



Regatta Spectators Guide

Borrowed & Adapted from Friends of Port Rowing in NY & Westford-Littleton in MA: Thank you!

Rowing, Regattas and Really Great Food!

- *a Beginner's Guide to Regattas*

The intent of this guide is to give parents new to rowing some basic information about how to prepare for race days. Being a new “rowing parent” can mean being a little overwhelmed. You will be: learning a lot of new terms (if you want to understand your rower); learning how to survive and enjoy a regatta, and; learning to be patient with just not knowing what is happening at times.

Attend Regattas: The most fun, and the best way to learn more about rowing, is by attending Regattas. Regattas are a wonderful day, and attending shows your rower your support. Dress in school colors & wear HB Crew apparel! We have T-shirts for sale to show your team spirit (Joyce@HBCrew.org). You will drop your athlete off early for the regatta and you should plan to go early as well, stay all day if possible, and bring everything you need with you. Crew can also carpool to an early morning race allowing families to arrive later. Don't forget to check the HB Crew website for directions. You may be required to pay for parking, so be sure to have some cash handy (usually \$10). There are also often vendors selling clothing and other crew related items and not everyone takes credit cards. Races are usually spread throughout the day. Rowers are required to be there all day; they need to unload the trailer, rig the boat, check in, race, cheer each other on, eat a lot of food after their race, de-rig, and load the trailer. Athletes may be asked to return to Lone Pine to work as a team to re-rig the boats and prepare for the next practice. It is a full day for the crew! If you cannot stay the full day, try to get there at your rowers estimated race time.

Fall and Spring Seasons are Different! In a nutshell, the fall races are called Head Races. The races are longer (5-6K) and are timed – it is very hard to tell who is winning because each boat is trying to get the best time – boats begin the races seconds apart. In the Spring, the races are 1.5K (1500 meters – about a mile) or 2K long. As there are many boats at the same level (example, Girls' Varsity 1) there are many flights. You can really see who is winning, as each boat begins a particular race at the same time. They can be more exciting, because you can see who has won at the end of the race (and you don't need to wait for the results to be posted).

At Regattas:

Crew & Parent Areas: Please respect the designated crew area. Crew & coaches will be focused on preparing to race. Think of it this way: would you walk onto the football field, onto the ice rink, or into a locker room before a game? Please resist the urge to hover and allow the crew & coaches to have their space. Crew will have their own tents for coach approved race food/fuel, gear, & downtime. Crew will rig their boats without adult assistance. Crew & coaches look forward to socializing with parents & family after the races at the team lunch. Our coaches keep parents informed via walkie talkie messages to our operations director and they visit the parent tent whenever possible to give updates and answer questions.

Please pay attention as you walk around a regatta, and remember that the people carrying the boat have the right of way – boats weigh a lot, and they can't dodge you! Be aware, and be prepared to hop out of the way and/or duck.

Dress appropriately. Dress in layers, remembering that the wind can be very cutting by the water, and it does rain at times. You can also have the sun come through quickly, and then it gets hot. It can also be muddy, so be thoughtful with your shoes. A hat or cap of some sort for sun/rain is important. Sunglasses are also very important, as the glare off of the water can be difficult. Sunscreen is also a necessity. (It is hard to remember that when you are leaving at six in the morning and it is overcast!)

Food – Please sign up to bring food to share on our website under “Regattas” then “Regatta Food.” All Sign Up Genius links for the season are posted for advance planning. This is for the crew, coaches, and parents/family to eat and drink on the long Regatta days. You will understand why you are asked to bring food every week when you see the amount of food that is consumed. The rowers require a LOT of calories and liquids after races. *We need full participation from each & every member of the team* to make this successful and not be too much of a burden on just a few families. Please contact our Hospitality Chairperson [Maryanne Shanley](#) with any questions.

What else to bring - You will want binoculars- you won't be able to tell which boat is which otherwise. Another essential supply is a reliable camera. Camp chairs are helpful, and you may even want to bring a sleeping bag for a really cold, windy day. You could just “have it with you” and offer it to your rower, because they will most likely have refused to bring it with them when you suggested it at home. Bring whatever you will be comfortable with.

Taking photographs - Unless you have a fantastic telephoto lens, taking good photos on the water is challenging at best. You might enjoy candid photos while rowers are just “hanging out.” Please share photos on our team Smugmug site

(www.HBCrew.Smugmug.com). The upload link for each race will be sent to you. Standard password applies.

The Races - for the most part, HB Crew rows in eights and sometimes fours, which are abbreviated as 8+ and 4+ on the schedules. An 8+ is a 60' racing shell for 8 rowers and one coxswain (cox) the 4+ is a 45' racing shell for 4 rowers and one coxswain. The coxswain steers the boat and controls the race strategy. When looking at the schedule you will see GV1 8+, BV2 8+, BN1 8+, or GV1 4+ and so on. These stand for the following:

GV1 8+ = Girls Varsity 1 (racing an 8+) – (fastest boat on the girls' team)

BV2 8+ = Boys' Varsity 2 (racing an 8+) – (second fastest boat on the boys' team)

BN1 8+ = Boys' Novice 1 (racing an 8+) – (fastest boat on the boy's novice team)

GV1 4+ = Girl's Varsity 1 (racing as a 4+) – (fastest girl's four on the girl's team)

Often you will see "Jr." before a race, as in: Jr. GV18+ – the "Jr." signifies high school age participants. A novice is defined as any rower in their first 12 months of rowing starting with their first race. For more information on the above, and to understand positions in the boat more thoroughly, see the link to USRowing below.

Socializing – Look for the HB Crew Banner! We usually have two or three pop up tents which shelter the food tables and our rowers. It is a very nice place to hang out, ask questions, have some coffee/food, and cheer on the rowers. Sometimes there are other areas where you can see better (depending on the venue). All the information can be overwhelming at first, but you will learn quickly, and you will find yourself becoming amazed at the organization and support that the parents give to the rowers.

Ways Parents Can Help @ Regattas- Set up & take down. Everyone should pitch in! Please help keep the area clean during the day. Take all belongings home with you (especially food dishes!) so someone else does not have to lug extra things to their car.

Helping your Rower get Ready -

Important: Crew should eat a whole-grain pasta dinner the night before, pre-hydrate, & *get plenty of sleep*. Check out [Nutrition Links](#) on our website. Please send protein and complex carbohydrate snacks + electrolyte-replenishing drink (chocolate milk is a good post race choice for protein) with your rower to have on hand in their kit. The coaches do not want rowers eating a huge meal at the parent tent before rowing, so they should have a snack in their bag in the event of an afternoon race.

Please put the races on your calendar and make sure the uniform is CLEAN by Friday night. While this seems self evident, rowers are so tired at the end of a long regatta that

they can roll that uniform into a muddy ball and forget all about it. You don't want to be finding it that way at 5:30 am on Saturday morning, having sat that way for a week.

Label Everything! At the end of almost every regatta there is a pile of unmarked clothing. While we do our best to collect it all and bring it back, your rower will most likely never find it if it is not marked with his or her name. Your rower should always bring extra clothing, especially socks. They should bring extra sweatpants and a sweatshirt as well. And a sleeping bag/blanket (if it is chilly). It is also recommended that your rower should bring their homework. There is a lot of downtime at the regattas, and it can be a good time to get some work done.

Why doesn't my son/daughter know what boat they will be in yet?

You should know that your rower will most likely not know which boat he or she will be rowing in until two days prior to the event (and even then it can change again on race day). The coaches are constantly monitoring performance, and do switch things up. For what it is worth, if your rower misses practices, his or her performance cannot possibly be evaluated, as it should be. Coaches are obligated to put their fastest crews together by boat. This often changes. It is an inherent part of a rowing coach's job and not intended to cause your rower distress.

How do I know what boat my son/daughter is in to determine what time they are racing so I don't miss it?

Ask your rower or coxswain which boat they were assigned to on the last practice before the race. If they don't know, they should contact Head Coach Eric. As stated above, please understand your son/daughter's race time can change by our coaches making last minute adjustments and also by our hosts; weather & scratches are common reasons to adjust race times.

Final Wrap up & Links- All in all, you will most likely find that Regattas become your life during "the season" and you wouldn't have it any other way. Hopefully you will want to become even more involved as time goes on. There is always a place to pitch in – you can set-up the food tent, flip burgers, you can help with fundraising, and the list goes on. Our rowers really depend on our support throughout the year.

You might find the following helpful in learning more about Terminology and Tactics:

<http://www.usrowing.org/About/Rowing101.aspx>

Rowing 101, posted on the US Rowing website.

Excellent glossary of rowing terms, for a sport that is full of interesting language. Also, there is a "Viewer's Guide," "Race Watching Tips," and a host of other information to read when you are trying to understand just what your rower is involved in.

<https://www.regattacentral.com/>

This is THE place to find the information on the upcoming races (besides on the HB Crew website!). This is helpful if you do the following: 1) find the event on the HB Crew website; 2) go to Regatta Central and look for the event by date; 3) the page on Regatta Central usually has a lot of information, and should have a link to the website of the event. Either on Regatta Central or on the website of the event will have a list of “who is rowing when” – you should be able to either download or print the spreadsheet. You will then know when your rower is racing, when the other races are happening, and what teams are rowing against us during the race. It makes for a more informed, exciting race. While they usually have similar programs at the different venues, it can be challenging to find them. It is easier to have them ahead of time.

<http://www.oarspotter.com/>

Is a great resource if you want to get to know which boats are from which schools and/or clubs. It can be really difficult to tell, even with binoculars, which are the HB shells. Knowing that the HB oar blade is navy blue with a white chevron is helpful too.

<http://www.concept2.com/us/default.asp>

The Concept2 website hosts videos showing “erging” so that you can see what your rower is talking about. Click on “Training” then “Technique Videos” to see a rower on an ergometer. Your rower can also register a log book to keep track of their scores.

Quick Reference Check List of What Parents Should Bring:

1. Food contribution (thank you!)
2. Water
3. Folding travel chair
4. Hat, sunscreen, sunglasses
5. Camera with zoom lens!
6. Binoculars
7. Jacket/rain gear
8. A re-useable water bottle (full to start with!) and thermos of coffee or tea to get you through the day!
9. Blanket
10. Cash: For Parking and vendors selling clothing and other crew items that don't always take credit cards.
11. Patience, “go with the flow” attitude, trust in our coaches, and most importantly support for your child and HB Crew!

Questions about Regattas: Please contact margie@HBCrew.org