



Parent Handbook

2026-2027 Season

One Team, One Effort

New to rowing? You belong here.

Most MCYR athletes start with no experience, and the sport is built to teach beginners from the first practice. There are no tryouts and no cuts. Every athlete who registers and meets the safety requirements gets a seat in a boat and coaching to match. The coaching staff places athletes by experience, skill, age, and commitment. Newer rowers begin as novices to learn technique and water safety, then move into more competitive boats as they develop. Coaches set and adjust lineups throughout the season, so there is always room to grow.

This handbook helps parents and athletes by sharing how the club operates including registration, practices, regattas, volunteering, athlete safety, and our code of conduct.

This Handbook is provided for information and may be updated at any time. It is not a contract and does not replace the waivers, releases, and agreements signed during registration, which govern participation and liability. Where this Handbook and a signed agreement differ, the signed agreement controls.



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New Family Checklist

New to MCYR? Here is the order to get your athlete on the water. Each step points to the section with the details.

1. **Try it.** Attend a Learn to Row or a free trial. A waiver is signed when you attend your first session. This is encouraged but not required to join the team. (Section 1.2)
2. **Register.** Create a RegattaCentral account through our website and complete the online registration and consents. (Section 3.2)
3. **Pay.** Pay season fees in full or on the 4-payment plan. (Section 3.3)
4. **Get the physical.** Submit the FHSA EL2 form. Incoming 9th graders, and grades 10 to 12 who never played an FHSA sport, also complete the EL1 ECG. It is good for one year. (Sections 3.1 and 3.2)
5. **Join USRowing.** Buy an individual membership at usrowing.org. (Section 3.2)
6. **Pass the swim test.** Every athlete is tested before going on the water. (Section 4.2)
7. **Get connected.** Join the parent email list and the parent GroupMe. Ask any Board member to be added. (Section 2.5)
8. **Come to the parent meeting.** At least one parent per athlete should attend, and all parents sign the volunteer release. (Section 2.4)
9. **Get geared up.** Order the uniform and pick up MCYR gear. (Section 3.1 and Section 8)

Questions at any step? Email MCYR941@gmail.com.

1. Welcome

Manatee County Youth Rowing, Inc. (MCYR) is a community-based 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization located at the Manatee County Fort Hamer Boathouse on the Manatee River. MCYR is also doing business as Manatee Rowing.

Founded in 2012, MCYR supports rowing for high school, middle school, private school, and home-schooled athletes across Manatee County, and for adult rowers through our Master's program.

Our mission is to provide rowing programs in a positive and competitive environment for all ages, promoting teamwork, strong character, personal integrity, and fitness.

Every level of ambition has a seat here. MCYR welcomes athletes who want to be elite and highly competitive, athletes brand new to the sport, and everyone in between.

1.1 Club's history

Palmetto High School was the first high school in Manatee County to have a rowing team in the spring of 2010. Southeast High School soon followed in 2011 and Manatee High School in 2012. In 2012, the club transitioned from Manatee Department of Education to Manatee County Youth Rowing.

Rowing is a sport that can be started as a freshman and get a scholarship as a senior. We currently have Manatee County student athletes from schools: Lakewood Ranch High School, Parrish Community High School, Braden River High School, Palmetto High School, Florida Virtual, Nolan Middle School, Mona Jain Middle School, Haile Middle School, and Buffalo Creek Middle School.



1.2 Free trial

You can't join a sport without trying it, so let's get you in a boat.

Free trials for youth and adults start with a Learn to Row. These are promoted and scheduled throughout the year, often on the Saturday after school starts in the fall and spring, and are held at our facility. If you don't see a date posted on the website, contact us at info@manateeyouthrowing.com.

After completing a Learn to Row, or if one isn't scheduled, you'll be invited to join a high school, middle school, or Masters practice for a free trial. The free trial is for one complete week; the number of practices varies based on what team you are interested in..

A waiver is signed when you attend your first session. No fees are owed by anyone who does not continue past the trial. To keep rowing after the trial, complete registration and pay season fees.

1.3 Programs offered

- High School Program (Men's and Women's) - Advanced technical rowing (sweep and sculling), competitive regattas, State, Regional, and National competition
- High School Program (Men's and Women's) - Foundational rowing instruction, technique development, and introductory competition
- Middle School Program (Men's and Women's) - Fundamentals, rowing safety, teamwork, and athletic conditioning
- Master's Program (Adult Men's and Women's) - Foundational rowing instruction, technique development, introductory competition and adult national competition

Our middle school student athletes practice at Fort Hamer facility on Tuesdays and Thursdays from [54:45](#)-6:30 pm and Saturdays from 7-10am. Our high school athletes practice Monday-Friday from 3:30-6:30pm and Saturdays from 7-10am. The Master's program times and additional information can be found on the website.

1.4 Our facilities

With the full support of Manatee County parks who owns the facility, MCYR operates out of the Manatee County Fort Hamer Boathouse, a dedicated rowing and training facility on the Manatee River. The boathouse includes competitive rowing shells (sweep and sculling), weight training equipment for land conditioning, a pavilion with restroom facilities, and safe water access to the Manatee River.

1.5 Recent achievements

MCYR competes as a full member of USRowing and the Florida Scholastic Rowing Association (FSRA), the governing body for scholastic-aged youth rowing in Florida. It varies by season but in 2025-2026, MCYR competed in 4 regattas in the Fall and 8 regattas in the Spring. Manatee County Youth Rowing athletes consistently performed at a high level across major regattas:



At the **Florida Scholastic Rowing Association (FSRA) State Championships**, the Men's Freshman Double (2x) earned a 2nd-place finish, placing among the top crews in the state. The team ranked 17th out of 46 programs, earning 71 total points, with 7 of 12 entries advancing to A-Finals, signifying placement among the top 8 crews in Florida in their respective events.

At the **Head of the Charles Regatta**, the largest regatta in the world, the Men's Youth Double placed 46th out of 56 international crews, competing against elite global programs. At the Head of the Hooch Regatta, the second-largest regatta in the United States, the Women's U19 Double placed 35th out of 105 entries in a combined U19/U17 field, demonstrating strong national competitiveness.

At the **FSRA West District Championships**, the program achieved:

- 7 First-Place Finishes
- 6 Second-Place Finishes
- 8 Third-Place Finishes

Across 10 regattas during the season, U15–U19 athletes earned the following cumulative results:

- Benderson Chase Regatta: 1 Gold, 1 Silver, 1 Bronze
- Secret City Regatta in Tennessee: 2 Gold, 1 Silver, 1 Bronze
- Sarasota County Invitational Regatta: 1 Gold, 3 Silver, 1 Bronze
- Winter Sprints Regatta: 3 Gold, 1 Silver, 2 Bronze
- Spring Sprints Regatta: 4 Gold, 4 Silver, 2 Bronze
- West District Championships: 7 Gold, 6 Silver, 8 Bronze
- FSRA State Championships: 1 Silver
- USRowing SE Regional: 5 semifinalists, 2 finalists with all boats finishing in top 6

These results reflect not only competitive success, but also depth, consistency, and sustained athlete development across multiple age groups and racing categories.

2. How the club works

2.1 A parent-led organization requires volunteers

MCYR is run by parents. The Board of Directors is made up solely of parent volunteers, and everything outside of coaching, including regattas, food tents, travel logistics, fundraising, and finances, happens because parents step up. Although MCYR has an excellent working relationship with Manatee County, the County does not govern us. When you join MCYR, you join a volunteer organization, and your involvement is what makes it work.

Volunteering is the heart of MCYR and is required to keep the club running. MCYR has no paid administrative staff, so every regatta, food tent, trailer move, fundraiser, and event happens because a parent steps up. There is a role for every family: regatta food tent, equipment and trailer transport, event hosting, fundraising, sponsorships, committee work, and Board service. The easiest way to get involved is to speak with any Board member; they will find a spot for you. All adult volunteers sign the MCYR volunteer release each season before volunteering.



Exact hours are not mandated, but we expect every family to sign up at the start-of-season parent meeting. First-time parents often sign up for tasks, and more experienced parents sign up to lead an effort such as facility maintenance, the food committee, fundraising, or media (photos, video, and social media). Parents who want to do more can join the Board, which has 5 defined seats (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Head Coach) plus up to 3 additional seats for program leaders.

The club also grows the same way it runs: parents talking to parents and athletes talking to peers. Invite friends, classmates, neighbors, and teammates from other sports to our learn-to-row events; a personal invitation is how nearly every MCYR family found the club.

MCYR also welcomes donations, business sponsorships, and scholarship support. Giving opportunities are at www.manateeyouthrowing.com.

2.2 Coaches

MCYR employs a professional coaching staff led by the Head Coach, supported by assistant and program coaches. Current coaching staff are listed at www.manateeyouthrowing.com. Our coaches believe in an open door policy: if you have questions or concerns, reach out to the coaching staff first.

2.3 Who to contact

The Board can be reached anytime at MCYR941@gmail.com.

- On-water and coaching matters, including lineups, training, and athlete development: the Head Coach, privately and after events, never from the sideline.
- Club and administrative matters, including registration, billing, volunteering, and club policy: the appropriate Board member.
- Safety or conduct concerns: the Head Coach or Board President. Serious concerns should never be handled informally.
- The 24-hour rule: do not approach a coach about lineups, boat assignments, or race results on regatta or practice day. Wait 24 hours, then email the Head Coach to schedule a conversation. Emotions cool, facts stay, and athletes are spared the sideline scene.

2.4 Start of season parent meeting

MCYR holds a parent meeting at the start of each season, in the fall and again in the spring. Attendance is required; at least one parent or guardian per athlete must attend. Please reach out to a board member if you are unable to attend.

The meeting covers:

- The season calendar, practice schedule, and regatta dates, including which events carry additional costs.
- Fees, payment plans, and deadlines.
- Day and time for the swim test. All athletes must pass a swim test to participate.
- Board member and coaching staff introductions and program expectations.
- Volunteer roles and sign-ups, including regatta jobs the club must fill.
- Signing the MCYR volunteer release. All parents must sign the volunteer release at the parent meeting.

- Coordinate after school carpools. Please note that MCYR does not organize, assign, supervise, screen, or insure private carpools. Drivers act independently and not as agents of the club. Families are responsible for selecting drivers and ensuring compliance with all applicable laws, including insurance and seat belt requirements.
- Safety requirements, paperwork status, and any policy changes for the season.

Meeting dates are announced by email and GroupMe as early as possible. If you cannot attend, notify the Board at MCYR941@gmail.com beforehand and arrange to get the materials and complete anything required of your family.

2.5 How the club communicates

MCYR uses a combination of email and GroupMe. Important information for all parents and athletes is communicated by email. Last-minute information, like delays at a regatta, is communicated via GroupMe.

There is a GroupMe for coaches and athletes, a GroupMe for the Board, coaches, and parents, and additional GroupMe groups for things like ride shares. Make sure you are on email and in the parent GroupMe at the start of the season; ask the Secretary or any Board member to be added.

2.6 Time commitment and absences

Rowing is a rewarding commitment.

- High school athletes practice 6 days a week, Monday through Saturday, which makes rowing their primary sport during the season. We know life happens. with doctor appointments and other obligations. We ask the athlete to notify their coach in advance. Because of that schedule, a second sport or a program like marching band is hard to balance at the same time, so most athletes make rowing their primary focus. School clubs such as Spanish club and classes like JROTC fit well alongside rowing, and many of our athletes do both.
- Middle school athletes practice 3 days a week, so their time commitment is lighter.

3. Fees, Registration, and Refunds

MCYR sets fees to keep the club fiscally responsible and fair to every family. Pricing reflects the actual cost of running each program, and each athlete's fees support the program that athlete rows in.

When the club commits money on an athlete's behalf, such as regatta entries, uniforms, boat transport, or coaching travel, those funds are spent when the commitment is made and cannot be recovered. That is why some fees are non-refundable. The club also works to keep costs that come from a specific group of athletes with those athletes, rather than spreading them across families whose athletes do not attend that event.

3.1 Fees

So families can budget for the year, here is a list of the fees.

- **Athlete physical.** All participants must have a current physical on the FHSAA EL2 form, signed by a licensed healthcare provider. Incoming 9th graders, and athletes in grades 10 through 12 who have never played an FHSAA-sanctioned sport in Florida, must also complete the EL1 ECG heart screening. A physical is good for one year and is required to start the fall season or whenever you join the club. Cost varies by your insurance, and the Manatee County Department of Education offers an ECG program that supports the screening. The FHSAA form is the form MCYR uses.
- **Season fees.** The current per-season fee is published on the website and is allocated to youth program operations.
- **Uniform.** This varies in cost by the number of uniforms ordered, often around \$150. We also encourage athletes to wear an MCYR shirt at regattas which can be purchased on the website.
- **USRowing membership.** Each athlete is required to be an individual member and the current fee is \$45.
- **Away regattas, if your athlete attends.** These fees are shared in section 7 and are a pass-through cost based on the number of athletes participating. All costs for parents and guests to attend an away regatta are their responsibility. While there may be parking fees, there are no fees to attend a regatta as a spectator.
- **Banquet.** An end of season or end of year banquet may be an additional charge.
- **Yearbook.** At the end of the year, you'll have the option to purchase a yearbook.

Families with more than one athlete enrolled receive a sibling discount on each additional athlete. If you have multiple athletes to register, contact MCYR941 for your personalized discount code. This code can be used to get the discount immediately upon registering.

To help families budget for the full year, here are rough estimates based on current fees.

- Middle school athletes row fall and spring, compete in local regattas and 1 away regatta in the spring, so a typical year runs about \$3,500, covering the fall and spring season fees, the uniform, USRowing membership, and 1 away regatta. In the summer, middle school athletes have the option to join summer camps which are an additional cost.
- High school athletes, including 8th graders who level up and compete as freshmen, pay the season fee for both fall and spring, plus the uniform, USRowing, and one spring away regatta, for roughly \$4,500 a year, plus a physical with ECG. They can also participate in the summer training program and optional summer regatta for additional fees.
- Upperclassmen and competitive rowers selected for fall invitational regattas such as the Head of the Charles and the Head of the Hooch should plan for an additional \$400 to \$1,500 per event, plus their own travel and lodging, which brings their year to roughly \$5,300 to \$7,500. They can also participate in the summer training program and optional summer regatta for additional fees.

3.2 Registration

Participants register on the website which routes them to Regatta Central. Parents will have to create an account with regatta central. When registering, you will input family information and check that you have read and understand

- Handbook and code of conduct. These can be downloaded from the MCYR website at the bottom of the home page

- Physical Form and heart screening. All athletes must submit FHSAA Physical Form EL2 from a licensed healthcare provider. New for 2026-2027: Florida's Second Chance Act also requires EL1 ECG/EKG heart screening for incoming 9th graders and grades 10-12 who have never played an FHSAA-sanctioned sport in Florida. A physical is good for one year and is required to start the fall season or whenever you join the club. These forms can be found at the bottom of the MCYR website.
- Swim test. Participants will be tested to confirm they can swim 100 yards unassisted, tread water for 5 minutes in rowing attire, and stay calm in open water. Those who are unable to pass this swim test will not be able to participate.
- Join USRowing as an individual member.
- Parents will also have to check they have read and agree to an assumption of risk, liability release, indemnity, parental consent to participate, emergency medical authorization, media release and the refund policy

3.3 Refund policy

The full refund policy is available at <https://manateeyouthrowing.com/refund-policy/>. Key points every family should know:

- Free trial: new participants may attend a learn-to-row session or up to one week of practice at no charge. A waiver is signed at the first session. To continue, athletes complete registration and pay season fees.
- Payment: season fees are due in full at the start of the season, or in 4 monthly payments under the payment plan. Accounts delinquent beyond 3 weeks pause participation until brought current.
- Refunds: fees are non-refundable after the trial period. Regatta entry fees and uniforms are non-refundable in all cases. Withdrawal does not cancel amounts owed for the season.
- Medical exceptions: a documented medical condition may qualify for a pro-rated credit toward a future season. Submit requests in writing to the MCYR board with a physician's note.
- USRowing membership: each athlete must hold a current USRowing membership, purchased directly at www.usrowing.org, separate from season fees.
- Scholarships: awarded at the Board's discretion for the current season. Families with financial need are encouraged to ask, quietly and confidentially, through the Treasurer or President. Scholarships hold no cash value, are non-transferable, and any fees not covered remain subject to the payment and refund terms.
- Coaches and volunteers cannot grant refunds, credits, or verbal exceptions of any kind. All requests go in writing to the Treasurer.

4. Athlete safety and safeguarding

Athlete safety and support is the top priority. MCYR reserves the right to suspend or remove any participant whose conduct or behavior jeopardizes the safety or well-being of others or is inconsistent with club values.

4.1 Coaching qualifications

MCYR has an established, professional coaching staff. All MCYR coaches are required to maintain USRowing Level 1 certification (or higher), annual SafeSport training, a USOPC-approved federal background check through NCSI, CPR/AED, First Aid, and Florida-approved Boater Safety certification.

MCYR Board members and coaches complete a Level 2 fingerprint-based background screening and are registered through the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) VECBS system. Coaching compliance is managed through the USRowing member portal and verified annually.

4.2 Athlete safety

What parents should know:

- Background screening: MCYR Board members and coaches complete a Level 2 fingerprint-based background screening before working with athletes. All other helpers take part as parent volunteers in supporting roles.
- SafeSport: MCYR follows USRowing SafeSport policies. Coaches complete abuse-prevention training and maintain current certification.
- Communication: coach communication with athletes stays on club-approved channels, such as the team GroupMe or club email, and is program-related. Coaches do not contact athletes through personal social media or private messaging apps. In-person conversations happen in open, observable settings. You may ask to be included in, or to see, any communication with your athlete.
- Emergency preparedness: MCYR coaches are trained in emergency procedures for lightning, heat, and on-water incidents, and work to have athlete emergency and medical information available at practices and regattas. In the event of an emergency, coaches may seek emergency medical treatment when a parent or guardian cannot be immediately reached.
- Injuries and concussions: report any injury or suspected concussion to the coaching staff immediately, even if it happened outside of rowing. An athlete recovering from an injury or concussion returns to practice only with written medical clearance.
- Reporting: report any safety or misconduct concern to the Head Coach or Board President. Florida law requires anyone who suspects child abuse, abandonment, or neglect to report it to the Florida Abuse Hotline at 1-800-962-2873. Reporting to MCYR does not replace that legal duty.

5. Photography, video, and social media

MCYR athletes practice and compete on public property, where filming and photography are legal, and the boathouse is covered by video security cameras. Photos and video are also taken by regatta organizers, other teams, spectators, and news media, none of which MCYR controls.

5.1 MCYR media release

MCYR may photograph and record video of athletes, coaches, parents, guests, and volunteers during practices, regattas, and club events, and may use those images on MCYR's website, social media accounts, newsletters, and promotional materials. During registration, families check a box confirming they have read and agree to the MCYR media release. MCYR does not maintain a separate media release form; consent is given through the registration checkbox. If you prefer your

athlete not be featured, you may opt out at any time by emailing MCYR941@gmail.com, and MCYR will make a good-faith effort to omit your athlete from content it controls going forward.

We cannot guarantee exclusion from all group photos or event footage, and this does not restrict photography or videography by other families, media, or regatta organizers at public events. You may change your preference at any time by emailing the same address.

Images celebrate athletes, recruit new rowers, and support the fundraising that keeps fees down. Whenever possible, MCYR identifies athletes by first name and last initial in public posts. Regattas and other content may include an athlete's full name.

5.2 Sharing and posting

When you share or post content about MCYR:

- Identify athletes by first name and last initial only, including your own, to protect their privacy. Never post an athlete's school, class schedule, or home location.
- Think before posting other people's kids. If a family asks you to remove a photo or video of their athlete, take it down without debate.
- Do not post real-time locations of minors. Share regatta content after the event or without tagging precise live locations.
- Represent the club well. Do not air grievances about coaches, athletes, officials, other teams, or club decisions online; bring concerns to the club through the channels. The Code of Conduct applies online.
- Only Board-authorized volunteers post to official MCYR accounts.

6. Practices

The rowing year has three competitive seasons: Fall runs mid-August to mid-December and Spring runs mid-January to mid-May. Summer is June and July with scheduled camps and training programs.

- Practice schedules are set by the coaching staff and communicated by email and GroupMe. Schedules change with daylight, weather, and the racing calendar.
- Attendance matters, and it is one of the best parts of the sport. Rowing is the ultimate team sport; every rower counts, and a full boat is a fast boat. Athletes should make every effort to notify their coach in advance if they cannot attend.
- Drop-off and pick-up: athletes should arrive on time and be picked up promptly. Coaches make every effort to stay until every athlete has been picked up, and prompt pick-up helps our coaches get home to their own families.
- Weather: coaches follow the club's safety protocols for lightning, heat, and water conditions. Practice may move to land training or be cancelled; safety decisions belong to the coaching staff and are not negotiable.
- What to bring: soft sided water bottle, sunscreen, hats/caps, sunglasses, athletic clothing that won't catch on equipment, and shoes suitable for running.
- Athletes with medical conditions such as asthma or allergies must have their medication at every practice and regatta.. Coaches do not administer medication except as permitted by law and training. Athletes are responsible for carrying self-administered medications

(inhalers, EpiPens, etc.). Parents must notify coaches of any significant medical conditions at time of registration.

- Respecting the community. At the facility, everyone is expected to follow the speed limit, park in appropriate spaces, no loud or inappropriate music and be courteous to our neighbors.

6.1 Open boathouse

Open boathouses are optional practice sessions for current athletes, with at least one coach always on site; these are usually scheduled over spring break, fall break, and the December break. These will be announced on GroupMe.

6.2 Dress code

Athletes look and race like a team when everyone follows the attire guidelines. Appropriate attire is required at all practices and events. Men and women must wear uni-suits, shorts (biking shorts and spandex shorts are permitted) and a top (tank tops are permitted) at all times. Clothing that's prohibited includes white or sheer spandex including sports bras, altered or shortened garments, revealing or immodest clothing, thin compression shorts and any inappropriate graphics or language.

It's encouraged that every family keeps a towel and dry change of clothing in their car in case their athlete gets wet during practice. The boathouse has a few spare towels and if they are used, please wash and return them.

7. Regattas

Regattas are the reward for months of practice and a major family commitment. The season schedule is published as early as possible; plan for early mornings and full days.

7.1 Local regattas

Most MCYR racing is local, primarily in the Sarasota and Tampa areas, including Nathan Benderson Park in Sarasota. Local regattas are day trips: families handle their own transportation to the venue, and local regatta costs are covered by season fees. This may change as inflation and regatta fees continue to rise; any change will be communicated before the season.

In accordance with SANCA, the non-profit organization that manages Nathan Benderson Park, policies and procedures, each team must provide volunteers to support the regatta. These volunteer opportunities will be scheduled as soon as we have the roster.

7.2 Away regattas

Away regattas are events more than 120 miles from the boathouse and may involve overnight travel. Away regattas carry additional costs beyond season fees, including registration fees, boat transport or rentals, coaching hours, and travel expenses. These costs are passed through to the families of the athletes who attend that regatta. Estimated costs are communicated before families commit, and fees will be required at sign-up to cover the costs as incurred.



Parents often transport other families' athletes to away regattas. These are private arrangements between families. Please note that MCYR does not organize, assign, supervise, screen, or insure private carpools. Drivers act independently and not as agents of the club. Families are responsible for selecting drivers and ensuring compliance with all applicable laws, including insurance and seat belt requirements.

Overnight stays.

- Athletes may not leave the race site, hotel or planned activity without permission from the head coach. When coaches aren't present, an adult chaperone is in charge.
- Athletes are assigned rooms with other athletes of the same gender and comparable age, at least 3 per room. No adult shares a room with an athlete who is not their own child. Room assignments will not be changed without permission from the head coach.
- Under no circumstances will visiting rooms of the opposite gender be allowed. No one other than an MCYR athlete, chaperone, or coach is allowed in a room. Adults do not enter an athlete's room alone; any needed check is done by two adults or with the door open.
- Unless there's an emergency, under no circumstances will an athlete be allowed to leave their rooms after curfew.
- In the event an athlete displays non-compliance with guidelines and instruction on an overnight trip, that athlete may be asked to room with their parents, if they are attending. If the offense is severe enough, the parent will be asked to take the athlete home or travel to get the athlete.

7.3 Food

Food at regattas is arranged by a volunteer committee. Their primary goal is to ensure the athletes have the nutrition and energy to perform their best. For local regattas, food for athletes is included in the season fees. Regatta days often include breakfast, lunch, and snacks for the athletes.

- The club sets up the food trailer and tents, and we sit together to cheer on our team. Look for the MCYR tents.
- Family members can purchase a food band for access to the amazing food and snacks provided by the team; bands are purchased the week before the event. While some events may have food trucks (Benderson, Dogwood), some regattas (Tampa, Secret City) do not have options to purchase food.

7.4 What a season looks like (Fall, Spring and Summer)

A typical season mixes three kinds of events. The actual schedule is published as early as possible each season:

- Local regattas (3 to 5 per season). Regatta fees, athlete food, and coaching costs are included in the season fee.
- Lottery or invitation regattas (1 to 2 per season, high school only). Some regattas are by invitation only, or the club submits boats that are selected by lottery. These are attended by roughly 3 to 10 athletes. Athlete fees run about \$400 to \$1,500 each and cover the regatta fee, boat rentals or transport, and the coach's salary, flights, hotel, and per diem. The athlete's own travel, hotel, and food are not included, but we provide support to coordinate hotel and local logistics.

- Whole team away regattas (0 to 1 per season, middle and high school). Athlete fees run between \$450 to \$650 each and include regatta fees, boat transportation, coach salary, travel, hotel, and food, plus athlete hotel and food. The athlete's travel to the regatta is not included.

7.5 Regatta day for families

Regattas are full days, often 7 am to 5 pm, and the club experience is half the fun. What to expect:

- Race times: check RegattaCentral and CrewTimer, and the whiteboard at the MCYR team tent. Times can change throughout the day, so keep an eye on your athlete's event. If you are new to regatta day, we will walk you through all of it. The first one can be overwhelming but we are all here to help with any questions.
- Your athlete races for about a minute. Be at the course well before the posted race time or you will miss it.
- Venues vary: some have free parking, some paid; some have full-service facilities, others portable toilets. Check the event information before you go.
- Bring a camping chair, shade or a hat, sunscreen, and bug spray, which is especially useful at the Tampa venues. Encourage athletes to wear sunglasses and sunscreen at practices and events.
- Volunteering: some regattas require each team to provide volunteers. MCYR may use SignUpGenius to organize volunteer tasks before each regatta, often in support of meal preparation and food service. No experience is needed; someone will show you what to do.

7.6 Expectations at every regatta

- Boat assignments and lineups: coaches do their best to balance development, fairness, and boat speed. Coaches are the final say in boat assignments and lineups.
- Athletes travel and compete as a team and are expected at every regatta unless excused by their coach in advance.
- Regatta entry fees are committed to host organizations when lineups are submitted, which is why they are non-refundable.
- Every regatta runs on parent volunteers: food tent, trailer loading, driving, chaperoning, and more. Expect to volunteer; sign-ups are coordinated by the volunteer leads before each event.
- Spectate positively. Cheer for every MCYR boat, respect officials and opposing teams, and leave coaching to the coaches. The Code of Conduct applies at every event.

8. Uniforms and club gear

Coaches will provide guidelines for practice and regatta attire. Middle school athletes may wear a uniform known as a unisuit (nicknamed a uni) or matching athletic shorts and shirts. High school athletes wear a unisuit, which may require an additional fee to purchase. Unisuit purchases are non-refundable once ordered (see Section 3.3).

We encourage athletes, parents, and family members to buy MCYR shirts and merchandise from our website at www.manateeyouthrowing.com. Wearing club gear at regattas and around town supports the team and helps grow the club.

9. Finances and fundraising

MCYR is a non-profit organization and the entire budget for the season is not covered by fees. Fees are allocated to coaches salaries, new equipment, equipment maintenance, insurance, regatta fees and expenses, food and boat trailers and boat house supplies. Additional fees are required for away regattas, uniforms, banquets, yearbooks and overnight travel for coaches and athletes. These are passed forward at cost. To keep parent costs as low as possible, a team of volunteers lead fundraising events, seek corporate sponsorships and apply for grants.

10. MCYR Code of Conduct

Applies to all athletes, parents, guests, coaches, volunteers, and board members

Our Standard

We want every athlete and family to feel welcome, safe, and proud to be part of MCYR. Manatee County Youth Rowing is a youth sport organization. Everyone who participates including athletes, parents, coaches, volunteers, and board members is responsible for keeping this a safe, respectful, and fair environment. This Code sets the baseline. It is not exhaustive. Use good judgment.

MCYR adopts the USRowing Code of Conduct as the governing standard for all members. Where MCYR's policies are more specific, those apply. Where USRowing's standard is higher, that applies.

All Participants

The following applies to everyone in the MCYR community at practices, regattas, club events, and in any communication related to MCYR:

- Treat every person with respect: athletes, opponents, officials, coaches, parents, and volunteers.
- Do not engage in harassment, bullying, discrimination, or conduct that demeans or excludes anyone.
- Do not use drugs or alcohol at any MCYR event or in the presence of athletes.
- Do not use abusive, threatening, or obscene language.
- Protect the physical and emotional safety of athletes at all times.
- Report concerns about unsafe behavior or misconduct to the Head Coach or Board President. Do not handle serious concerns informally.
- Comply with all USRowing SafeSport policies and mandatory reporting requirements.

Athletes

- Compete with integrity. Follow the rules of the sport and accept official decisions.
- Respect your coaches and teammates. Disagreements are handled privately, not on the water.
- Take care of club equipment. Damage caused by negligence or misconduct may be the athlete's responsibility.
- Attend practices and events as committed. Notify your coach in advance if you cannot attend.
- Represent MCYR well at regattas and in the community.

Parents and Guardians

Parent conduct has a direct effect on the experience of every athlete on the team, including your own. MCYR holds parents to the same standard as athletes and coaches.

- Cheer positively. Do not criticize athletes, coaches, officials, or opposing teams, from the sideline, in the parking lot, or online.
- Do not coach from the sideline. Trust the coaching staff. If you have concerns about coaching decisions, raise them privately with the Head Coach after the event, not during.
- Do not approach officials or opposing coaches to dispute calls or decisions.
- Model the behavior you want your athlete to demonstrate.
- Communicate concerns about your athlete's experience through the appropriate channel: Head Coach for on-water matters, the appropriate Board member for club matters.
- Parents who repeatedly violate the Code of Conduct may be asked to leave practices or regattas, lose volunteer privileges, or have their athlete's participation reviewed by the Board.

Coaches and Staff

- Prioritize athlete safety and well-being above competitive outcomes.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries with athletes at all times, consistent with USRowing SafeSport policies.
- Complete required SafeSport training annually and maintain current certification.
- Keep electronic communication with minor athletes on club-approved channels and program-related, never through personal social media or private messaging apps. Hold in-person conversations with athletes in open or observable settings, such as an office with the door open.
- Do not use or condone abusive coaching techniques, including humiliation, excessive physical demands used as punishment, or emotional manipulation.
- Disclose any conflict of interest to the Board President promptly.

Board Members and Volunteers

- Act in the best interest of the club and its athletes, not personal interest.
- Maintain confidentiality of board discussions, family information, and personnel matters.
- Comply with the MCYR Conflict of Interest Policy and disclose conflicts promptly.
- Do not use your role at MCYR to obtain personal benefit.

Consequences

Violations of this Code will be reviewed by the Board President and Head Coach. Depending on severity, consequences may include a warning, removal from an event, suspension, or permanent removal from MCYR. Serious violations, including any SafeSport violation, will be reported to USRowing and, where required by law, to the appropriate authorities.

MCYR will not retaliate against anyone who reports a conduct concern in good faith.

Acknowledgment at registration

Acceptance of this Handbook is collected electronically during online registration each season; no separate signature is required. The following statement is presented with a required checkbox on the registration page:



"I have read and agree to the MCYR Parent Handbook, including the Code of Conduct. I understand the Code applies to me, my family and guests, and to my athlete, and that this acknowledgment covers participation for the current season. I can request a copy of the Parent Handbook and any MCYR policy at MCYR941@gmail.com."

Registration renews annually, so this acknowledgment is refreshed each season automatically. To request a copy of this Handbook, the Code of Conduct, or any MCYR policy, email MCYR941@gmail.com.

One Team, One Effort

Thank you for being part of Manatee County Youth Rowing. The policies in this Handbook exist so the club runs well and every athlete is safe; what actually makes MCYR work is families who show up, volunteer, and cheer for every boat on the water.

Watching your athlete pull with seven teammates in perfect time, or cross a finish line they were not sure they could reach, is worth every early morning. We are glad your family is here, and we look forward to a great season together.

An introduction to rowing terms:

A few terms you'll hear from your athletes:

Sweep: each rower has one oar

Sculling: each rower has two oars

Shell: the racing boat

Erg: the indoor rowing machine used for training and testing

Coxswain (cox): the person who steers the shell and directs the crew

Novice: a first-year rower

Regatta: a rowing competition

Head race: a longer fall race, usually about 5,000 meters

Sprint race: a shorter spring race, usually 2,000 meters

Port and starboard: the left and right sides of the boat from the rower's seated view

Catch and finish: the start and the end of each stroke

Rigger: the metal frame that holds the oar to the shell

Uni: the one-piece uniform rowers wear to race