

# RowBOC Handbook 2010

## BOC and RowBOC HISTORY

The Brattleboro Outing Club (BOC) is one of the oldest civic outdoor sporting associations in the United States. Founded in 1921 by local sportsman Fred Harris, the BOC was formed to “encourage, develop, and promote family outdoor life and good fellowship.”

The summer of 2007, BOC started a rowing program known as “RowBOC” located in their rented boathouse located on Spring Tree Lane on the West River upstream of the Marina Restaurant in Brattleboro. It features both sculling and sweep rowing from mid-April into November, weather permitting. Other BOC programs include an X-C Ski Program with groomed trails; a Tennis Club with 6 beautiful red clay courts, lessons and leagues; and a paddling program with organized group paddles in kayaks and canoes throughout northern New England.

## LEARN TO ROW

A Novice Clinic is offered each spring to introduce new rowers to the sport. The Novice Clinic is held sequentially at the RowBOC and the Putney Rowing Club boathouses so new rowers are familiar with both clubs and their boats and opportunities. There are a few trained coaches in the area who may be available for private lessons to those who cannot attend the clinic but wish to become sufficiently skilled to join RowBOC.

Safety is one of the most important aspects of rowing. River conditions, traffic, changing weather, equipment failure, carelessness, or fatigue could turn a pleasant experience into a dangerous situation. Please always apply caution to your time on the river. Each novice rower must watch the safety video before getting in a boat. We also expect all rowers to watch it annually as a refresher.

To join RowBOC you either need to complete the Novice Clinic, take private lessons from a “BOC approved” rowing coach, or have your rowing skills observed and verified by RowBOC. You can download the clinic application forms from the Brattleboro Outing Club website and submit with the requisite fee to the address on the bottom of the form. Coach contact information is also available at the website. [www.brattleborooutingclub.org/rowing/](http://www.brattleborooutingclub.org/rowing/)

## 2010 RowBOC PROGRAMS

RowBOC offers a youth program as well as the adult program organized each year by volunteers. This is a great way for members to meet other rowers and help the club grow. Several local students race on different high school or college rowing teams and this summer we plan to have weekly sweep rows with some coaching for these youth to stay in rowing shape. For the 2010 season, Gwen Schoch, an intern who is a

seasoned coxswain will be working at RowBOC and will be available for weekly sweep rowing sessions with student racers and also with adults. The RowBOC blog is great source for seeing what is going on at the club.

<http://rowblog.brattleborooutingclub.org/>

### **MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION**

Membership entitles use of club equipment, the docks and participation in club events. Along with these privileges comes responsibility to work for a morning in April to put the docks in and prepare the equipment and boat house for the rowing season and to work for a morning in November to pull the docks out and store the boats and equipment for the winter.

To join RowBOC you either need to complete the Novice Clinic, take private lessons from a "BOC approved" rowing coach, or have your rowing skills observed and verified by RowBOC. If you are new to the area and come with prior rowing experience, it is best to contact the Program Manager or a coach to let one of them know about your interest in joining. Current contact information is available at the RowBOC website. [www.brattleborooutingclub.org/rowing/](http://www.brattleborooutingclub.org/rowing/)

Each rower accepts the responsibility of their own safety and safety of others. Any damages done to a boat or other equipment due to negligence or accident must be reported immediately to the boathouse manager or program director. Cost of repairs are the responsibility of the person or persons who were using the equipment at the time of the damage or who caused the damage to occur.

All members are expected to watch the safety video each year. Anyone observed being reckless or unsafe with RowBOC equipment may lose their privilege to use club property.

There are several volunteer opportunities to help the Brattleboro Outing Club Rowing Program and the club depends on each member to help in some way.

Boathouse: responsible for maintaining and upgrading the boathouse. This includes building additional boat racks, making signs and general upkeep. The committee also maintains the boats, oars, slings and other equipment as needed and organizes work crews.

Registration: Maintain database of RowBOC member registration and boat rack rentals.

Education and Social: Coaching or assist at clinics, organize weekly group rows, organize junior program, plan membership social gatherings.

Website: Content manager of BLOG and photo album.

Special Events: Plan and organize regattas.

BOC liason: Board or committee member of Brattleboro Outing Club

Members who complete 6 documented hours of volunteer time may earn a \$50.00 credit toward their membership fee in the following year. Hours may not be carried forward beyond the one year. Please document your hours and submit to the Volunteer Coordinator when 6 hours are completed.

### **RowBOC Boat House and Dock Information**

If you have questions that cannot be answered from the website or sources listed feel free to contact [rowboc.members@gmail.com](mailto:rowboc.members@gmail.com). The boathouse lock combination, a list of members and contact information are available to members upon joining and being given boat permission.

The RowBOC boat house is located at 125 Spring Tree Rd, off Route 5 (Putney Rd.) just north of the bridge over the West River at the confluence with the Connecticut River. Across from the Connecticut River Safari canoe rental, take the road behind the stores and toward the Marina Restaurant. Before the guard rail and restaurant turn right and continue on the dirt road to the last building on your right. The tan Quonset hut is the boathouse and docks are on your left. Continue past and park in the ample lot next to the cornfield adjacent to the boathouse.

### **ROWING and BOATHOUSE PROTOCOL**

1. Before coming to row check the weather and water levels on-line to assure safe conditions. Although the condition in Brattleboro will vary somewhat check "Real time Connecticut River Conditions at North Walpole" on the web <http://newweb.erh.noaa.gov/ahps2/hydrograph.php?wfo=box&gage=wlpn3>
2. Clothing: avoid loose fitting clothing that may get caught in seat wheels or oars. Wear brighter colored clothing on shirt or hat for better visibility to other boaters.
2. SIGN OUT: record your name, time out, boat taken, etc. on the clip board. If you plan on an extended row much beyond an hour, please note that when you sign out. Until familiar with the area check the map next to the logs for the location of snags, buoys, and dragon (yes really) which you'll want to avoid. Check other rower's comments.
3. Select and take oars down to the dock placing the blade over the water on the opposite side from where you launch. Place the slings on the grass above the docks for when you return.
4. Check the position of the boat on the rack before you remove it – look to see where it is resting on the rack. You may want to adjust the foot stretchers with the boat on slings before you take it down to the river. Check general condition of the boat, seats, skeg, etc. to be sure it is not damaged. Record any boat damage you notice, in the comment section of the sign out sheet.

5. Take the boat down to the dock and place the bow up river. Do not leave a boat at the dock unattended and unsecured with oars. Always put dock oar on first. (Oar-lock toward stern (feet), hatchet down and curved toward stern.) Get in boat as you were taught in clinic or lessons and check foot stretchers for correct position. Tilting to the right, slide alongside dock until the oars clear the edge of dock.

If rowing on the West River stay closer to the right side (east or boat house side), that is the deepest section. There can be numerous trees and snags in the water and often in summer the water level is very low in sections. Water level is regulated at the dams, and not only affected by rainfall. Be very cautious about watching water depth to avoid breaking a skeg or worse. Make yourself aware of the known shallow areas in the West River.

If rowing on the Connecticut River – head upstream on West River then turn around and row toward CT River. Watch for motorboat traffic at the Marina and be cautious when rowing under the bridges. When entering the CT River– cross over to the NH side immediately if rowing north. Traffic flow is to row east side of river when heading north, and row on west side when heading south.

There is one big rocky area on VT side as you approach the West River from the north. Be aware of this spot and always take precaution to avoid it. There is a large tree caught up there this year so it is easier to see than previous years.

6. A few tips while on the water:

Turn your head frequently towards the river bank to be aware of what is ahead and steer clear of other rowers, tree limbs, docks, bridge pilings, buoys, swimmers and dragons, the geese will usually move as you get close to them.

Row closer to edge of river, not up the middle, in case you capsize you will have a shorter distance to swim with the boat to the shore.

If you capsize, hang on, catch your breath, check that you have both oars and swim your boat to the edge of the river where it's shallow--preferably where the water is about 18 inches deep. Hold your oars flat on the water with one hand, straddle the boat and climb in.

When a motor boat passes and creates a wake, position your boat parallel to the wake. Stop rowing and place oars flat on the water hands together and let the boat float easily over the wake.

Take a moment to enjoy the scenery and the wildlife. Sometimes we are so focused on rowing that we miss enjoying the beauty around us. Otters, beavers, bald eagle, herons, osprey, loons and more have all been seen each year within a half mile of the

boathouse.

7. When returning to the dock, always head the bow up river, rowing slowly toward the dock and come in parallel to the dock. At the dock raise the starboard oar slightly so that the oar and rigger pass over the dock. Holding both oar handles in the right hand, grasp the dock with the left hand and move the boat forward on the dock to allow another boat to land behind you.

If anyone is on the dock who is not a rower, or who is in your way, please ask them kindly to vacate the dock when you come in – and to take their belongings with them. Often people do not realize the length of the oars taking up so much space. No dogs are allowed on the docks when a boat is there –under any circumstances.

8. To exit the boat: With your port oar flat on the water, hold both oar handles in your right hand. Put your right foot on the step plate and rise slowly stepping on the dock with your left foot. When on the dock pull the riverside oar into the dock. The oars will hold the boat to the dock. If windy or there is a strong current, be cautious about leaving a boat unattended at the dock. Secure it with the oars as best you can.

9. Unlock the boat house and set out slings and fill the bucket with water at the dock.

10. Undo the gate and remove the outboard oar first. Re-latch the keeper on the gate and then remove the dockside oar. Place the oars with blades over the water away from the launching side of the dock.

11. Lift the boat out of the water, carry it up the ramp and place on the slings upside down. With sponge and a bucket of river water scrub off nasty river gunk. Dry boat with a towel from the boathouse. Inspect for damage. Stern in first, carefully put the boat back on the rack where you found it in the boat house. Watching the riggers to not scratch or damage other boats. Check that the boat is resting on appropriate load bearing points.

12. Get the oars from the dock, rinse first if dirty, and hang in the correct area in boat house with blade perpendicular to the back wall. Watch that the oars do not rock toward edge of blocks and fall. Check other oars, that they were replaced safely. Put sweep oars singly on left side racks, and sculling oars in matched pairs on right side racks. Place slings inside if there are no other boats on the water. Check dock area for clothing etc. you may have left behind.

13. We all need to help out in the boat house and dock area. So when you see a bag of trash, take it home. Or when the towels need laundering, be a hero and do that. If you see something that needs doing, please do it! Or ask what needs to be done.

14. Sign back in indicating the time you returned the boat and add comments such as

river and boat conditions for next rower. Close the boat house doors from the inside and secure the chains at middle and on left side near exit. Turn all lights off. Lock boat house with padlock upward (see picture) and reset combination at 000.

### **RowBOC Club Boats and Oars**

Members may use club boats and equipment and bear the financial responsibility for damage to the boats and equipment they use. Members may invite guests with rowing experience who sign the legal waiver, pay the guest fee, and are responsible for any damage incurred.

#### **Singles**

Alden – blue top- most stable training boat

Zephyr—purple top - stable training boat good for practicing skills

Queen Bee- Maas 24 less stable, but not a racing shell

The Curtis--designed for skilled rowers 140-165 pounds and with permission.

When you are totally comfortable with rowing the Queen Bee, and want to try a racing single ask one of the coaches or Graeme to set a time for a designated person from the club to observe your rowing skills and boat handling skills to determine if you are ready to row the Curtis. Wooden boats are about 1/16 of an inch thick and the slightest bump can damage the varnish or damage the deck or hull. The cost to repair this boat is very expensive – always keep that in mind when using The Curtis. On occasion, club members have given permission for members to use their personal boats. Please be respectful of privately owned equipment and do not use it unless you have express permission from the owner.

#### **Doubles** (two pair of oars)

Vespoli for mid-weight rowers

Van Deusen for light and mid-weight rowers

#### **Pairs** (sweep boat; one port oar, one starboard oar)

Papesch (Putney Rowing Club boat at RowBOC in April and October)

#### **Fours** (sweep boat)

Vespoli , two Schoenbrod (in need of repair 5/2010)

Brattleboro has three 4+ boats. These boats are 40+ feet long, weigh only 225+ pounds and are rowed by four people each with one sweep oar and steered by a coxswain.

As the club grows we will be acquiring more boats to match the skill levels of our members.

#### **CLUB Oars**

4 pair hatchet blades sculling oars marked with tape - BOC

4 pairs Macon (tulip) oars  
8 hatch blade sweep oars –not marked

Facing the rack of oars, from left to right:  
sweep oars, then club oars (sculls), wooden oars and last on far right are the private oars.

Hang oars with blades perpendicular to back wall.  
Do not use privately owned oars.

### **PUTNEY ROWING CLUB**

Additional rowing opportunities are nearby at the Putney Rowing Club (PRC) located 15 minutes up Route 5 on the banks of the Connecticut River. The club offers RowBOC members affiliate memberships at a discount. The majority of the PRC members row in single or double shells. The Club owns three recreational singles appropriate for novices, eight racing shells, five doubles, a pair and two quads. The PRC offers Big Boat Rows Sunday mornings June-September where members row the quads and doubles. Frequently on Saturday mornings the Club offers Scrambles where participants race against the clock for 3 miles down the Connecticut River to the Putney Rowing Club docks. All club members, including recent novice clinic graduates, are welcome and encouraged to participate in all club activities. Browse the PRC website for more information about the rowing opportunities and how to join.

### **RowBOC Rowing Season Statistics May-Oct 2009**

Some Statistics:

- Our sign out sheet revealed that a total of 57 people rowed 617 times 2009 season, including 10 junior rowers
- RowBocMembership reached 44 and we welcomed 13 guests who rowed with us
- The most active 15 rowers accounted for 70% of the activity, not counting the clinic time, private lessons or junior program
- 22 different people participated in weekly sweep rows – with 7 of those only coming for the sweep rows
- The Vespoli double was taken out the most times at 111, with the single trainer coming in second at 102 times out
- The “Curtis” (King single) was rowed by 9 people, who pre-qualified to take this boat out

### **Rowing Resources**

#### **Local Rowing Club Websites**

**RowBOC** <http://www.brattleborooutingclub.org/rowing.htm>

Check the BLOG often for important club news.  
For more information on RowBOC contact [rowboc.members@gmail.com](mailto:rowboc.members@gmail.com)

### **Putney Rowing Club**

<http://sites.google.com/site/putneyrowingclubsite>  
For more information on Putney Rowing Club contact  
[secretary.prc@gmail.com](mailto:secretary.prc@gmail.com)

**Green Mt. Head Regatta**      <http://www.rowgmh.com/>

### **Weather and Water Level Forecasts**

Hourly, daily and weekly weather forecast at <http://www.wunderground.com/>

Connecticut River water conditions at the North Walpole, NH station.  
Rowers are advised to be cautious at river flows over 20,000 and novices at 15,000 as this level has substantial current often brings debris down the river.  
Conditions at West River/ Brattleboro will differ.

[http://waterdata.usgs.gov/nh/nwis/uv/?site\\_no=01154500&PARAMeter\\_cd=00065,00060](http://waterdata.usgs.gov/nh/nwis/uv/?site_no=01154500&PARAMeter_cd=00065,00060)

<http://newweb.erh.noaa.gov/ahps2/hydrograph.php?wfo=box&gage=wlpn3>

Or it's easier to go to <http://www.erh.noaa.gov/box/>

Click on Rivers and Lakes under current conditions on the left hand menu

Click on Connecticut River under River menu at bottom

Select North Walpole to see a graph of water level forecasts

### **Vermont Regattas**

Green Mountain Head, Putney (end of Sept) <http://www.rowgmh.com/>

Black Fly Scullers Danville Vt. (end of June) <http://www.blackflyscullers.org/>

*New Aug 1st 2010* Charles Eakins Bridge to Bridge Pairs Regatta -Brattleboro.

[www.pairsregatta.com](http://www.pairsregatta.com)

### **Rowing Camps, weekend and weeklong sessions**

Craftsbury Sculling Center Craftsbury, VT May-Sept

<http://www.craftsbury.com/sculling/camps/home.htm>

Bear Sculling School Hanover, NH <http://blackbearsulling.com>

### **Putney/Brattleboro coaching private or group lessons contact**

Tim Whitney [Tim@doubledogcenter.org](mailto:Tim@doubledogcenter.org)

### **websites of interest to rowers:**

[www.row2k.com](http://www.row2k.com) lots of information about current events in the rowing world

US Rowing, [www.usrowing.org](http://www.usrowing.org), is the national rowing membership association. Up to date information about regattas, results, national teams, resource library and rowing store. DVD's are available for \$20 from [www.usrowing.org](http://www.usrowing.org).

### **Safety DVD**

Major, and minor, accidents have a direct impact on the lives of those involved and some incidents can have repercussions for the entire rowing community. All club members are required to view annually the Safety DVD. It is available for viewing at the Putney library, the Novice Clinic and is available for loan from RowBOC. Please borrow for no more than three days and return promptly. The video must be signed out with date if you borrow it.

### **Sculling Fundamentals DVD**

Sculling Fundamentals is for rowers and coaches who want to improve their skills. The text for this DVD was written by National Team coach Kris Korzeniowski and uses US National Team athletes as examples. The DVD starts by discussing the basic principles of boat movement and then shows and explains proper technique. The last section of the DVD shows drills that you can use to improve sculling technique

### **Coached Drills II DVD**

US Rowing asked successful sculling coaches to show their favorite drills. In the first 40 minutes of the DVD the coaches explain the drills as the rowers execute them and for the last hour the coaches work directly with their athletes. Scullers who don't have regular coaching can use this DVD to learn new drills and get some technical ideas for their own rowing.

### **Books of Interest --**

**Essential Sculling** by Daniel J. Boyne covers equipment, basic strokes, boat handling, technique and power, training, competing rigging and more.

**The Art of Sculling** by Joe Paduda discusses drills for technique and bladework, tips on rigging, training and physiology, race strategy and more.

**Rowable Classics, Wooden Single Sculling Boats & Oars** by Darryl J. Strickler Includes a section on Graeme King's career and his boats.