



*Junior Team Handbook*  
*2009-2010*

**IRC Mission: To develop youth and adults of all social and economic backgrounds through the sport of rowing by providing experienced and knowledgeable instruction, a variety of skill-enhancing programs, and world-class facilities.**

[www.indyrowing.org](http://www.indyrowing.org)

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[www.indyrowing.org](http://www.indyrowing.org)

Welcome Potential Athletes and Parents,

Welcome to the Indianapolis Rowing Center. The odds are that you do not know much about the sport of rowing or Indy Rowing. We hope this handbook will answer a lot of your questions. If you have additional questions, suggestions or think that we need to address something in the handbook, please let us know.

Rowing is a great sport. One does not have to be a gifted athlete to succeed. All it takes is the willingness to work hard and a commitment to the team's success. There are no stars in a crew. Many sports tout themselves as the ultimate team sport, but one would be hard put to find any team as dependent on each individual as a crew.

Rowers should register for the Novice or Varsity Team on [www.regattacentral.com](http://www.regattacentral.com). Under the club tab. IRC uses regattacentral for its enrollment, so please make a note of your login and password! Payment is due at the time of registration. We do offer a payment plan as well as scholarships.

We understand that some students wish to come to practice for a few days before making a commitment to the program. We realize that this sport is not for everyone, so before we ask you to make a decision requiring your time and money, we offer a TRY-US-OUT camps for novice. During the first two weeks, you will learn the basics of the sport, experience typical workouts, and discover how our team functions. If you decide to join the program, your camp fee will be directly applied to your membership.

Practice is held Monday through Friday at Eagle Creek (West 56<sup>th</sup> Street outside 465) from 4:00 to 6:00 pm. The importance of practice attendance and commitment are covered in this manual.

An important part of the Indianapolis Crew is our Booster Club. Made up of parents, the Boosters help transport the athletes to races, feed the crews, cheer them on and fund needed equipment for the program.

Thank you for joining us! We have a large and close knit team. Our travel schedule and the time spent together all but guarantees tight bonds and friendships, forged by hard work and mutual respect. Have fun!

Sincerely,

The Indianapolis Rowing Coaching Staff and Booster Committee



## About Rowing in Indianapolis

We are very fortunate to row in Eagle Creek Park, the 4<sup>th</sup> largest city park in the nation. The park consists of 3,900 acres of wooded terrain and meadows, and 1,300 acres of water. There is a fee for entering the park, rowers and parents are not exempt. The park fee will be collected even if you are just coming to pick up your child from practice. The park offers season passes at the Gatehouse.

The Indianapolis Rowing Center was founded in the early 1980s when the City of Indianapolis was actively promoting amateur sports as an economic development strategy. The first rowing event was held in conjunction with the 1982 National Sports Festival and was followed in 1983 with Indianapolis' first National Championship Regatta. These initial events were held at the south end of Eagle Creek Reservoir (the finish line was located where Rick's Café Boatyard is now). The success of these events led to the founding of the Rowing Center and the plan to develop a world-class rowing course at Eagle Creek.

In 1984 Indianapolis made the commitment to build a rowing course in the north pool of the reservoir and to bid for the World Rowing Championships. The development of the rowing course was fast tracked when Indianapolis was unexpectedly awarded the 1987 Pan American Games after it was determined that Cuba was unable to host the games. The success of the Pan American Games regatta led to Indianapolis being awarded the 1994 World Rowing Championships, the first (and so far only) time that the event was held in the United States.

The rowing course remains one of the country's premiere venues. The Eagle Creek course has held more than a dozen USRowing National Championships (including the 2004, 2005 and 2006 events), numerous Olympic, Pam Am and National Team trial regattas as well as NCAA National Championships and regional collegiate, junior and masters events.

The purpose of the Indianapolis Rowing Center is to be a community rowing program with opportunities for all ages. The junior (high school) program is open to any high school student in the Indianapolis area. We offer Learn to Row programs for people of all ages. Masters (adult) rowers include those who simply like to get some exercise in a beautiful environment, as well as those who compete regularly in organized age group competitions. Other groups currently rowing out of the Indianapolis boathouse include Butler University, Culver Alumni and the Indianapolis master rowers. All of these groups race at the same fall regattas.

For more information about the Indianapolis Rowing Center, its programs and activities, or to enroll in a Learn to Row class please go to [www.indyrowing.org](http://www.indyrowing.org).



# The Indianapolis Junior Rowing Organization

## ***What is a “Junior” Rower?***

The Indianapolis Juniors program is a competitive team that focuses its training towards successful competition. The term ‘Junior’ refers to all high school or middle school-aged rowers, regardless of their year in school. Rowers range from eighth graders to high school seniors.

Athletes come from many schools across the city to row for Indianapolis. We have had rowers from – Academy Plus, Ben Davis, Bishop Chatard, Brebeuf Jesuit, Brownsburg, Cardinal Ritter, Carmel, Cathedral, Center Grove, Eastwood, the International School, Noblesville, North Central, Orchard, Park Tudor, Pike, Ritter, St. Richard’s, St. Thomas, University and Zionsville middle and high schools. Varsity letters for rowing are awarded at Brebeuf Jesuit, the International School and Park Tudor.

Rowers are generally taller than most. However, a shorter stature matched with strength and hard work can also be a winning combination. Among other things rowers are very dedicated to their sport! It’s not uncommon for novice rowers to fall in love with the sport very quickly.

The rowing program runs year-round. You should start rowing as soon as possible. However, if you have a fall or winter sport, you may continue with the other sport and return to rowing in the spring. Likewise, you can row in the fall, participate in a different competitive sport in the winter, and come back in the spring.

## ***The Indianapolis Junior Coaches***

The Indianapolis Rowing Center is a 501 c 3 non-profit organization. The board of directors and the executive director set the budget, hire and manage coaches, establish race schedules and maintain the fleet of boats, among many other things. The Indianapolis Junior Coaches have vast and varied rowing experience. Their biographies are posted on the [indyrowing.org](http://indyrowing.org) website.

## ***Recruiting for Indy Rowing***

Chances are your rower was recruited by one of the Indianapolis a rower, a parent or a coach. Recruiting is a major part of our program and critical to our success. The coaches will be glad to help organize or attend call out meetings at schools if requested. If you are interested in getting students from your school involved please contact the Indianapolis Rowing Center executive director.

## ***Tryout and Cut Policies***

We rarely cut rowers because most novices who come out are good matches for the sport. Currently, we don’t have formal tryouts. Typically, new rowers row with the team for a few days before deciding if rowing is right for them. It’s during that time that the coaches will let anyone know if they are not a good match with rowing. To row, each rower must be dedicated, hard-working and have a positive attitude.

## ***Squads***

Most rowing teams, like Indianapolis, have 4 main squads; varsity boys, varsity girls, novice boys and novice girls. All four practice and compete together, and are under the direction of the head coach.

## ***Novice Rowing***

The United States Rowing Association (USRowing) states that rowers are considered to be novices for one year after they start racing. Indianapolis starts new novices each season and builds a team throughout the school year. In other words, one group of novices starts in the fall, with more novices joining in the winter and spring seasons. Each season, there are set registration dates when new rowers must join but exceptions can be made for late registration.

Novices have started rowing as late as the spring of their senior year and have learned fast enough to row in the first Varsity boat. It is never too late to start rowing, but the ideal situation is to start as soon as you enter high school, or even the 8<sup>th</sup> grade.



## ***Varsity Rowing***

Regardless of what season you start rowing (fall, winter, spring), the following school year you are considered to be an Indianapolis varsity rower. The varsity squad enters both junior varsity and varsity events. Varsity events are "first boat" races and the junior varsity boats can race in second, third and fourth boat events.

## ***Coxswains***

Crew also has an important position called the coxswain (pronounced "cock-suhn"), a naturally light person (under 125 pounds) who motivates the rowers, executes racing strategy and steers the racing shells. A coxswain is a second coach on land and on the water. There are many instances where a girl will be on the boys team.

## ***Being the Only Person from Your School***

If you do not attend a school that is listed on one of our current rosters, don't worry. Anyone can row for Indianapolis even if they are the only rowers from their school. That is why Indianapolis started its program - to help people like you access the sport. There are several rowers on the team who are the only people rowing from their school, and many schools only host 5-6 rowers each. Don't be shy! Come on out and meet rowers from all over the Indianapolis area.

## ***Car Pools***

The Boosters can help to organize car pools for novice rowers, and we encourage your students to talk to other kids from their school. Most of the rowers do not drive when they begin rowing, and depend on varsity rowers to bring them from school to practice. This is a great way for the novices to get to know more about the sport and develop bonds with the older rowers. The boosters can also help find rowers who live in your area for rides home. Small donations to the driver for gas are greatly appreciated.

## ***Summer Camp***

Another good way to try rowing is to attend a learn to row summer camp at the Indianapolis Rowing Center. More information about these camps can be found on our website. Rowers may also benefit from rowing camps held on college campuses across the country. This gives a rower an in-depth visit to a college, experience with national level coaches and a chance to meet others who share a passion for a sport. Summer camps are listed at [www.row2k.com](http://www.row2k.com).

## ***The Indianapolis Junior Boosters***

The very active Booster Club, composed of all the parents of Indianapolis Junior rowers, helps to implement the junior team's plans. Parent volunteers help by chaperoning regattas, fund-raising and in the general promotion of Indianapolis rowing. Without the considerable support of parents, the Indianapolis juniors rowing program would not be able to operate.

The Boosters organize a parents meeting to kick-off each racing season. At these meetings parents volunteer for all the racing needs, including food preparation, driving and chaperoning. The Boosters also organize 'Spirit' activities at each school, such as locker decorations, public relations, recruiting and varsity letter celebrations.

Appointments to the executive committee are held in June for the next year's positions. There are no term limits. The committee meets once a month during the rowing seasons. If you are interested in serving on the committee, please contact the Booster Club President.

**2009-10 Booster President, Tritty Gibson** [tritty@comcast.net](mailto:tritty@comcast.net)



# Membership Information

## ***Forms, Waivers, Dues and Fees***

The Indianapolis Rowing Center is a non-profit club supported by its membership dues and sponsorship. We receive no funds from the schools our rowers attend. Membership forms and waivers are required for each season. They are available at the start of practice for each season.

### **Dues - \$300/ season**

The dues collected go towards the daily operations (insurance, coaching, gas etc.) of the team. Need based scholarships are available for families with real need. The applications are available online on our website, or from Bernadette Teeley. Every family is expected to contribute as much as it can to support its rower.

### **Booster Club Fee - \$50 (included in dues)**

The funds raised by the Booster Club supplement the dues, and are used predominantly for equipment and supplies for races. This fee includes food at the races for your rower (breakfast, lunch and snacks), and end of the season coaches gifts. Grants to the Junior program are also given.

### **Travel Fund - \$100 – Voluntary (and tax-deductible)**

For those who you are unable to drive you athlete/ other athletes to the regatta, or would like to contribute to defray the cost of transporting the athletes to and from the regattas, we gratefully accept your donation. If wish to make an additional tax-deductible donation to IRC, please do so!

### **Travel Fees – based on regatta attendance at away races**

There is a fee to participate in each away regatta, which is due the Thursday before each race. These fees cover entry fees, hotel accommodations (IRC arranges), food/ snacks at the race course, and boat transportation. .

### **Eagle Creek Park Pass**

There is a fee to enter the park even for pick up or drop off of rowers. Passes are to be purchased directly from the park. They are also available from the Eagle Creek Foundation at the Eagle Creek Park office (the next building west of the 56<sup>th</sup> Street Park entrance). The Foundation Passes are a bit more expensive, but they include a tax-deductible donation and are cards rather than windshield stickers—meaning they can be passed between vehicles.



# The Rowing Season

There are three main rowing seasons; fall, winter and spring. Many new rowers start crew at the beginning of the school year, so we tend to have more athletes rowing in the fall than in any other season. Some athletes compete in other sports in other seasons, but most row year round.

***This is an example of typical training seasons and race dates:***

**Fall season** begins late August, and concludes in late October. Plan on a regatta every weekend from mid-September through the end of October. In the fall we travel regionally for these regattas. . Indianapolis also hosts our own regatta, the Head of the Eagle, in late October. Fall 'Head' races are about 3 miles long, with a boat starting every ten seconds, and the teams compete for overall times.

**Winter training** takes place from early-November to the end of February. Yes, the team rows in the winter but not on the water. The indoor season primarily consists of training on indoor rowing machines called ergometers (ergs). The team trains by rowing on ergs, running, weight work, stretching and doing sport-specific drills. If you are not planning on participating in another competitive sport during the winter season, it is highly recommended that you row. This is where the team builds speed for the spring.

Fitness Concepts (49<sup>th</sup>/Penn) is our winter training home. Your IRC winter season fee includes a gym membership as well as an entry into the Indianapolis Indoor Rowing Championships. Your gym membership includes use of their aerobic and weight equipment. This special membership fee is also available to rower's families.

The team will race at indoor rowing events at least once during the season. The scores compiled from the erg training are crucial information for athletes interested in rowing at the college level.

We host the Indianapolis Indoor Rowing Championships, an indoor rowing regatta with video projection of the racers, in January. It is a great kick-off to the season and fun to participate in, or watch.

**Spring season** starts in mid-March, and ends in late May or early June. We will begin traveling to regattas in April. Plan on a regatta every other weekend from mid-April through late May, although there will usually be one or two weekends free. We travel to Ohio, around Indiana and host our own home Regatta/Senior Day in early May. Spring races are 2000 meters long, in six lane race courses.

Indianapolis also has an optional summer season, which runs during June and July. Regattas may include the USRowing National Championships in Indianapolis and possibly others. Summer Camps at Eagle Creek are also available to teach interested athletes. Many of our rowers attend summer rowing camps at universities across the country. This gives them great exposure to a college campus as well as other rowers and programs.



# On the Water

## **Safety**

The sport of rowing has a long history of safety and so does the Indianapolis Rowing Center. **We are serious about safety** and follow a comprehensive plan in accordance with guidelines set by the USRowing (rowing's governing body). Indianapolis coaches follow USRowing rules as well as Indy Rowing safety policy.

When rowers train on the water, coaches accompany the team in safety motor boats. The launches are equipped with safety gear and a cell phone. No Indianapolis junior rower is allowed on the water without the direct supervision of a coach in a safety launch.

## **Weather**

We practice rain or shine. Thunderstorms, high winds or very cold weather can prevent the crews from rowing on the water. Canceling on the water practice is at the discretion of the coaches. Unless told otherwise by a coach, athletes should report to the boathouse for practice when scheduled. Erging or other activities may replace a practice on the water on inclement days. The website calendar has the most accurate schedule information, though facebook and twitter will also be utilized.

## **Swimming Ability**

You do not need to be a great swimmer to row but basic swimming skills and comfort around the water are required. In the unlikely event that a rower should go into the water, they must know how to handle themselves. A swimming test is required for each rower and the certificate is good for 4 years (see end of the handbook). Until this form is on file with IRC, rowers are required to wear PFD's during practice.

## **Practice Clothes**

Most athletic gear works fine as long as it is not *too baggy*. Gym shoes are always required. **We row rain or shine, and all rowers are expected to dress appropriately.** Varsity rowers will row on the water late into the fall and early in the spring; and layering usually works best for those colder weather practices. Also, please encourage your rower to bring a bottle of water even on cool days when there isn't much sun.

## **Practice Schedules**

Teams practice daily after school from 4:00 – 6:00pm. Varsity rowers may have scheduled Saturday morning practices on weekends the crews do not race.

Beginning rowers will spend the first several practices learning the basics on indoor rowing machines before going on the water, and handling the equipment. Once on the water there are just a few weeks before the team starts racing.

From late fall through early spring the rowers train by using a variety of "off water" training techniques- mainly on indoor rowing machines. Winter practices are held the Fitness Concepts (49<sup>th</sup>/Penn)

## **Attendance**

**In rowing, attendance is paramount** (just like any other competitive sport). We row in eight- or four- person boats that are unworkable with fewer rowers. Missing a practice can mean that up to eight other teammates can't practice (and no one likes to get stood up!). Rowers are asked to present their coach with a list of days they cannot attend practices at the beginning of each season. By the time rowers start rowing on the varsity level they rarely miss practices.

**All rowers are expected to take responsibility by calling or e-mailing the coach as soon as possible if an emergency arises and they cannot make it to practices.** Please don't intentionally schedule appointments during practice times. Coaches have the option of establishing a "3 strikes and you are out" policy, where rowers have three violations of this rule each season before they are asked to leave for the season. It sounds tough, but clear communication of one's' schedule with the coaches alleviates any of these problems.



# Travel and Racing Information

## ***Racing & Traveling***

A major part of what we do is race. Yes, even novice rowers race and compete in events specifically designed for novices. All rowers on the team are expected to attend each race. After all, that is what the team trains for! Please consult the regatta schedule and make sure the coaches know now if for some reason your rower can't make a race. When a rower is training for a particular season it is assumed that he or she can make it to the races on the schedule. If you can not attend a race for any reason, notify your coach as soon as possible.

Indianapolis travels as a group, in 12 passenger vans or by charter bus. We work to keep down the travel cost per rower as low as possible. Travel arrangements are made for the entire team for each race. Race fees are determined by boat and trailer transportation, food, lodging (if applicable) and regatta fees. Rowers are never permitted to drive themselves to an out of town race. All rowers will travel with the team, leaving early is discouraged and should only be planned for emergencies.

## ***Qualifications for Racing***

Indianapolis makes every effort to race all of its rowers. Because rowing is done in 8's and 4's it can make things difficult when there are odd numbers of rowers on a squad. This is one reason why the coaches like to enter each squad in multiple events (i.e., a novice boy's 8 and a novice boys 4). If there are an odd number of rowers on a squad then the coaches will attempt to make sure that each rower races in at least one of the events. ***If a rower is absent for more than 30% of the practices, it is not guaranteed that they will race in a regatta.***

## ***Specific Itineraries***

Trip information is available on our website [www.indyrowing.org](http://www.indyrowing.org) and will be e-mailed the Tuesday before the trip. This information will contain departure and return times, what to bring, where we are going, where we are staying and race fees. The team generally leaves Indy around 3:30-4:00pm on Friday and returns on Saturday night. Our pick up/ drop off point is the International School (40<sup>th</sup> and Michigan Rd). The link to the sponsoring regatta's website will be included in the race information will contain information on the race schedule, as well as directions, parking, etc. ***It is extremely important that your rower is ready to leave on time! We cannot hold the crew for a tardy individual.***

## ***Chaperones***

Parents are encouraged to attend races to see their rowers compete, and we depend on them for transportation to most away races. Your rower may discourage you from attending, but they really do appreciate the support. Each parent is expected to volunteer for at least one regatta, and may attend all the races. Parents are responsible for their own hotel expenses. Parents act as chaperones for the team, along with the coaches. Rowers who are rude, uncooperative, or disrespectful towards these individuals will be reported to the coaches, and dealt with on an individual basis. Don't push your luck, or the chaperones' patience! This is very unusual, as our rowers are frequently commended by hotel and restaurant staff.

## ***Uniforms***

Novice rowers wear Indianapolis racing tank tops that can be worn with any black spandex shorts that you provide. Tank tops are available from Fitness Concepts. The required varsity team uniform (called a unisuit) costs \$60.00 but will last for several years. The rest of the Indianapolis team gear – polo shirts, jackets, hats, long-sleeve tees - are available to the athletes and parents for purchase but are not required.

## ***More Race Day Tips...***

***On the junior booster page of the IRC website***

