing mentors listed at the last page of this document to set up a meeting time.

Piloting a Club Swim: Certified rowers are encouraged to participate in club swims as a pilot. No special training is **required** to pilot from one of our Whitehalls, but you should speak to a rowing trainer about piloting and the demands of the particular course (some are quite long and demanding) before participating. First-time pilots can join an experienced pilot in a double for some on-the-water experience. There is no better way to become involved in club activities and meet other members.

Boat Night

Attendance at one boat night is required to complete your basic rowing certification. Boat Night happens every Tuesday evening from 6 to 9pm. New and old Club members and other wooden-boat enthusiasts gather in the boat shop to do maintenance on our fleet. Volunteers work under the supervision of our Master Boat Builder, Jon Bielinski. Afterwards, the group shares a “family style” meal together in the boat house. The evening is fun, social, and educational. Come prepared to sand or varnish by wearing clothes that you don’t mind getting dirty. You are welcome to bring a non-member friend. You need know nothing of woodwork or boat building, just bring your enthusiasm.

Lake Merced Boathouse

The Dolphin Club also maintains a boat bay for flat water racing shells at Lake Merced boathouse. You must first complete the Open Water shell certification process at Aquatic Park followed by an orientation to the Lake Merced Boathouse.

Other Club Boating Experiences

Wieland – Also known as “the barge” is our largest boat that seats six rowers and requires one coxswain. There is a women’s team that forms every fall for our annual completion against the South End Club. The barge also goes out for periodic fun rows. Announcements for both are posted at the club.

Kayaks – The Kayaks stored at the club are used for piloting club swims but are also available for personal paddling. A separate Kayak class is offered at various times through the year. Watch for postings and announcements.

Powered Boats - The power boats are used exclusively to pilot the club swims. Training classes are periodically announced by postings at the club.

Organized Long Rows – Certified rowers are encouraged to participate in the club’s occasional long rows. These events will involve a multi-hour row and may extend over multiple days (with camping!). Participants in the longer rows usually rotate positions, taking rest periods in-between periods of rowing, allowing most reasonably fit rowers to participate. Watch for announcements about these fun and unique events.

Rowing Mentors

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