

Competitive Junior Team Selection Process

What to expect during try-outs!

MRA Mission Statement

Continue the legacy of developing highly skilled and competitive rowers, particularly the youth, through community education and training in the art of rowing.

We focus on teaching competition, leadership, sportsmanship and compassion.

****Paperwork**** – Attached Participation Waiver and Health Form are due back to the coach no later than Wednesday, Sept. 12. We need these forms in order for athletes to participate. Cost - There is no cost to try-out for the team.

Why must we make selections? Unfortunately, we are restricted by the size of our waterway in addition to parking restrictions and a 125 athlete number cap by the City of Larkspur. We run 4 teams after school and only so many boats can safely be on the water at the same time.

How many athletes will make the team? We have 4 teams: Novice Boys, Novice Girls, Varsity Boys and Varsity Girls. For clarity, a Novice rower is anyone in their first year of rowing. The Varsity coaches take up to 33 athletes onto the team, and the Novice coaches take up to 30 athletes. **NOTE:** We allow athletes to play a competitive Fall or Winter sport, which means that we will leave spots open for a second round of selections at the end of that season.

Can my athlete play another sport? We allow athletes to play a Fall or Winter sport for their high school sports team. If your athlete is playing a Fall or Winter sport, they must contact the team rowing coach prior to or during try-outs to let them know of your intentions to come to the team at a later date. If you are playing a Winter sport, you must come to Fall rowing try-outs. Athletes need to come to rowing immediately following the conclusion of the season.

Try-out Schedule – For the period Sept. 10 - Sept. 21

All Athletes – Monday, Sept 10 4pm – Boys/Girls Groups I & II will be announced at this practice

Novice Boys Group I Tuesday and Thursday 4-6:30pm

Novice Boys Group II Wednesday and Friday 4-6:30pm

Coach: Graham Willoughby - graham@marinrowing.org

Novice Girls Group I Tuesday and Thursday 4-6:30pm

Novice Girls Group II Wednesday and Friday 4-6:30pm

Coach: Jessica Fritz – jessica@marinrowing.org

What are the coaches looking for during try-outs?

Body construction, size to strength ratio, leadership, coachability, competitiveness, positive “I can do it”, “I will try it” attitude, confidence, sportsmanship, support and encouragement of teammates, athletic potential. If your son/daughter is in 8th grade it may be that they are not emotionally ready to be on this team. We will work with you to make this determination.

How will we look for these traits?

For the try-out period the athletes will not be on the water. The coaches will work with the athletes on land to teach the rowing stroke, assess fitness, work one-on-one to determine coachability, perform fitness, flexibility and strength testing as well as perform team skills workouts. If the assessments are going well, the coaching staff may decide to work with small groups on the water in the second week. The idea here is that once we find the right athletes, we can teach them the technique of rowing after they have made the team. We will make sure that the athletes have a chance to see rowing in action, we understand that they are trying out a new sport in addition to our trying them out as athletes.

Supporting Your Athlete During Selections

Try-outs are exciting yet stressful time for parents, coaches and student-athletes. It's a time of great hope and disappointment. This is the first chance that the coach gets to see the athletes who might make up their team. There are many different personalities and skill levels and so showing your best side and really putting yourself forward is super important. You might know you are a great athlete and perfect for the team, but we can't see that unless you show it during try-outs. Our goal is to make this a respectful, positive and honest experience. Honesty can be hard to take sometimes, but it is the best way for us to handle this experience.

What parents can do to support their student-athlete through this experience:

- Be honest. We all have our strengths and weaknesses. This is an opportunity to teach them how to improve on their weaknesses while succeeding at their strengths. Try to help them realize that just counting on their strengths and turning their back on the weakness won't help them be better.
- Share your sports experience with them. Have you been through this process?
- Remind them that coaches respond to athletes that are present, listening and participating. It shows that they are eager to learn.
- Talk with your son/daughter about being an athlete. What are their strengths? What are their weaknesses? What qualities does an athlete bring to a team?
- Stress the fun parts. "Just go out and have fun and show them what you can do".
- Offer encouragement when it is hard, help them feel good about themselves.
- Let them know that no one thing is going to put them on the team, and no one thing will take them off the team.
- Support your son/daughter, but also support the coach. We will be honest about what we see. Please talk to the coach in a friendly way when asking what he/she is thinking, and why she/he has made a decision. We don't play favorites, but we are looking for a team that will be successful.

We can make your son/daughter a stronger, fitter, better technical rower, but we can't make him/ her want it, and they won't make it without the passion to want to be their best.