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**THE ROLE OF A COXSWAIN AT BGRC**

Now that we have all returned to rowing after a considerable break due to CV-19 lockdown limitations, it is a good time to reinforce and remind all rowers about the standards we strive to uphold and to avoid any potential complacency creeping into our working practices.

Bridport Gig Rowing Club (BGRC) recognises the importance of incorporating current health and safety standards into all aspects of its activities, both on and off water. BGRC believe that the best approach to uphold said standards is through a positive safety culture, which includes giving due respect to Club Coxswains.

BGRC aims to provide relevant information, instruction, training and supervision to all its members. To achieve this goal, BGRC requires the full co-operation of all its members. We are proud of our Club coxswains and provide them with thorough, staged, instruction and training relevant to the role. We ensure all Club coxswains are educated to undertake their role on behalf of the Club in a knowledgeable and confident manner, fully supported by the Club management.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

* BGRC coxswains are responsible for the overall safety and wellbeing of their crew, the boat and equipment.
* They are constantly watching the ever-changing sea and weather conditions.
* Coxes are vigilant towards the welfare of their crew before, during & after a row, especially if the crew are involved in a boat launch and/or boat retrieval.
* Coxes give training advice to their crews whilst at sea and follow pre-agreed training & fitness programmes.
* They will always give advice on rowing techniques and offer instruction if needed.
* Coxswains are expected to maintain radio contact with gigs that are out on the water at the same time, also with the Coastguard if necessary.
* They must keep their first aid, safeguarding, DBS and VHF radio operator licences current and valid.
* **In short, your BGRC cox takes on a great deal of responsibility, on behalf of BGRC, to ensure that you can enjoy a safe and productive time rowing at sea as part of an efficient and confident crew at BGRC.**

As an active member of the rowing community at BGRC, we also have expectations from our rowers. This applies to all rowers across the Club: racing squad, general squad and juniors.

**EXPECTATIONS OF BEHAVIOUR FROM ALL ROWERS**

Everyone is expected to:

* Wear clothing and footwear appropriate to the sport and weather conditions.
* Take responsibility for themselves and others and understand how their actions could affect the safety of all rowers.
* Understand what actions are required to keep fellow rowers and themselves safe.
* Report any incidents or concerns about the safety of all rowers.
* Listen to their cox. Respond and React to cox instructions.
* Coxes (when rowing) should not give instruction but should listen to the cox.

**FITNESS TO ROW**

Please remember it is the responsibility of the rower to inform the Club of any change to health, fitness and ability. All rowers should be able to demonstrate:

* Ability to swim 50m in light clothing, tread water for at least 2 minutes, swim underwater for at least 5 metres.
* Ability to enter and exit boat efficiently and safely, both on slipway and pontoon.
* Ability to safely lift and lower an oar in a controlled manner, unaided.
* Ability to contribute effectively towards the launch and retrieval of a gig as part of a crew.

**SUPPORT YOUR COX!**

* Please limit the amount of talking during a rowing session, perhaps chat during an ‘Oars’. Not everyone can concentrate with someone else chatting and it can make it hard for the cox to be heard.
* Remember that your cox is acting in the best interests of everyone aboard, so please respect their instructions.
* At launch or retrieve, make sure you are alert and listening to the instructions given from your cox. It makes the process easier and safer for everyone.
* Remember your cox is doing a lot of multitasking! Please give them all due consideration.
* Always await instruction from your cox and always feel very welcome to ask a relevant question if you are not sure of something – your cox will be happy to help.