

# **PNRA - Mercer Junior Rowing Club**

## **Parents Handbook**

***2010***

This Manual is intended for informational purposes only. It is designed to help new parents understand the club better as well as pass along info to new and returning parents. It may be revised and is subject to change. Any questions or suggestions should be directed to [seanmccourt@rowpnra.org](mailto:seanmccourt@rowpnra.org)  
We welcome input from athletes and parents.

*The Mercer Junior Rowing Club*  
*2010*

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# **Section 1. General Information**

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## **1.1 Mercer Junior Rowing Club Mission and History**

### **The Mercer Junior Rowing Club**

**The Mission of the Mercer Junior Rowing Club is to:**

- **Develop a nationally competitive rowing team.**
- **Develop each student-athlete to his/her maximum potential through team work, sacrifice, persistence, and commitment**

In the winter of 2001, The Princeton International Regatta Association (PIRA) created the Mercer Junior Rowing Club (MJRC) to increase the accessibility of rowing for high school students in the Mercer County area. In the spring of 2005 PIRA was renamed The Princeton National Rowing Association (PNRA). The MJRC team is housed on Mercer Lake and is open to all high school students whose schools do not have their own rowing teams. Since its inception, MJRC has benefited from the enthusiasm and contribution of students, parents, and local rowing enthusiasts.

## **1.2 Princeton National Rowing Association**

### **About the Princeton National Rowing Association**

The Princeton National Rowing Association, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, serves as a community resource for the support and advancement of the sport of rowing. Its goal is to increase the visibility of rowing, promote international and national competition, and support superior competitive rowing from the United States. The organization, originally founded as the Princeton International Regatta Association, was established in 2000 as the local organizing committee for the first FISA World Cup held outside of Europe. It has since grown into an umbrella organization which is responsible for: The Mercer Junior Rowing Club, The Mercer Masters Rowing Club, PNRA-Resolute Racing Camps, running the Finn M.W.Caspersen Olympic Rowing Training Site, and hosting national and international regattas. Its facility, the Finn M.W.Caspersen Olympic Rowing Training Site on Mercer Lake in West Windsor, is home to over 500 rowers ranging from high school aged to Olympians, six rowing teams, the United States National Team, and community outreach programs. The center is officially recognized as a training site by the United States Olympic Committee.

## **1.3 Boathouse Location**

### **Directions to the Caspersen Rowing Center West Windsor, NJ**

**From Route 1 North or South**

- Take the Alexander Road Exit off of Route 1 towards the Princeton Junction Train Station
- Alexander Road comes to a circle at North Post Road
- Make first right hand turn on to North Post Road
- Proceed through two stoplights
- Stay on Post Road past the Conover Fields and the Mercer Oaks Golf Club. This road will take you right to the boathouse
- After these fields, there will be a 'road closed' sign at the entrance to the park, on the boathouse side of the lake.
- Ignore this sign and head straight down the access road; the boathouse will be on your left as you reach lake.

#### **From North on Route 206**

- Route 206 into Princeton
- Left at traffic light by Borough Municipal Building onto Nassau Street
- Go 3 traffic lights to Washington Road
- Washington Road to U.S. Route 1 South
- Use directions for "From North and South via U.S. 1"

#### **From Hightstown (Route 33)**

- Take Route 33 south and turn right at the Hankins Road traffic light
- Stay on Hankins Road and Cross Old Trenton Road
- Hankins Road will become Village Road. Stay on Village Road
- Take a left at the light at the intersection of Village and Post Roads.
- Follow the directions for "From Route 1 North or South" to the boathouse

#### **From Allentown (Route 130)**

- Take Route 130 north and turn left at the Church Road traffic lights
- Stay on Church Road and cross Old Trenton Road.
- The next light will be Village Road. Make a left onto Village Road
- The next light will be Post Road. Make a left onto Post Road
- Follow the directions for "From Route 1 North or South" to the boathouse

## **1.4 PNRA/ MJRC Staff**

### **Dr. Timothy Hosea**

#### Chief Executive Officer and President, PNRA

As president of the PNRA, Dr. Hosea is responsible for overseeing the growth and success of the rowing programs at the Finn M. W. Caspersen Olympic Rowing site, including the US Olympic Team, the Mercer Junior Rowing Club, the PNRA Resolute Summer Rowing Camps, the Mercer Masters Program, and the community-based learn-to-row programs for disadvantaged youths in Central New Jersey. With all these programs working together, under the same roof, the

Caspersen Center will continue to draw top rowing talent from around the country and will remain as one of the most unique training centers in the world.

Dr. Hosea has a B.A. from Harvard University, and received his M.D. from the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine. He did his residency in Orthopedic Surgery at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston. Since 1985 he has been the attending Orthopedic Surgeon at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital and St. Peters University Hospital in New Brunswick. He is also on staff at Princeton University Hospital in Princeton.

Dr. Hosea is no stranger to rowing. He rowed in one of the most dominant Harvard crews of the 1970's. During his tenure he won a gold medal at the Nile International Regatta, Cairo & Luxor, Egypt in 1972. His crew also captured The Ladies Challenge Plate at the prestigious Henley Royal Regatta in Henley-on-Thames, England in 1973. In 1997, he received the Jack Kelly Award from the United States Rowing Association. The Kelly Award is one of the highest honors given by the United States Rowing Association. It recognizes superior achievement in rowing, service to amateur athletics, and professional success.

Since 1975, Dr. Hosea has been a member of the American Medical Association. He is also a member of numerous other organizations including New Jersey Medical Society, American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons, Leadership New Jersey, U. S. Olympic Sports Medicine Society, and the United States Rowing Association.

In addition, Dr. Hosea has presented in both national and international meetings. He has spoken about a topics ranging from back pain to ankle injuries.

Dr. Hosea has also contributed to articles about sports injuries, most notably the article, "Rowing Injuries" published in the Postgraduate Advances in Sports Medicine.

**Kris Grudt ([krisgrudt@rowpnra.org](mailto:krisgrudt@rowpnra.org))**  
Executive Director, PNRA

As the Executive Director of PNRA, Kris oversees all of PNRA's activities, including the Mercer Junior Rowing Club.

Kris began his rowing career in the early 1980's at Oregon State University. In 1987 he became a licensed USRowing Judge-Referee. He has officiated at all levels of rowing in the United States from juniors through masters including serving as the Chief Referee for the 2000 and 2004 Olympic Trials. He first officiated on Mercer Lake during the National Team Trials in 1992. Kris became a FISA Umpire (international) in 1996. He has been an official at numerous international regattas including the Junior, Senior and U-23 World Championships. Kris was the President of the Jury for the 2006 FISA Master's Regatta on Mercer Lake.

Kris served for 10 years on USRowing's Referee Committee including serving as the Northwest Regional Representative, Secretary and Chair. He currently holds the Male Vice President

position on the USRowing Board of Directors. As a member of USRowing's Board, he serves as Chair of the Ethics and Governance Committee and is a member of the Legal Committee.

Kris received his under graduate degree from Oregon State University which included a year studying in Japan. He has earned an MBA from the University of Portland and a JD from Rutgers University School of Law-Newark. He has 17 years of management experience in high technology companies and is admitted to practice law in New Jersey, New York and Oregon.

## **Sean T. McCourt (seanmccourt@rowpnra.org)**

### Director of Programs & Events , PNRA and Head Coach, MJRC

Sean McCourt is the Head Coach for the Mercer Junior Rowing Club and is responsible for the oversight and training of all crews. He is also responsible for organizing and overseeing the programs and events of the organization.

Sean began rowing in high school at St. Joseph's Prep in Philadelphia. He went on to row for Boston University, where he graduated in 1999 with a B.S. in Secondary Education, and stroked the BU Varsity Heavyweight Eight for two years. During that time he was selected to attend the US Pre-Elite Team camp in 1998, Lightweight Selection in 1999 and was runner up in the 2000 US Senior Lightweight Pair Trials.

Sean's coaching experience includes the McCallie School in Chattanooga, Tennessee where his freshman crew went undefeated. He also coached for St Joseph's Prep, where his crews achieved victories at the Head of the Charles, The Stotesbury Cup, Philadelphia Catholic League and the City Championships.

Sean, who is a Level III US Rowing Certified Coach, has coached MJRC crews since the program's inception in February of 2002. Under his watch Mercer has developed into a nationally competitive team.

## **Katie Bitz ( katie@rowpnra.org)**

### Varsity Women's Coach, MJRC

Katie began coxing in the Fall of 2000 for Pacific Rowing Club in San Francisco. After high school she chose to continue her rowing career as a Spartan for Michigan State University.

During her freshman year she was part of MSU's first ever Big Ten Championship team. As a sophomore, she coxed the second varsity eight, helping the team earn its highest national team ranking of sixth in the country. In 2008 her team had its most successful season to date. Katie coxed the varsity eight boat to the Big Ten Title that ensured MSU its second Big Ten Championship in four years. In the same year her varsity eight made their first ever appearance in the grand final at the Central Region Championships where they captured a silver medal. With the help of their performance Michigan State earned their first Central Region Team Championship. Katie's boat capped off their year with a sixth place finish at the NCAA championship. Bitz also earned individual honors for their performance. She was named First

Team All Big Ten as well as First Team All Central Region. Katie also showed that she was a scholar-athlete by being named a National Scholar Athlete three times during her tenure at MSU.

After graduating from Michigan State, Bitz moved to Princeton, NJ in order to train with the US National Team. Coaching is something she plans to pursue as a career and is excited that she can start at Mercer.

## **Megan McCourt ([megan@rowpnra.org](mailto:megan@rowpnra.org))**

### Women's Varsity Coach, MJRC

Megan began her rowing career in the fall of 1993 for the Los Gatos Rowing Club in California. In 1995, she raced in the first USRowing National Youth Invitational in the V4+, placing 5<sup>th</sup>.

After graduating from Lincoln High School in San Jose, CA, Megan went on to attend and compete for UC Berkeley (Cal). She won 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the Varsity 8+ event at the first ever NCAA Rowing Championships in 1999. The following year, her boat went on to take 4<sup>th</sup> at NCAA's.

While in college, Megan pursued her National Team aspirations by attending Pre-Elite camps in the summers and racing with National Team at the Henley Royal Regatta in England, as well as a World Cup in Lucerne, Switzerland.

In 2001, after earning her BA in Psychology, Sociology, and Education from Cal, Megan took some time off from rowing and taught 4<sup>th</sup> grade in Campbell, CA. She also coached the Los Gatos Rowing Club's novice girls to a successful season, ending with a gold medal finish in the N8+ at Southwest Regionals.

In the spring of 2001, Megan was invited to come to Princeton, NJ and try for a seat on the US National Team. That summer she made her first team as a member of the Women's 8+. Megan has competed in seven World Cups, six World Championships, and one Olympic Games.

At the 2004 Olympics in Athens, Greece, Megan won a silver medal in the Women's 8+. Her boat also set a new world record (5:56.55) in the heat against Romania. In 2005 Megan was named to the Women's Eight for the World Championships in Gifu, Japan where she finished fourth. After taking 2006 off to pursue her Master's Degree she returned to competitive rowing and was selected to the Women's Four for the World Championships in Munich, Germany. Her boat went on to win a Gold Medal in their event. Megan is now retired from competitive rowing and enjoys giving back to the sport by working with the MJRC athletes.

## **Kelsie Chaudoin ( [kelsie@rowpnra.org](mailto:kelsie@rowpnra.org) )**

### Novice Women's Coach, MJRC

A volleyball player in high school, Kelsie Chaudoin walked on to the varsity rowing team at the University of Virginia as a freshman. In May of 2008, she graduated from the UVA with an Architecture major and Spanish minor. During her tenure at Virginia, Kelsie was a member of teams which won 4 Atlantic Coast Conference Championships, 3 Central-South Regional Championships, and made 2 NCAA appearances including a 2nd Place finish in 2007. As a

senior, Kelsie served as team co-captain and was awarded All-ACC, All-South Region, and First Team All-American honors.

During the summer of 2008, Kelsie competed with the United States Under-23 rowing team as a member of the Women's 8+. The crew (which also included fellow MJRC Coach Suzanne Van Fleet) won a gold medal at the FISA U-23 World Championship. She is currently training with the U.S. National Rowing Team.

## **Shane Madden ([shane@rowpnra.org](mailto:shane@rowpnra.org))**

### Men's Varsity Coach, MJRC

Shane began his rowing career as a freshman at St. Joseph's Prep in Philadelphia. During his tenure at "The Prep" he had much success at the Stotesbury Cup and SRA National Championship.

Upon graduation from St. Joe's, he attended Drexel University where he earned a B.A. in Finance. While studying at Drexel, Shane continued to row part time at the Malta Boat Club on historic boathouse row. While a member of Malta, he won Canadian Henley 8 times and US Rowing Club Nationals 6 times. Following graduation, he put rowing on hold so and began working for Citizens Financial Group.

During the fall of 2005, he began to focus on training again and was selected to compete in the Lwt 4x at the 2006 World Championships in England where he finished in fifth place. In 2008 Shane was again selected to the Lwt 4x for the World Championship in Linz, Austria where he again made the "A" final. In 2009 Shane was selected for a seat in the Lightweight Double, an Olympic Class boat. He is currently training with the US National Lightweight Team.

## **Troy Kepper ([troy@rowpnra.org](mailto:troy@rowpnra.org))**

### Men's Novice Coach, MJRC

Troy began rowing in the fall of 1997 for Leon Crew in Tallahassee, FL. Although Troy was in the second novice boat his first year, he was the only sophomore in the Varsity boat the following year. During his junior year, Troy earned a silver medal in the Varsity Four at US Rowing Youth Invitational. He followed this performance up by being selected for the US Jr National Team. His coxed pair won a silver medal at the Jr. World Championships in Zagreb, Croatia that summer.

As an undergrad, Troy attended University of California, Berkeley. His freshman crew finished fourth place at the IRAs (Nationals). The next year Troy made the JV eight and won the National Championship.

His final two years were spent in the Varsity Eight, where he earned back to back bronze medals at the IRA.

Troy was selected to train with the National Team in 2005 and earned a spot on the World Championship Team where he earned a silver medal in Gifu, Japan. In 2007, Troy rowed in the first place US eight during the Pan American Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. In 2009 Troy was crowned as a world champion in the Coxed Pair event at the FISA World Rowing Championship.

Currently Troy is training with the US National Team Men.

## **Chris Callaghan ([chris@rowpnra.org](mailto:chris@rowpnra.org))**

### **Men's Varsity Coach, MJRC**

Chris found rowing in college as a walk on at Oregon State University in the fall of 2000. After a few months he got the hang of erging and hasn't looked back. During his sophomore year he placed 4<sup>th</sup> at IRA's. While at OSU he rowed during the summers in Seattle and Philadelphia earning medals at both the US Rowing Club Nationals and the Canadian Henley.

Chris graduated from OSU in May 05' and moved to Philadelphia to continue training in hopes of making the national team. In 2006 Chris was selected to the Coxed Four and traveled to England where they placed 4<sup>th</sup> at the World Championships. In 2007, Chris and fellow MJRC coach Troy Kepper were the bow pair in the Men's Eight for the Pan-Am Games and won gold!

Since then, Chris has continued training full time and has been sharing his knowledge with the Men's program at MJRC.

## **1.5 PARENT ORGANIZATION**

The Mercer Junior Rowing Club Parent Committee is responsible for helping with fundraising, publicity, clothing orders and logistical support and travel. A committee sub-chairman is chosen for each of these functions and a Parent Committee Head, who also serves on the PNRA Board of Directors, oversees the group. These individuals have monthly meetings with the MJRC Staff and have the ability to help form team policies and procedures based on input from other parents.

Participation in the Parent Committee is strongly encouraged and is the best way for parents of athletes to meet other parents and voice their opinions about the program. All inquires should be directed toward the MJRC Parent Committee Chair.

Mercer Junior Rowing Club would greatly appreciate any help that parents would be able to provide to the club. In the past, parents with specific skills such as welding, accounting and mechanics have been an amazing assistance to the club, as have those without a specific skill. Some people have also generously provided the MJRC with contacts in the business world, who have been involved with the program and/or regattas through providing goods and services, or sponsorships.

If you would like to offer any such assistance or you would like to volunteer your help, please contact Sean McCourt (seanmccourt@rowpnra.org)

## **1.5.1 PARENT VOLUNTEERISM**

The Mercer Junior Rowing Club is a parent driven organization. The club does not receive any government funding of any kind. The organization is not officially affiliated with any schools or other organization that might provide financial aid. Thus, the operation of the club is entirely dependent on rowing fees and fundraising and more importantly parent volunteerism. **This year we are asking that parents volunteer for at least four hours per regatta during the rowing season. If you cannot complete this requirement for each regatta, a fee of \$200 will be collected in lieu of your hours worked. This fee will allow MJRC to hire sufficient staff to cover certain aspects of the event.**

### **1.5.1.1 Communications**

The best way to get up-to-date information is by email. It is imperative rowers and their parents submit an email address, which they regularly check. MJRC uses a yahoo group for mass communication. Please check your email regularly for announcements or schedule updates. Please also consult John Wagner, jwagner@princeton.edu, with email updates/changes or difficulty with opening emails.

### **1.5.1.2 Clothing & Club Merchandise Committee**

During the season MJRC athletes will be permitted to order additional MJRC merchandise (jackets, practice shirts, etc.). Athletes will bring home information on ordering gear. These items are not mandatory. Team gear will be ordered through Mandy Dewey (rmbdr@verizon.net)

### **1.5.1.3 Publicity/Photography**

PNRA and the Mercer Junior Rowing Club periodically publish information, advertisements and results in local media publications and websites. If you have contacts with a particular publication and would like to print publicity for MJRC, please ensure that the article or item has been viewed in full by the publicity committee

### **1.5.1.4 Social/Hospitality**

MJRC strives to promote fellowship amongst club members and their parents. The social committee is responsible for organizing events that bring the team's parents and/or athletes together outside of the boathouse setting. There are several areas where parents have taken a leadership role. This committee is responsible for setting up the food tent at away regattas. For more info on this contact Nancy Gross (nancy.gross@ptsem.edu).

### **1.5.1.5 Alumni Relations**

PNRA and MJRC are very proud of the young men and women who have left our program and moved on to their respective colleges and universities. Currently, MJRC athletes are rowing and/or attending the following universities: Brown, Georgetown, Princeton, Dartmouth, Navy, Boston College, Stanford, Cornell, Penn, Boston University, Yale, Lehigh, Rutgers, Wisconsin, Trinity, Connecticut College, Bucknell University, John Hopkins, and Drexel University among others. Ruth Novak (Josh Novak '05) chairs the committee responsible for corresponding with alumni athletes and parents. She also keeps alums up to date with the team's progress with results. She can be reached at [thenovaks4@verizon.net](mailto:thenovaks4@verizon.net).

#### **1.5.1.6 Travel Logistics**

It is quite a task to travel with a squad of 50-100 athletes. Parents have been a great help throughout the years with planning, chaperoning, scheduling and helping with other tasks to make it possible to get our team from point "A" to point "B" and back.

#### **1.5.1.7 Fundraising**

PNRA and MJRC do not receive any government funding. The organization is not officially affiliated with any schools or other organization that might provide financial aid. Thus, the operation of the club is entirely dependent on rowing fees and fundraising. Each season a major fundraising event is held to raise money for the club. The MJRC Staff will organize a single large annual fundraiser, which is an ergathon (ergometer marathon) at the Quaker Bridge Mall. Things such as grant writing and corporate solicitation are the responsibility of the MJRC Parent Organization, who are encouraged to use MJRC fundraising resources and staff to plan fundraising endeavors. This year's committee chair is Jaqueline Connor Bailey, [jconnorbailey@comcast.net](mailto:jconnorbailey@comcast.net)

#### **1.5.1.8 Regatta Organization**

Throughout the year PNRA & MJRC host several rowing events. These events range from mid-sized high school races to large collegiate or international regattas. These events are directly responsible for improving MJRC equipment and training facilities. PNRA staff will oversee this committee with the help of several team captains. The captains are responsible for the following teams: parking, launches, dockmaster, volunteer co-ordination, merchandise sales, results & timing. To find out more about how to become a part of the regatta team, please contact Sean McCourt, [seanmccourt@rowpnra.org](mailto:seanmccourt@rowpnra.org)

### **1.6 Contacting the Coaches**

Due to the large size of the team and numerous requests, the coaches are not able to process and respond to every email request. Thus, parents are encouraged to take specific/detailed questions to the parent committee before contacting the coaches. This year Martha Esche ([mesche59@verizon.net](mailto:mesche59@verizon.net)) will serve as the varsity women's parent liaison and Janis Abraham ([janisabe@gmail.com](mailto:janisabe@gmail.com)) as the varsity men's parent liaison. Any general question that the liaisons

can not answer should be directed to the appropriate coach. For example, do not contact the varsity coaches to find out what time novice practice will be on Saturday morning. This type of question should be directed to the novice coach. ***Parents are not permitted to call the coaches at any time to discuss boat selection or boatings. This matter will only be discussed between coaches and athletes.***

## **Section 2. Program Details**

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### **2.1 Rowing Season Outlines**

#### **Fall: September 13 to November 14**

Practices will be held on Mercer Lake from 4.00-6.00pm weekdays and Saturday mornings. Those in the varsity program will have the opportunity to compete in several head races. These are longer races, between two and a half and three miles, and due to their length are usually held on rivers such as the Charles River in Boston or the Schuylkill in Philadelphia. In head racing, crews begin individually and race against the clock.

#### **Winter: November 29 to February 13**

Due to cold temperatures, practices will be held inside at the newly refurbished Caspersen Rowing Center's training room. Rowers will work out on stationary ergometers, or "ergs." These are rowing machines designed to simulate the rowing stroke and help athletes get in shape for competitive rowing in the spring. Throughout the winter season, the rowers will be required to take several erg tests for score. These tests will be used to designate which boats the rowers are better suited for. If interested in college recruiting, it is important to understand that rowing coaches use erg test scores to determine which athletes they wish to recruit. Participation in the Winter Training is highly recommended for those wanting to be on the top boats in the spring. Winter training is open to varsity athletes only unless an exception is granted by the varsity coach. There is a separate fee for Winter Training.

#### **Spring: February 15- June 13 ( Novices & non-qualifying Varsity boats conclude on May 9)**

Rowers will practice on Mercer Lake. Those in the racing program will train for and compete in "sprint" races, culminating in the US Rowing Northeast & Mid-Atlantic Junior District Championship Regatta; qualifying boats may be sent to the National Championships in Cincinnati. High school sprints races can be either 1500 meters long or 2000 meters in length. For sprints races, crews begin simultaneously at the starting line and race against each other.

### **2.2 The Rowing Programs**

In the 2010 season, the MJRC will offer the following programs:

#### **Varsity Program:**

The Varsity program will consist of six two-hour practices a week. Practices will be held on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday afternoons (from approx 4.00-6.00pm) as well as on Saturday mornings (usually around 10am). Rowers in the racing program will have the chance to travel with the team to away regattas. This program will be limited and is intended for athletes that are serious about competing at a high level with each other and other teams. The size of this program may be expanded in future seasons.

Like previous seasons, due to a limited number of boats/ equipment, there will be selection for this program made during the first two weeks of each season. The team will be selected based on ergometer score, athletic ability/potential, work ethic, attendance and rowing technique at the coaches' discretion.

**Mercer Novice Program:**

The Novice Program will meet at the same times as the Varsity Program practices (See above). This program will be limited to a certain number of beginner athletes and is for those who wish to participate in rowing six days a week and aspire to be in the Varsity Program. Novice rowers will follow a separate racing schedule from the varsity squad. In cases where an athlete shows exceptional improvement they may be moved to the Varsity Program before the end of the season.

**Like previous seasons there will be selection for this program made during the first month of each season.** The team will be selected based on ergometer score, athletic ability/potential, work ethic, attendance and rowing technique at the coaches' discretion.

**Mercer Development Program:**

The Development Program will meet at the same times as the Varsity Program practices (See above). The development program will be geared toward athletes who are not yet qualified for the novice or varsity team. It will give them a chance to participate in the sport and allow them to work toward making a higher squad in the MJRC program. This program will be open to 8<sup>th</sup> graders to juniors. Seniors will be excluded as they will not have the chance to make a higher squad the following year because they are graduating. Unlike the varsity and novice squads this group will only be on the water 3 days a week and will not participate in racing. The 3 days that this group is not on the water will be spent land training and doing video analysis. The focus on this group will be skills, increasing physical fitness, and fun. The end goal is to filter student-athletes up to the varsity team.

**2.3 2010 Schedule**

**(Races are open to all team members unless noted)**

Date	Event	Location
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15-Feb	First Day of Spring Practice ( <b>Varsity &amp; Novice Only</b> ) ( <b>All Registration Forms &amp; Swim Tests must be completed prior to 1<sup>st</sup> pra</b> )	Caspersen Center
27-Feb	First Day of Spring Practice ( <b>Development Athletes</b> ) ( <b>All Registration Forms &amp; Swim Tests must be completed prior to 1<sup>st</sup> pra</b> )	Caspersen Center
13-Mar	Erg-a-thon (All Crews)	Quakerbridge Mall
20-Mar	Chaminade HS (Boys Only)	Caspersen Center
27-Mar	St. Andrew's School (Varsity Boys & Girls)	Middletown, DE
April 1-6	Westminster School (UK)	Hosted by MJRC
3-Apr	Shoebie Cup (Girls Only)	Conshohocken, PA
11-Apr	Practice-No Race	Caspersen Center
April 16-17	Mercer Lake Sprints (All Crews)	Caspersen Center
18-Apr	Lawrenceville & Kent (CT) (Varsity Boys & Girls)	Caspersen Center
24-Apr	Mercer Cup (Novices)	Caspersen Center
April 24-25	Saratoga Invitational (Selected Crews)	Saratoga, NY
<b>* All varsity athletes should plan on attending double practices over spring break</b>		
1-May	Norwalk (All Crews)	Caspersen Center
May 7-8	MA Regionals (All Crews)	Caspersen Center
May		
TBA	MJRC Banquet	
May		
TBA	MJRC Jr. & Sr Prom	
June 10-13	Youth Nationals (Qualified Varsity Crews)	Cincinnati, OH
6-Sep	First Practice (All Athletes) ( <b>All Waivers &amp; Swim Tests must be completed prior to 1<sup>st</sup> practice</b> )	Caspersen Center
11-Oct	Navy Day Regatta (Varsity Boys & Girls)	Phila, PA
Oct 18-19	Head of the Charles( Varsity Eights Only)	Boston, MA
30-Oct	Head of the Halloween (All Crews)	Caspersen Center
14-Nov	Bill Braxton Regatta (All Crews)	Phila, PA
15-Nov	Boathouse Cleanup-Mandatory	Caspersen Center

## 2.4 Crew Line-Ups and Boat Selection

During the competitive seasons, the rowers will be assigned to boats within their respective programs. The “first boat” is the most competitive boat, followed by the “second” and “third” boats. Novice rowers are similarly ranked – i.e. “first novice,” “second novice.” Development rowers will focus on improving skills and rank later in the season. The boats will be chosen based on erg scores as well as through seat races in which rowers will compete with one another on the water to demonstrate their effectiveness in the boat. Race results against other teams will also be used as indicators for seats in the top boats. Athletes’ attendance will also be a factor in selection. Varsity athletes are **EXPECTED** to attend **EVERY PRACTICE**. Repeated failure to do so will result in removal from the priority crews. Coaches will also use their discretion in the final selection process.

*Please note that parents are not permitted to call the coaches at any time to discuss boat selection or boatings. This matter will only be discussed between coaches and athletes.*

## 2.5 Crew Captains

At the end of the spring season, team captains will be chosen for the next year. The varsity girls’ team will elect two captains and the varsity boys’ team will elect two captains. The captains, will be responsible for team organization during the following year, working with the parent committee and the Head Coach, Sean McCourt.

### **2009-2010 Men’s Captains**

Paul Popescu  
Mike Massone

### **2009-2010 Women’s Captains**

Lizzie Abraham  
Emily Bailey

## 2.6 Practices

Practices are approximately two hours long. In the fall and spring practices will be held on Mercer Lake. Coaches will supervise and instruct rowers from the launch boats alongside. To vary workouts, athletes will take part in jogging, ergometer and strength and conditioning sessions. In the winter or in poor weather, practices will be held indoors.

A typical practice would be as follows:

- Rowers arrive (punctuality is mandatory), and report to their coach
- Coaches prescribe warm up, either on ergs, jogging or circuit exercises.
- Stretching routine is performed
- Crews rosters are announced for practice and individual crew briefings occur
- Rowers ensure they have the gear they need (water bottle, clothing, flip-flops etc.)
- Rowers may need to help put launches on water etc.
- Rower place oars by the dock

- Crew takes boat from boathouse as directed by their coxswain and carefully places it in the water, always listening to the coxswain (&/or coach) for directions
- Coaches direct crew during session

Following a practice, crews will:

- Put the boat and oars away in the boathouse
- Be debriefed on the practice
- Ensure any tasks that need to be performed are done as directed by their coach (for example, gas cans & life jackets removed from launches)
- Be dismissed by their coach

### **2.6.1 Weather/ Cancellation Policy**

1. The decision whether or not to cancel practice is always made at 2:00 pm. An email announcement will be sent out at that time
2. Due to the high volume, individual parent/athlete emails will not be replied to
3. Please do not call the office before 2:00 pm.
4. Please check your email before calling the office after 2:00 pm. This will greatly lessen our office's call volume
5. Please do not contact individual coaches' cell phones. We are not able to talk to the 100 + MJRC athletes individually.

## **2.7 Parking**

***Rowers must be dropped off for practice in the upper parking area.*** The upper parking area is the area that is furthest away from the boathouse. Cars are not to be parked in front of the boathouse, on the grass, or the road leading to the boathouse at anytime. Athletes who drive may only park in the upper parking lot. Once that lot is filled, athletes must park at the Conover Fields and walk down.

## **2.8 Telephone**

There is a telephone in the PNRA/MJRC office that is available to student-athletes in the case of an emergency.

## **2.9 Showers and Change Rooms**

High School athletes are not allowed to use the showers and locker rooms except in the case of an emergency.

## **2.10 Academics**

PNRA and MJRC feel that academics should be the primary focus of all students. Thus, MJRC policy is that if a student is having severe academic difficulties they should be encouraged to suspend rowing activities and focus on their studies. MJRC will also help to match students with

private tutors if necessary. In the past MJRC athletes have worked with National Team athletes to improve grades. Many of these U.S. Team members have degrees from top universities and can be of help in specialized subjects that they have studied themselves.

Because MJRC is not officially affiliated with any area schools, it is the responsibility of the students and parents to inform a staff member if they are having academic difficulty. MJRC cannot by law view a student's academic record without their consent.

## **2.11 College Recruiting**

Rowing can be helpful in gaining admission and scholarships to many of the nation's top colleges and universities. In the past MJRC athletes have used their involvement in the sport to help gain admission to top universities. Especially in the case of female athletes there can be scholarships available for rowing at large state universities. Currently, MJRC athletes are rowing and/or accepted into the following universities: Brown, Georgetown, Princeton, Duke, Dartmouth, Cornell, Penn, Boston University, Yale, Lehigh, Rutgers, Harvard, Wisconsin, UCLA, MIT, Trinity, UNC, Bucknell University, Navy, and Drexel University

Ergometer score is extremely important in the college recruiting process. If you would like to know more about the role rowing plays in the college admissions process please contact Head Coach Sean McCourt.

## **Section 3. Program Fees & Expenses**

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### **3.1 2010 Fees & Refund Policy**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Spring Fee</b>	<b>Fall Fee</b>
Varsity Racing Program	\$625	\$575
Novice Racing Program	\$625	\$575
Development Program	\$625	\$575

**There will be no pro-ration/refund if athletes remove themselves from the program after each season's drop date (Sept 31, 2010 or March 22, 2010). Athletes who are not selected to the Varsity or Novice Program will be offered a spot in our Development Program. Athletes who do not wish continue in the Development Program will have all of their monies returned with the exception of a \$100 administration fee. Any athlete who removes themselves from the program after attending their first practice and before the drop date will have all of their monies returned with the exception of a \$100 administration fee.**

### **3.2 Financial Assistance**

A limited number of scholarships are available to athletes that find financial difficulty with paying fees through The Rebecca “Little Becca” Annitto Memorial Fund. Please contact PNRA Executive Director Kris Grudt at [krisgrudt@rowpnra.org](mailto:krisgrudt@rowpnra.org) for more information. MJRC will not deny motivated athletes, whom are truly in need, the opportunity to participate.

### **3.3 Fee Discounts**

Families with more than one child participating in an MJRC program will receive a \$50 discount on each child.

### **3.4 Payment of Fees & Club Funding**

Parents can pay program fees (registration & trip) on line directly through Regatta Central on the MJRC website ([WWW.MJRC.ORG](http://WWW.MJRC.ORG)). *Due to a high number of late payments by athletes, MJRC has been forced to institute a late fee for all payments over two weeks late. Payments over two weeks late will be assessed a \$25 late fee. After 30 days an additional \$10 charge will be added for every week that the bill is not paid.*

PNRA and MJRC do not receive any government funding of any kind. The organization is not officially affiliated with any schools or other organization that might provide financial aid. Thus, the operation of the club is entirely dependent on rowing fees and fundraising. As such it is extremely important that each athlete pay their rowing fee in full and on time as well as participate in club sponsored fundraising activities.

### **3.5 Fundraising Commitment**

Effective fundraising is necessary for the Mercer Juniors to provide the extraordinary health and growth experience for our youth rowers as well as compete with the top crews in the area and USA. Fundraising allows us to maintain fees as low as possible and make necessary capital purchases (**A new shell runs over \$36,000 !**), provide scholarships, maintain existing equipment, and pay the coaches' salaries. Many of our competitors have substantially greater resources. Our goal in 2010 is to raise \$30,000. Our top priority is to have 100% participation of all MJRC families in our fundraising activities. We expect each family to contribute at least \$200 (either through solicitation or personal donation) but we need families who can give or raise substantially more if we are to meet our goal.

Our major fundraising event of the year is the Ergathon which will be held at the Quakerbridge Mall. Friends and families are asked to support a rower with a fixed sum donation. We are always seeking individuals to help with fundraising. If you would like to help or have any ideas or questions please contact Head Coach, Sean McCourt, [seanmccourt@rowpnra.org](mailto:seanmccourt@rowpnra.org)

The PNRA/MJRC is a tax-exempt organization under IRS Section 501(c)(3).

### 3.6 Tax Deductions

Rowing fees are NOT tax-deductible, however, donations to the Club are tax deductible.

### 3.7 Travel and Other Expenses

Travel associated with away trips and various team expenses that are not covered by fees will be shared among athletes participating. The amounts owed will be e-mailed to participants prior to a club function.

### 3.8 Incidental / Additional Costs

Please note that this is a guide only. Costs may vary and are not applicable to those who don't participate in racing.

Item / Expense	Cost (approximate)
Regatta fee (including entry fee, gas, toll, bus etc.) / race	\$25 - \$40
Unisuit (for Varsity Racing Program)	\$65 (one-time fee)
MJRC Tshirt (for novices racing in regattas)	No Cost
Accommodation (overnight regattas only)	Varies

### 3.9 Refunds & Processing Fees

Due to IRS restrictions regulating distribution of monies, ***refunds will not be issued for any reason after the drop date (Sept 31, 2010 or March 22, 2010). Unlike previous seasons all athletes who remove themselves from the program will be subject to a \$100 administration fee charge.*** In the case of injury or special circumstance that prevents an athlete from completing a substantial portion of a season, a credit will be applied on a case-by-case basis to that athlete's fee for the next season. Credit will not be issued for athletes that remove themselves from the program willingly.

## Section 4. Safety

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### 4.1 Safety Guidelines

In the event that a person should become injured at the boathouse or during rowing practice, they should report it to their coach. Coaches are trained in first aid and CPR/AED. In extreme

circumstances, athletes will be transported to hospital for treatment. Rain, snow, and cold weather do not restrict rowing activity unless they reach extreme levels (see “Dress” section for information on how to dress for the weather.) However, boats will not practice when the lake is icy, or when there is a thunderstorm. If a coach or rower hears thunder, all boats will return immediately to the dock. On Mercer Lake, a boat is never more than 3000 meters – a 10 minute row – from the docks, and if thunderstorms are predicted, boats will remain even closer to the dock throughout the duration of practice.

## 4.2 Behavioral Guidelines

It is expected that all Mercer Junior Rowers will conduct themselves with good behavior at all times. They are to treat other people, the equipment and the environment with respect and will be instructed how to do so. Each athlete is expected to sign the MJRC Code of Conduct Form prior to the start of the season. **Failure to conduct oneself by this code will result in rowing privileges being revoked without refund of rowing fees.**

## 4.3 Swim Test

Rowing teams, including the Mercer Junior Rowing Club, require all athletes to pass a annual swim test before participating with the team even though the chances of an eight or four flipping over are small. Life vests are not worn while rowing since they restrict the motion of the stroke; however, in the rare case that a boat does flip, the shell itself may be used as flotation devices. Life vests (PFD’s) for the whole crew will be carried in the coaching launch.

# Section 5. Equipment

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The Mercer Junior Rowing Club owns several top-end, high quality racing shells, sets of oars, coaching launches with outboard engines, coxswain speaker systems, a truck and boat trailer for towing equipment to regattas. The purchase of this equipment has been due to the generous support of donors, through fundraising by rowers, and the hard work of dedicated parents who have volunteered at PNRA sponsored races.

At present the Mercer Junior Rowing Club owns thirteen racing shells. Due to the high cost of rowing equipment, **a new shell can run over \$36,000**, it is imperative that all of our equipment is treated with respect. Any damage that occurs should be reported to a coach for repair.

## 5.1 Dress

It’s important that rowers’ clothing is not too baggy, as it can become caught in the slides in the boat. The most effective way to dress for rowing in cold weather conditions is to layer clothing, allowing the top layers to be removed once the athlete is suitably warm. Thermal tops are a good idea, as they will keep you warm, even when they are wet.

It is also a good idea to bring some spare warm clothes to put on after practice, when clothes may have become wet.

The following is a list of required and suggested items rowing gear;

**Required:**

- **Sneakers** – required for warm-up jogs, erg sessions and land training. Athletes must have sneakers EVERY SESSION
- **Spandex / Lycra shorts or leggings** – these are required for ALL ROWERS as they do not get caught in the sliding seat
- **T shirt** or similar (short or long sleeved)
- **Waterproof windbreaker** – always handy at the boathouse where weather conditions can change quickly.

**Suggested:**

- **Socks** – good to wear in the rowing boat where rowers will take off their shoes and wear the shoes attached to the boat
- **Cap / Sun Visor / Knit hat**
- **Sunscreen**
- **Sunglasses** – where morning & afternoon glare is a problem
- **Spare clothes** - for after practice
- **Flip-flops** – handy for launching the rowing shells
- **Pogies** – Gloves cannot be worn, even in cold weather. Pogies, however, slide over the oar handle to cover hands in the cold.

Note: **Footwear is to be worn AT ALL TIMES.** Valuables should not be brought to the boathouse nor should gum be chewed while rowing or at the Caspersen Rowing Center.

## 5.2 Racing Wear

The United States Rowing Association has mandated that in races, all rowers must dress identically. MJRC novice rowers will race in Mercer t-shirts and black spandex/lycra shorts. Varsity team members will race in MJRC Unisuits, which will be able to purchase before races in a given season. Coaches will allow plenty of notice when Unisuits and a racing uniform will be required.

## Section 6. Information & Contacts

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### 6.1 Website

The MJRC website can be found at [www.MJRC.org](http://www.MJRC.org) or by clicking on the Mercer Juniors link on [www.rowpnra.org](http://www.rowpnra.org). This site will contain information on practice schedules as well as information on regattas breaking news.

## 6.2 Postal Address

**Princeton National Rowing Association  
1 South Post Rd. Suite 1  
Princeton Jct, NJ 08550**

Boathouse Office Phone: 609-799-7100

## 6.3 PNRA/MJRC Contact Information

PNRA Executive Director

**Kris Grudt**

Office: 609-799-7100 x 100

Email: [krisgrudt@rowpnra.org](mailto:krisgrudt@rowpnra.org)

Head Coach

**Sean McCourt**

Office: 609-799-7100 x 101

E-mail: [seanmccourt@rowpnra.org](mailto:seanmccourt@rowpnra.org)

Varsity Girls Coach

**Katie Bitz**

E-mail: [katie@rowpnra.org](mailto:katie@rowpnra.org)

Varsity Boys Coach

**Shane Madden**

E-mail: [shane@rowpnra.org](mailto:shane@rowpnra.org)

Novice Boys Coach

**Troy Kepper**

E-mail: [troy@rowpnra.org](mailto:troy@rowpnra.org)

Varsity Boys Coach

**Chris Callaghan**

E-Mail: [chris@rowpnra.org](mailto:chris@rowpnra.org)

Novice Girls' Coach

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Development Coach

**Suzanne Van Fleet**

Email: [suzanne@rowpnra.org](mailto:suzanne@rowpnra.org)