



TACR

Traverse Area Community Rowing

**SAFETY AND OPERATIONS
HANDBOOK**

Rev 07/19

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Introduction

Traverse Area Community Rowing (TACR) on Boardman Lake was founded in 2012 by four rowers (Melissa Fournier, Barbara Jones-Smith, Dustin Ordway, and Glen Rauth) who wanted to bring the sport to the heart of Traverse City and make it available for all interested in the community and greater Grand Traverse area. TACR began with shared space in the Traverse Area Community Sailing boathouse and a few donated singles. In late 2015, TACR entered into an agreement with the City of Traverse City to operate a rowing program utilizing City land at Hull Park, and in 2016 acquired its first used eight.

TACR is governed by a board of directors and is incorporated as a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. TACR's mission is to educate the public and promote rowing in and by the community, including people of all ages, levels of experience, and forms of recreation and competition. TACR relies on program participation fees, community grants, and donations to fund its equipment and operations.

Organizational Code of Conduct

Traverse Area Community Rowing is committed to maintaining the highest standard of conduct throughout the organization. This includes responsible behavior and consideration for the safety and well-being of others. We treat each other, equipment and facilities with respect and exercise good sportsmanship both on and off the water.

All participants, rowers, coaches, volunteers, and board members will:

1. Be respectful and considerate of others, fostering a safe, non-threatening environment.
2. Put the safety of others and personal safety first. There will be no engaging in the use of illicit drugs or alcohol before or during rowing. No one shall behave in a reckless manner, take unnecessary risks, or act in a way which places anyone at risk of injury nor property at risk of damage.
3. Adhere to the standards, policies, rules & regulations of TACR.
4. Promote the positive spirit and culture of rowing, and the reputation of Traverse Area Community Rowing. No one shall engage in or encourage conduct that is detrimental to the organization or any of its participants, or otherwise engage in behavior that would bring the organization or the sport into disrepute.

Any participant may be removed from activities or the board for cause, upon decision by a majority vote of the board. Prior to any vote on termination, the respective individual will be

given comprehensive description of the alleged offense(s) and be provided the opportunity to address the board to respond to/defend themselves against any charges. “Cause” shall include:

- Failure to pay fees within 60 days of incurring charge to participant’s account
- Willful violation of published TACR standards policies, rules & regulations
- Willful disregard of TACR property/equipment.
- Engaging in or encouraging behavior detrimental to TACR
- Repeated unsportsmanlike behavior
- Unfounded malicious or libelous remarks regarding the organization or its officers
- Criminal conduct of any kind on TACR premises or while engaging in TACR activity
- Abuse of trust in matters relating to TACR funds

USRowing Association and SafeSport

As a member of the USRowing Association, TACR abides by a SafeSport policy in effort to prevent bullying, harassment, hazing, emotional misconduct, physical misconduct and sexual misconduct within the organization. For more information about SafeSport, go to <http://www.usrowing.org/safesport/>. As of the onset of the 2019 on-water season, all TACR board members and coaches are required to complete the USRowing Association SafeSport Training Program and submit their SafeSport Certification to the board chairperson. This shall be renewed every two years. All athletes and TACR participants are strongly encouraged to complete the USRowing Association SafeSport Training Program.

Safety and Equipment Usage Rules

The following rules apply to all participants in any class or other activity offered and/or run by TRAVERSE AREA COMMUNITY ROWING (“TACR” or “COMMUNITY ROWING”). Use of TACR equipment and/or facilities is conditioned upon participants abiding by the rules set forth here. TACR reserves the right to amend these rules without notice and refuse participation without refund to any person not abiding fully with these rules in the sole judgment of TACR.

A. General Rules

1. Common sense and compliance with directions from the coach must prevail with “SAFETY FIRST” as the first rule. Do not engage in behavior that jeopardizes any person’s well-being or that may result in damage to equipment or facilities.
2. Except as set forth below, only participants who have paid all fees will be allowed to row or cox in TACR boats or use TACR equipment or facilities. Experienced rowers or coxswains serving as helpers in Learn to Row (LTR) classes with coach approval are welcome to participate without paying a class fee as their presence contributes to the LTR experience for the session students. Rules governing individual participants rowing on their own are set forth further in this manual.

3. Each participant must have a signed TACR liability waiver on file. Any minor must also have signed/approved forms as required by TACR.
4. All rowers must have an Attestation of Swimming Ability Form on file.
5. Individuals and groups are expected to abide by the Safety Rules below in addition to all other TACR rules and policies.
6. All participants and coaches are responsible for upholding the integrity of TACR's participation in USRowing and its safety recommendations. (archive.usrowing.org/Safety/SafetyGuidelines). All rowers must attest to having viewed the USRowing Safety Video. (<http://www.usrowing.org/safety-video/>) Any issues or concerns regarding actions or compliance should be brought to the attention of the TACR board.
7. Violations of any safety rule should be reported to the board for appropriate review and action regarding the situation. The coaching staff should also be made aware of any infractions.
8. TACR reserves the right to deny participation to any person at any time, for safety or other reasons, at the sole discretion of the board.

B. Rules for Coaching Staff

1. Each practice must have, at minimum, one board-approved coach in direct supervision of rowers.
2. The coach has the authority--and shall exercise at his/her discretion based on safety before all other considerations--to cancel practices (or postpone practice, or end practice early) for safety reasons.
3. As part of determining whether on-water practice should be cancelled, the coach should obtain a current weather forecast to determine whether severe weather is predicted. Practices will be postponed or curtailed if thunderstorms are legitimately threatened or threatening, if lightning is seen or thunder is heard. In any case, the coach shall cancel practice if she/he thinks environmental conditions are unsafe. This may include considerations for snow, rain, ice, fog, temperature, wind, equipment conditions and/or skill level and focus of the rowers in particular weather conditions.
4. No individual, regardless of ability level, may coach any novice, Learn-to-Row, or Learn-to-Scull crew from any single shell unless there is also a safety launch in attendance. No novice crew (coxed or otherwise) should be on the water without a safety/coaching launch close by. A coach sitting in the coxswain seat does not satisfy this requirement. Use of a coaching launch is required as any emergency situation may require the distribution of life-jackets, first aid, or immediate return of a person to the dock.

C. Rules on the Water

1. All rowers are to be safety conscious at all times. No one is to leave a boat intentionally—stay with the boat. It is the obligation of any person/crew who can help safely to immediately attend to a rower or coach who has been ejected from his/her craft into the water.
2. The coxswain is in sole command of a shell subject to the coach's overall authority. The first concern of the coxswain is safety of the rowers and the equipment. The coxswain is the only one in the shell giving the commands and instructions. No shell that is equipped for a coxswain, unless it is a straight (four, quad, double) boat, shall go out on the water without a coxswain in the boat. If a coxswain's command might place either the crew or equipment in a harm's way, the rowers have the responsibility to ask to stop the shell. Rowers may assist new coxswains in improving their skills, but only when it is not interfering with the coxswain's ability to administer his/her responsibilities.
3. TACR boats may not be rowed in the dark. Dark rowing is defined as any on-water time that falls before 30 minutes prior to sunrise and 30 minutes after sunset.
4. To be on the water, a sweep boat must be accompanied by a coach in a launch or specifically be approved in advance in writing based on the level of experience of all rowers using the boat. All boats

must be accompanied by a safety launch when the air plus water temperature (which must be at least 50 degrees) is less than 90 degrees (“Ninety Degree Rule”).

5. Every rower on the water must have a life jacket in the coach’s launch.

6. All shells are to follow the set traffic pattern: row on the right-hand side of the lake from the coxswain’s perspective, turn in the counter-clockwise direction, and ensure that the craft traveling in opposite directions pass port to port.

7. Stay alert for both rowing and non-rowing craft as well as changing water conditions. If sudden severe weather should strike, return to the dock/shore immediately. Do not row if a thunderstorm warning exists for the immediate area. Do not row in fog unless visibility is at least 100 yards. If heavy fog sets in while on the water, keep a land reference and return to the dock, moving slowly. Be prepared to stop and make noise frequently to warn other boats that may not be visible. Listen for the presence of other boats.

D. Facility Usage Rules

1. The facility gate is to be shut and locked when crews are on the water and when the last person leaves the facility.

2. All gasoline and other flammables are to be stored safely.

3. No smoking is permitted in the facility or around the equipment.

4. All shells and launches taken out on the water are to be signed out in the logbook prior to going on the water. For coxed boats, coxswains are responsible for signing in and out. Include the boat name and time out. Upon return, complete the actual time in, comments, and all equipment problems encountered. If an equipment problem requires attention before the boat is rowed again, notify the Equipment Manager the same day.

5. We share Hull Park, the parking lots, the TART Trail footpath, the launching areas, and the lake with others. Be considerate of other boats, sailboards, fisherman, swimmers, kayakers, bikers, joggers and others in the area. Adhere to scheduled launch times as these have been coordinated to accommodate others who are using the area.

E. Equipment Handling Rules

1. Enter any equipment problem into the logbook located inside of the facility shed. If further use will cause more damage to the equipment or potential injury to a rower, make sure the equipment will not be used by anyone until the Equipment Manager has addressed the problem. Do not assume someone else has reported the problem.

2. Shells are to receive routine/preventative maintenance on a regular basis.

3. Shells are to be wiped down by rowers after each use. Oar handles are to be cleaned with anti-bacterial solution after each use to prevent the spread of infection.

4. Rigging is not to be changed without approval. All measurements and adjustments are to be noted in the organization’s Rigging Book.

5. Moving Boats and Oars

a. When lifting a boat, always make sure there are enough rowers properly distributed to prevent injury or damage. Lift the boat evenly.

b. Boats are to be lifted off racks, not slid off.

c. Watch riggers carefully to assure they do not collide with other objects, including the hull of other boats.

d. Do not hold shells by, or rest shells on, the riggers.

e. Coxswains are to give directions for moving boats. Those carrying a boat are to follow the coxswain's commands and are to refrain from speaking while moving a boat unless necessary for the safety of others or the equipment. The coxswain shall strategically maneuver along the trail to give notice to users of the trail that a boat is crossing.

f. Do not place shells on the ground. Use stretchers or horses for proper support.

g. When transporting shells on the trailer, assure they are properly secured and unable to move in any direction. Refrain from placing gunwales directly on metal; use foam protectors. Remove seats and riggers before transport.

h. Walk around a shell; never step over a shell.

i. Never place your head inside a rigger while carrying a shell; never step into a rigger while climbing into or out of the shell.

j. Carry oars with the blade high and in such a way as to avoid damage to the oar or surrounding objects or people.

6. Launching and docking boats

a. Never step into the bottom of the shell or drop anything heavy into the bottom of the shell.

b. Before entering the boat, inspect seat, rigger, stretchers, etc. to make sure no parts are missing, loose, or broken. Inform the coach of any problems you find.

c. Remember that the coxswain is in charge of landing at the dock. Enter the landing area slowly and always have someone present to catch the boat at the dock/shore. If the landing does not look good, weigh enough, back off, and try again.

7. Handling Launches

a. Use of a launch is to be entered in log sheets, just as is done with shells, by the launch driver.

b. Life jacket bags must be included in the corresponding numbered launch boat as they contain the boat registration documentation.

c. Launches are to be securely tied to the dock and the motor properly hoisted and locked.

d. Launches stored inside the facility are to have the gasoline tank removed. Store the gasoline in the shed.

e. The launch is to be considered a safety vehicle at all times. Launch drivers must make sure all of the proper safety equipment is in the launch. Launch drivers shall also be familiar with rescue procedures. The number of persons in the launch shall be limited so as to allow for adequate room for the rescue of crews.

Independent Use of TACR Equipment

1. Unless otherwise authorized, no rower shall use TACR equipment at any time except during a scheduled row/class and under the supervision of a coach.

2. Advanced sweep rowers may be certified to meet and row outside of their regularly scheduled Advanced Row during another coached session, provided that the coach who is conducting the session agrees he/she is able to appropriately supervise the group while they are on the water.

3. Blue level scullers may be certified to row with a coach present outside of their regularly scheduled class provided that the coach who is conducting the session agrees he/she is able to appropriately supervise the sculler while they are on the water.

4. Green and Gold level scullers may row without a coach present if:

a. They have met the certification requirements which have been signed by the coach and have been received board approval.

- b. All fees are paid in full in advance—annual fee and/or punch card. All waivers are signed and on file.
- c. They are rowing only when at least two scullers are present and rowing at the same time, whether in two singles or a double.
- d. They adhere to all safety standards set forth within this document as well as USRowing standards. Each sculler must have/wear a PFD, wear a whistle, and at least one cell phone must be present in the boat for use in emergency.
- e. They use only the sculling equipment for which the rower is approved in writing.
- f. Any violation at any time may result in the removal of the rower from the approved sculling list and there will be no refund of the fee.
- g. Any use of TACR equipment at any time without board authorization or in violation of board authorization or these rules shall be considered trespass.

See **TACR Sculler Certification** document.

Guest Rowing Policy

Guests are welcome to use TACR facilities with the permission of the Head Coach and in accordance with all TACR policies and procedures. Guests are allowed two (2) visits after which time they will need to purchase a punch card or enroll in sessions. Guests who wish to use sculling equipment must complete the certification process. All guests are expected to complete and sign a waiver, sign the TACR Handbook Acknowledgment Form, and provide swim test documentation.