

Green Lake Adult Crew Handbook

Green Lake Small Craft Center
5900 W Green Lake Way N Seattle, WA 98103
Phone 206-684-4074 Fax 206-684-4042

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this handbook is to provide an overview of how the Masters Program operates as part of the Green Lake Crew organization, what you can expect from staff and coaches, and what is expected of you as a participant. It also contains some basics about the sport like rowing terms and coxswain commands.

2. History and Organizational Structure

Green Lake Crew (GLC) is a sponsored program of the Seattle Parks and Recreation Department. It is one of two publicly funded rowing programs in the city (the other is Mt. Baker). The City provides the facilities, pays the core office staff, and contracts with the Associated Recreational Council (ARC) to hire coaches and authorize a volunteer Rowing Advisory Council to provide strategic direction for the organization. Green Lake Crew operates out of the Green Lake Small Craft Center, often referred to as “the boathouse.” We share this facility with the Seattle Canoe and Kayak Club, summer sailing classes, and youth day camps.

GLC has a long and proud history of excellence that began in 1948 with the Juniors program, which now serves over 150 junior high and high school athletes from neighborhood schools every year. The Juniors’ varsity program has evolved into a nationally recognized competitive rowing team that places in regional and national regattas. The Junior teams practice every week day after school and some weekends.

The Masters Program is for adults age 18+. “Masters,” in this case does not mean “expert”, but rather adults rowing both recreationally and competitively. There are several different classes that comprise what we call Green Lake Adult Crew (GLAC), from Learn to Row to Competitive, which are explained below in Section 3c.

The vision of GLAC is to be an inclusive community where every individual can experience the transformative power of rowing and achieve their fullest potential. The following entities play key roles for GLAC:

a. Rowing Advisory Council (RAC)

The Rowing Advisory Council (RAC) is the advisory body of Green Lake Crew, and is authorized by the Associated Recreation Council (ARC). Comprised of a group of volunteers (including Juniors’ parents and adult rowers) dedicated to Green Lake Crew’s continued success, the RAC helps make decisions regarding the budget, equipment purchases, and fundraising. The RAC meets at the boathouse on the third Wednesday of each month. Meetings are open to all, and participants are welcome to attend.

b. Masters Advisory Council (MAC)

The Masters’ Advisory Council (aka “MAC”) is a voluntary organization of participants of the Green Lake Adult Crew (aka GLAC) rowing program. The MAC monitors and supports the mission/vision of GLAC, and its coaches in an advisory, non-coaching capacity. The MAC aims to ensure the efficient operation of the GLAC program, promote team growth and camaraderie, strengthen the team’s relationships with program administration and the broader rowing community, and garner resources to support team needs and goals. See **Appendix A** for the MAC By-Laws, which include a description of council positions and roles.

c. Seattle Parks & Recreation

The Green Lake Small Craft Center is managed by the Seattle Parks Department. Staffing for the facility, also known as the “office staff,” consists of one full-time Program Coordinator, a part-time Recreation Attendant (0.8 FTE), and a part-time Assistant Program Coordinator (0.4 FTE). The office staff is responsible for all happenings at the facility, seven days per week. This includes all programming, special events, hiring, training, payroll, Advisory Council partnerships, implementing all city policies, and standard administrative duties. The office staff are assigned to the Aquatics unit which is part of the large Recreation unit within the Department. The Program Coordinator oversees the dozens of ARC staff who work with participants at the facility. The Recreation Attendant fields class registrations and questions, and interfaces with park visitors.

d. Masters Rowing Coordinator

In January 2018, a part-time Masters Rowing Coordinator position (0.15 FTE) was added to the ARC-hired staff to ensure adequate program support for GLAC. Duties for this role include:

- Designating lead coaches for each class
- Working with coaches to match participants to appropriate rowing group(s)
- Translating input from the MAC into program adjustments
- Working with GLSCC office staff to optimize class scheduling
- Coordinating equipment usage and coxswain availability with Junior coaches
- Managing the team roster and communications
- Providing monthly program updates to the Rowing Advisory Council (RAC)
- Coaching as necessary to ensure program consistency and continuity

e. Team Captains

See the MAC By-laws (Appendix A) for a description of the team captains’ roles. If a rower has concerns regarding programming, coaching or other participants, this should be brought to the attention of the Team Captains. The Team Captains will advise or handle whether the matter needs to be addressed through the program director or coaching staff.

3. Green Lake Adult Crew Programming

a. Masters Class Structure

Participation in Green Lake Masters program is structured around classes. These classes are often referred to as “practice.” Classes generally run for 4-6 weeks.

b. Payment Options

All participants will need to set up an account with <https://apm.activecommunities.com/seattle/Home> so they can register for classes. (This can be done with the office staff in-person or by phone.) Participants register for classes through www.greenlakecrew.org or through the office staff.

Ten-session punch cards can be purchased through the office staff for those who choose to “drop-in” to classes. Punch cards are intended for those who cannot commit to the typical class schedules. It is strongly recommended that those who row regularly register for classes rather than use punch cards as it is more cost effective and allows the office to better predict class size and coaching needs.

c. Masters Classes by Level

Masters classes are structured around degree of experience, skills, and interests according to the following levels. All participants must complete and submit a float test and sign a risk and release form.

Learn to Row (R1A)

For adults new to rowing. Learn-to-row classes meet twice a week for 5 weeks for a total of 10 sessions. Sessions are two hours long and are held rain or shine.

This class covers the basics of the rowing stroke, rowing terms, boat handling, equipment care, and water safety. Participants begin by learning the basics of the rowing stroke on ergometers (indoor rowing machines) and in docked boats then quickly progress to rowing in sweep (one oar per person) racing shells. Depending on class size, students may also be introduced to sculling (two oars per person). Satisfactory completion of this class qualifies participants for Developmental Rowing (R1B).

Developmental Rowing (R1B)

Requirement: Completion of Learn-to-Row (R1A) or coach permission.

The focus of this class is skill development, with special attention to building participants' sculling and coxing skills. These classes run at the same times as Learn-to-Row classes to enable a smooth transition from one class to the other. Participants are strongly encouraged to repeat this class until they have received coach approval to advance to R2.

Continuing Rowing (R2/3)

These classes include "Novice" (R2) and "Experienced" (R3) rowers as described below. Coaches will organize rowers into boats, boating people according to experience or race line-ups.

Novice Rowers (R2)

Requirements: Completion of Learn-to-Row (R1A) and Developmental Rowing (R1B) or equivalent rowing experience and coaches' approval.

"Novice," for purposes of this class, refers to those who have rowed less than two years but are competent in the basic skills taught in R1A and R1B. "Novice rowers will be given instruction with an emphasis on developing their rowing skills while increasing their fitness.

Many R2 participants race in the three annual Green Lake hosted regattas and also opt to race in some regional regattas. Participants registered for the class will have boating priority over punch card participants.

Experienced Rowers (R3)

R3 participants should have at least two years of rowing experience and be competent rowers. People rowing at this level include both those who are interested in competing and those who simply want to get a good workout on the water with other competent rowers. Although skill development will continue to be addressed, there will be a strong emphasis on training and getting more meters into the workout.

R3 rowers typically row in local and regional regattas.

Competitive Rowing (R4)

This class offers rowers the opportunity for a higher intensity workout as they meet on the water four times per week. Training continues to develop skills while the workouts focus heavily on physical training in order to compete at the national levels. This class is open to experienced rowers or coaches' permission. In addition to local and regional regattas, this group may compete at different regattas across the country, Head of the Charles, Masters Championships, etc.

Supplemental erg/land conditioning classes may take place in the off-season (November-February). Note: Seattle Parks & Recreation policy prohibits novice participants from rowing before sunrise.

Class registration is expected for participation in this class; participants using an open row "punch card" will be boated last.

Erg Conditioning Class

Participation in erg conditioning classes is open to all adults but completion of a Learn-to-Row class is strongly encouraged. These are on-land conditioning classes primarily consisting of indoor rowing on ergometers (ergs) and are offered during the winter months (September - April). The focus of this class is improving fitness and form for on-water rowing. Coaches may also incorporate other land-based exercises. Class registration is required for participation. Open row punch cards are not accepted. All participants must have a current risk and release form on file.

d. iCrew

Once a participant has completed a Learn To Row class and registers for a class or purchases a punch card, they will be enrolled in the Green Lake online iCrew system, which tracks class enrollment, attendance and regatta participation. The participant will receive a registration email from iCrew with instructions for creating an account. iCrew may be accessed online or by downloading the iCrew smartphone app.

- ***Using iCrew to RSVP for Practice***

Keeping your attendance plans current in iCrew is essential for helping coaches know who to expect for practice so they can plan line-ups and lesson plans. If you plan on attending practice please indicate on iCrew no later than 8pm the night before. Putting together a line-up for several boats is a strategic and time-consuming process so keeping the coaches informed of your attendance status is an important expectation of participation in any rowing program.

- ***Using iCrew to Determine Coxing Rotation***

In the Masters program every participant is expected to take a turn coxing a boat if a junior coxswain is not available. iCrew will keep track of the number of sessions since you last were assigned coxswain duties. The iCrew system allows both you and the coach to see when your turn at coxing is coming and allows you to plan accordingly. See *Basic Coxing and Calls* in **Appendix B** for cox role, responsibilities and calls.

4. Safety

Safety is of paramount importance at Green Lake Crew. See **Appendix C: Safety at Green Lake** for a complete list of safety measures including the requirements of a float test, thorough coach safety training, handling of wind and water conditions, and pre-dawn rowing protocols.

5. Racing Seasons and Regattas

Green Lake hosts three regattas a year: Frostbite (November), Spring (March), and the Summer Extravaganza (August). Other clubs from the area come to Green Lake to compete in these 1000 meter sprint races. There are events for juniors, masters and both novices and more experienced rowers. These are great opportunities to both compete and volunteer. We also travel to other sites to compete in regattas. See **Regatta Basics** in **Appendix D**, for complete information on types of races, types of events, age handicaps, what to wear and scholarships. A current list of regattas can be found on <https://www.greenlakecrew.org> under Adult Crew/Masters Calendar. The season typically involves these events:

January NW Ergomania (*all rowers*), Seattle

March Green Lake Spring Regatta (*all rowers*), Green Lake

April "Raising of the Green" Fundraising Auction/Dinner, Nile Golf Course

April Spring Sprints Invitational (*all rowers*), Lake Stevens, WA

May Opening Day/Windermere Cup (*qualifying boat only*), Montlake Cut

June NW Masters Regional Championship (*all rowers*), Vancouver, WA

July Cascadia Masters (*all rowers*), Vancouver, BC

August U.S. Rowing Invitational National Championships (*qualifying boats only*)

August Green Lake Extravaganza (*all rowers*), Green Lake

September Erg-a-thon Fundraiser

September Row for the Cure (*all rowers*), Lake Union

September Otter Island (*all rowers*), Everett, WA

October American Lake Fall Classic (*all rowers*), Tacoma, WA

October East Coast Regatta (*qualifying boat*), location varies

November Frostbite Regatta (*all rowers*), Green Lake

November Head of the Lake (*qualifying boat*), Lake Washington

Financial aid to help meet class or travel costs is available to all Green Lake rowers. Contact the office for information.

Volunteer Opportunities

The three regattas that Green Lake hosts each year raise money for the program. Masters rowers contribute by volunteering for dock duty. Rowers of any level are encouraged to sign-up for 1-2 hour shifts to ensure that racing crews launch safely and direct traffic on and around the docks. Dock duty is a great way to see the big picture of the event, contribute to the team and represent Green Lake to the community. There are also opportunities to volunteer with time keeping and other regatta procedures.

Green Lake Crew is in the midst of a campaign to build a new boathouse. There are opportunities to support this effort on the Green Lake Crew webpage. Fundraising also supports the purchase of equipment and the scholarship program for both the Masters and Juniors programs.

There are two primary fundraising events during the year:

The “Raising of the Green” annual auction and dinner is our major fundraising event and is held annually in March or April. Volunteers are needed to help with planning, procurement, and day-of tasks. Green Lake Crew encourages everyone to contribute as generously as possible and to attend the event.

In the fall there is an Erg-a-thon which involves both junior and adult rowers.

6.Guidelines for Masters Coaches and Rowers

These guidelines were developed by Masters rowers to communicate what they expect from both Masters coaching staff and rowers. These guidelines are advisory only and not intended to supplement, in any manner, the coaches’ contract with Seattle Parks and Recreation.

a. General Culture and Purpose

The Green Lake Adult Crew (GLAC) Masters program is an inclusive community of adult rowers who participate in sweep, sculling and conditioning sessions for a variety of reasons, the social community, skill development and health/athletic benefits being primary. As members of the GLAC program, rowers pay for specific class sessions or drop-in attendance throughout the year-round program and expect a certain level of organization and accountability. Meeting the expectations of our rowers regardless of skill level or natural ability, creating a positive coaching environment with common goals and building and retaining participation is the goal and purpose of these guidelines.

b. General Expectations of Coaches:

- Rowers want and welcome tips and corrections of individual technique and skill development if delivered in a supportive manner. Coaches are expected to give individual as well as boat feedback.
- Rowers like to see practice sessions run in a manner that maximizes time on the water (barring rescheduling or delays due to weather). This might mean utilizing iCrew to set line-ups ahead of time and having a practice plan.
- Rowers should feel that their coaches are accessible directly following or prior to practice sessions to discuss their individual goals or concerns regarding their time on the water.
- Coaches are asked to stress the importance of using iCrew for attendance reservations so that the coaches know ahead of time who and how many are coming to practice. Universal and consistent use of iCrew by both rowers and coaches will help set boatings and line-ups and encourage advance class registration.
- Coaches are asked to encourage participation by all rowers in local regattas. Green Lake hosted regattas (three per year) are an integral part of our program and community development goals. These events are open to all skill levels and foster a sense of community and team building. New rowers often need encouragement to be in their first regatta. Participation in other more competitive regattas is strongly encouraged according to individual goals and/or class skill levels.

- The Green Lake Masters program tries to use junior coxswains when available but often must rely on rowers to cox boats for fellow rowers. Cox duty rotates through the team according to frequency of attendance, which is tracked on iCrew, e.g. someone who is a regular attendee is likely to cox more often. The coxing assignment is done through iCrew (with some coach discretion) in an effort to be equitable and transparent. Coaches are responsible for ensuring that their class participants have basic coxing skills. Twice yearly coxswain training will be offered free of charge to all rowers. In addition, coaches are responsible for ensuring that every coxswain, regardless of skill level, is familiar with the course, operation of the cox box, traffic pattern and hazards (buoys, swimmers, boaters, etc.) for safety purposes.
- Coaches are encouraged to foster a productive and enjoyable experience for rowers, on and off the water, through innovative coaching techniques, friendly competition and other practices that engage and develop a supportive GLAC rowing community.

c. Coaching Expectations, by Class

Learn to Row and Developmental (1A and 1B):

- Coaches are asked to follow the Learn to Row and Developmental curriculum (which may be modified from time to time or due to inclement weather or class size) so that there is consistency across classes and all safety and rowing technique basics are covered.
- Coaches are asked to provide feedback and make recommendations to new rowers about which class would be most appropriate to their skill level following completion of the Learn to Row course.
- Coaches will provide basic training in coxing

Continuing Rowing (Rowing 2 and Rowing 3)

Novice (Rowing 2)

- Focus of practice sessions is primarily on improving fitness and skill level of individual rowers
- Coaches are encouraged to periodically assess the skill level of individual rowers and recommend at what point they should advance to Rowing 3.
- Rowing 2 participants are best served by coaching to the specific skill level of these rowers and providing line-ups and boating opportunities for their successful technical skill development whenever possible.

Experienced (Rowing 3)

- Rowing 3 participants are experienced rowers who may or may not be interested in being competitive. These rowers often share practice times with Rowing 2 and are offered a number of options for practice sessions.
- Though focus is on skill development and fitness, coaches are encouraged to be flexible in meeting the expectations of this group whether it be purely recreational, off-season competitive rowers, preference for sculling, sweeping or particular line-ups whenever possible.

Competitive Rowing (Rowing 4)

- Participants generally have at least two years' experience and want to compete at a high level and train for specific regattas; or very experienced scullers who prefer an early morning high intensity workout to retain and refine their technical skill and fitness.
- Coaches at this level are encouraged to develop individual and team fitness goals and provide seasonal training plans for the duration of each class.
- Regatta specific training and determination of boat line-ups in advance are encouraged. Coaches are asked to encourage this group to set individual performance goals and to do extra conditioning outside of regular class sessions.

d. Rower Responsibilities

- All rowers should use the iCrew reservation system so that coaches are informed of attendance plans. This allows coaches to plan line-ups in advance and efficiently conduct practice sessions. In the event of an unexpected or last-minute change of plans, rowers are asked to notify coaches via iCrew or by text (cell #s are available on iCrew) in a timely manner whenever possible.
- If a rower has a concern with their individual development within the program, they should feel free to discuss these concerns with their session coaches.
- If a rower has concerns regarding the programming, coaching or other participants, this should be brought to the attention of the Team Captains. The Team Captains will advise or handle whether the matter needs to be addressed further through the program director or coaching staff.
- The Green Lake Masters program tries to use junior coxswains when available but often must rely on rowers to cox boats for fellow rowers. Cox duty rotates through the team according to frequency of attendance, which is tracked on iCrew. E.g. someone who is a regular attendee is likely to cox more often. The coxing assignment is done through iCrew (with some coach discretion) in an effort to be equitable and transparent. A list of coxing and rowing terms is given to all Learn to Row participants (see **Appendix B**). Every rower is responsible for ensuring that they are familiar with the course, traffic pattern and hazards for the safety of all participants.
- Rowers are expected to adhere to the directions of coaching staff while on the water. Rowers are expected to follow the calls and direction of the cox (drills and pieces are at the discretion of coaching staff). The ONLY exceptions are for safety.
- Rowers should not coach other rowers in the boat unless specifically asked to provide feedback from an individual.
- Rowers are responsible for fostering a positive rowing environment for all participants.

Appendix A: Glossary of Rowing Terms

Blade: The wide part of the oar. Blades are painted in team colors.

Bow: The leading end of the shell with a rubber ball on the end to prevent injury.

Bowball: A small white rubber ball attached to the bow designed to protect a rower in the event of a collision.

Bow Seat: #1 seat in the boat.

Catch: The point at which the blade takes the water to initiate the drive phase of the stroke. The blade must be placed quickly and accurately into the water before the rower changes direction.

Catching a Crab: When a rower places the oar into the water without squaring the blade, it often goes too deep and the rower loses control. This can stop a boat dead in the water and also catapult a rower out of the boat.

Collar: A wide plastic ring placed around the sleeve of an oar. The collar stops the oar from slipping through the oarlock.

Cox (coxswain): The person in charge of steering the boat and the only person facing the direction of travel.

Cox Box: A small amplification system with timer and stroke meter. This allows the cox to be heard all along the boat and provides key elements such as strokes per minute and elapsed time.

Drive: The propulsion phase of the stroke, which occurs between the catch and release.

Ergometer (erg): The wind resistance machine used to test the absolute power generated by a rower, usually recorded in 500-meter splits. On the water, this force coupled with the distance from catch to release determines an athlete's power value in the boat.

Feather: The hand motion used to roll the blade into a horizontal position during the recovery phase of the stroke. The blade can then skim just above the water's surface in preparation for the next stroke.

Gunwale (pronounced 'gun-el'): The sides of the boat.

Hatchets: Oars with big blades.

Head Races: Fall races between 2.5 and 4 miles, which build rowers' endurance.

Layback: Amount of backward lean of a rower's body at the finish of the drive.

Leg drive: Power applied to the stroke, at the catch, by the force of driving the legs down.

Line-ups: The order the athletes sit in a boat, partially determined by erg scores.

Lightweight: Category for rowers who meet a maximum weight requirement. The weights vary depending on the regatta and season. Weight category applies to the individual, usually 130 for girls and 155 for boys.

Oarlock: The "U"-shaped swivel holding the oar in the rigger. It is mounted on the rigger "sill", rotates on an upright pin, and has a "gate" at the top to secure the oar.

Openweight: Rowers who are not in the lightweight category.

Outside Hand: The hand at the end of the handle (left for ports, right for starboards). This hand dominates the pulling and controls the level of the oar through the stroke.

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

Power Ten: The ten most powerful strokes a crew can produce. Called for by the coxswain. Must be used strategically and not over-used.

Puddles: "Footprints" in the water made by the oars. Little whirlpools.

Rate, Stroke rate: The number of strokes taken per minute.

Recovery: The rest phase of the stroke when the blade is out of the water.

Release: The point at which the oar is extracted from the water. The end of the work phase of the stroke. When executed properly, it is a smooth, clean maneuver.

Rigger: An attachment to the gunwale to hold the oar in place as it rotates through the stroke.

Rudder: Steering device at the stern of the shell controlled by the Coxswain through cables and ropes.

Run: The boat's response to the send generated by the propulsion phase of the stroke. This is what rowers should feel as the boat glides underneath them on their way up to the catch.

Rushing: Athletes who pull themselves up the slide to the catch faster than they drive the oar in the water are "rushing the slide." This slows down a boat.

Sculling: Rowing with two oars, each smaller than a sweep oar.

Seat Racing: A system by which the coach can judge which rowers are fastest on the water. Two boats of 4 are matched against each other in a series of races. Rowers are switched from boat to boat or seat to seat until an obvious winning combination is achieved.

Set: The balance of the boat, achieved by keeping the oars moving together horizontally, preferably along the same plane in both the drive phase and recovery phase of the stroke.

Shell: Can be used interchangeably with boat.

Slide: The tracks that the seat moves across or the action of sliding with each stroke.

Splits: The time it takes a rower to complete 500 meters based on his/her current pace.

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

Stern: The trailing end of the boat, where fin and rudder are located. Generally the coxswain is seated in the stern so that he/she can see what the rowers are doing. There are, however, "bow loaders" in which the cox is seated in the bow section of the boat.

Stretcher or Foot-stretcher: Where the rower's feet go. The stretcher consists of two inclined footrests that hold the rower's shoes. The rower's shoes are bolted into the footrests.

StrokeCoach: A small electronic display that rowers attach in the boat to show the important race information like stroke rate and elapsed time.

The Stroke: The rower in #8 seat who sets the cadence of the strokes for the other rowers. Must have excellent technique.

Sweep: Each athlete has only one oar.

Swing: The hard-to-define feeling when near-perfect synchronization of motion occurs in the shell, enhancing the performance and speed.

Below diagrams from <http://ucirvinewomensrowing.weebly.com/prospective-athletes.html>

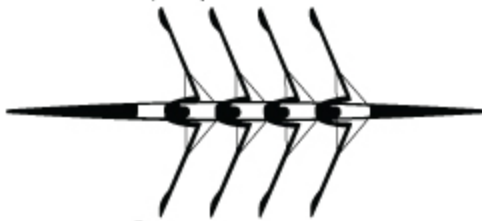


Sculling Boats

Single (1x): Approximately 26 feet long, 11 inches wide, and about 30 lbs. Rowed by one person using two oars.



Double (2x): Approximately 32 feet long, 13 inches wide, and about 60 lbs. Rowed by two people using two oars each.

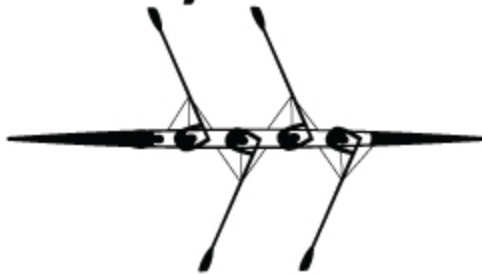


Quad(4x): Approximately 42 feet long and about 115 lbs. Rowed by four people using two oars each.



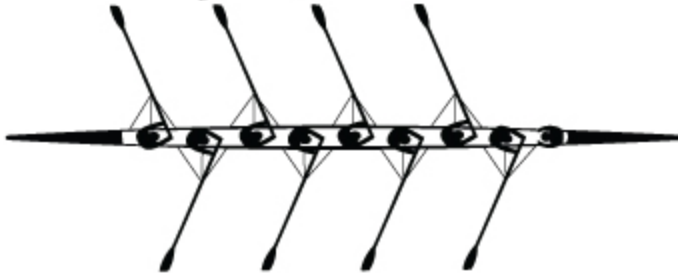
Sweep Boats

Pair (2-): Approximately 32 feet long, 13 inches wide and about 60 lbs. Rowed by two people using one oar each.



Four (4+): Approximately 42 feet long, 21 inches wide and about 112 lbs. Rowed by four people using one oar each. Coxswain can be in the bow or the stern.

A **Straight Four (4-)** is a similar boat but without a coxswain.



Eight (8): Approximately 60 feet long, 26 inches wide and about 210 lbs. Rowed by eight people using one oar each. Coxswain sits in the stern.