

Where to get information – Check our website fhccrew.org and the facebook page **Forest Hills Central High School Rowing Team** regularly. Kim Sitarski updates these weekly. Kim will also send emails out to parents, so be sure she has your correct email.

What are the different classifications for rowers? Men and Women and within those: Novice, Varsity, Light Weight and Open Class. Typically LW Women are 130 lbs & under and LW Men are 150 lbs & under. A coxie can be male or female regardless of boat class. (8) person boats always have a coxie; (2) and (4) often do not.

What does the money go: Most of it goes to regatta food for rower and coaches, gas for safety boats, gas for boat trailer, coaching fees, coach lodging and travel, uniforms, equipment repair, and entrance fees for regattas.

Are there additional fees? Travel to the Midwest or Canada regattas will be an extra charge. Not all rowers will go, it is by invitation only. Usually the best rowers are invited, sometimes the coach will use his/her discretion and allow alternates to go as well. Lodging, busing, and food is extra and cost will be disclosed to you before you commit your rower to go.

Regatta Pro Tips: Assume it will be cold and wet and muddy. Bring a hooded rain jacket, binoculars, water proof boots and a camp chair. Dress in layers as it will often be 10 degrees cooler near the river. We do not feed parents. Bring money to feed yourself or pack a cooler. Find a comfortable spot to watch the race from along the river. Your rower is well fed, but you are on your own. Most of our venues have restaurants not far from the regatta site. It takes a lot of volunteer help to keep our events running on time and athletes fed. You are asked to volunteer at the regattas. Look for the sign up genius sent out by Belinda Chou. When your rower is racing, you are always excused to watch them and cheer on their boat. Your rower will generally row in at least two races. Regattas usually start between 8-9 am and smaller ones (Belted Galloway) go until noon or so and the larger ones (GR Invitational and States) can go until 4 or 5pm. The larger regattas usually mean the team is excused about 5-6 pm. The list of race events is printed out at the regatta and online the night before. After the last race is done, the rowers will load all boats and oars onto the trailers and the coach will excuse them as a team after the last of the equipment is loaded. This takes a while; you will need to exercise some patience. Meanwhile, the parents are helping pack up the food tent, cookware, and tables.

Practice info: Your rower should ALWAYS have a refillable water bottle, rain jacket, athletic shoes and good attitude. Only coaches park near the boathouse. Athletes use the parking area near the park entrance. Parents picking up and dropping off rowers can pull up until the no parking sign and drive around or have your rower meet you out near the entrance (that is usually

easier). Rowers will run to warm up before putting in the boats. The athletes rig the boats, load the launches into the water at the start of practice and wipe the boats down, and help put the racing shells and launches away at the end of practice. This is not a parent job. Your rowers are learning to respect their equipment and take care of it properly.

Belted Galloway: This is a local regatta at our boat house. It is a relatively small regatta and FHC, FHN, and FHE take turns hosting. This regatta is named after the cows the rowers see along this stretch of the Grand River.

GR Invitational: We host this at Riverside Park in Grand Rapids. It is a one day event. Many volunteers are needed on and off the water and it is a big regatta.

Wyandott: The kids sleep in the gym floor of a high school within walking distance of the regatta. This regatta is held right downtown in cute Wyandott with plenty of places for parents to get coffee and lunch. Athletes are fed via our traveling food tent and the wonderful Patti Spencer and her many volunteers.

States: Also at Riverside Park in Grand Rapids. It is a one day event as well. Many volunteers are needed on and off the water. Even if we do not host this regatta, FHC is heavily leaned on for water support and we still feed 115 athletes (plus their coaches) breakfast and lunch. This is a big regatta.

Midwest: This is the best of the rowers in the region. Only those qualifying are invited to attend. Our numbers at this regatta have fluxed over the years. Our coaches will let you know if your rower is invited. This is a weekend long event and the rowers leave school early and take a bus to Zanesville, Ohio. Your rower will miss at least one day of school.

Canada: Rowers from North America compete and we stay near Niagra Falls in hotels. The novice rowers do not usually go and you will be notified if your rower is invited to go as a rower or an alternate. This is a 4 day event and the rowers do miss school. They must have a valid passport to load the bus.

Key Rowing Terms

Bow: The forward section of the boat. The first part of the boat to cross the finish line. The person in the seat closest to the bow, who crosses the finish line first.

Stern: The rear of the boat; the direction the rowers are facing.

Port: Left side of the boat, while facing forward, in the direction of the movement.

Starboard: Right side of the boat, while facing forward, in the direction of movement.

Oar: Used to drive the boat forward; rowers do not use paddles.

Rigger: The triangular shaped metal device that is bolted onto the side of the boat and holds the oars.

Sculls versus sweeps: One of the two disciplines of rowing – scullers use two oars or sculls. We have added sculls this year to increase the number of races our athletes can participate in. Sweeps use one oar per rower.

Shell: Can be used interchangeably with boat.

Coxswain: Person who steers the shell and is the on-the-water coach for the crew.

Cox box: an electronic box that displays the stroke rate and elapsed time and allows the coxswain to talk through a speaker system to the rowers.

Crab: known as “catching a crab”; when a rower’s blade hits the water during recovery and is “stuck” in the water. Often the rower will lose control of the oar and the oar handle flies backwards either over the rower’s head or striking the rower’s chest. In extreme cases the rower can be thrown from the boat.

Stroke: The rower who sits closest to the stern. The stroke sets the rhythm for the boat; others behind her must follow her cadence.