



*Shrewsbury Crew – Parents' Handbook*

*A Handbook for Parents by Parents*



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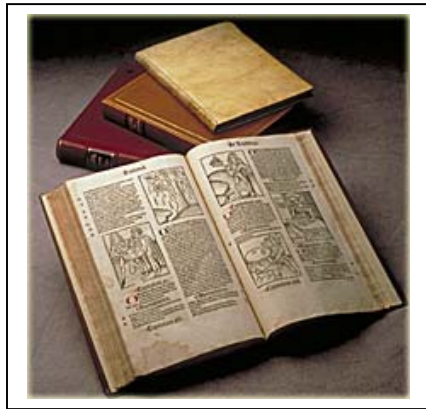
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## **Introduction**

This handbook is designed as a helpful guide to the parents, family, friends, and other supporters of the Shrewsbury High School Crew Team. It has been prepared by parents of rowers on the team and, although it is a useful tool, it is not a document of the Shrewsbury Schools, nor is it intended to replace any guides, policies, procedures, etc. of the Shrewsbury Schools or any school materials/documents.

Much of the information in this handbook was taken from college crew websites and the School's website. The school's website is a fabulous source of information and can be accessed at: <http://www.shrewsbury-ma.gov/schools/SHS>

## **Shrewsbury High School Mission**



The Shrewsbury High School community provides challenging, diverse learning opportunities, promotes creativity and independent thinking and empowers students to become capable, caring, and active contributors to the world in which they live.

## **A Message to Students**

Shrewsbury High School's long and proud tradition of excellence in athletics is due to dedicated and responsible athletes and coaches. It is a privilege to compete in high school athletics. As an athlete, before trying out for a sport, you have responsibilities that must be given careful consideration.

Athletics is a full time after-school activity. Your presence is required at every practice and race. You must arrange your after-school activities around the time schedule of the sport you have chosen. Missing crew practice is very disruptive to the development of a good boat. Work, clubs, driver training, etc. will either take a secondary position or be eliminated during competition. Your responsibilities as a team member take priority.



## History of Crew at Shrewsbury High School

### Founders/Coaches/Benefactors



The sport of crew in America began in 1852 when Harvard raced against Yale. Crew has the distinction of being the oldest intercollegiate sport in America.

In 1937, under the direction of Kenneth Burns, Shrewsbury entered the world of crew with just two boats

and a few boys willing to learn a sport that few knew about. But within a short time, the team excelled and during the 1940's and 1950's Shrewsbury won eight national championships. In 1975 girls were invited to participate in the sport of crew under the coaching of Mrs. Barbara Caron.

The sport of crew is very expensive due to the cost of boats, maintenance and equipment and over the years many benefactors have helped to support the team. The Donahue family has been one of the greatest benefactors in the history of the team. Their unending sense of support and generosity has been a key factor in the team's success.

## Crew Dictionary

**Regatta** - Any competitive rowing event.

**Bow** - front of the boat

**Stern** - back of the boat

**Port** - left side of the boat when facing bow

**Starboard** - right side of the boat when facing bow

**Racing shell** – the boat

**Uni or Unisuit** - uniform for crew

**Blade** – part of the oar

**2k** – 2000 meters; usual distance for a Spring race, but for High School the distance is 1500 meters. (Fall races are usually 2.5-3.5 miles)

**Coxswain** - person who sits in the extreme stern, calls directions, and steers.

**Stroke seat** – rower in the stern of the boat who sits in front of the coxswain and sets the rowing rate.

**Crab** - when one oar gets “caught” in the water and interferes with the rest of the teams rowing rhythm.

**Outrigger** – the brace along the side of the boat that supports the oarlock.

## The ERG



The pictured machine is an ergometer, or “Erg” for short, which is the standard land device used in practices, competitions and to help identify rowing speed. You may hear your child refer to his/her “erg score” which is a time measurement that corresponds to time-to-distance.

## The Two Seasons of Crew

Crew has two seasons; fall and spring. There are a few differences in the types of races for each season:

**Fall Season:** Fall races are also known as “head races” and in the fall, boats race against the clock. There is a staggered start, so when watching a race, it will seem like one boat is far ahead of the other boat. Races are usually 2.5 – 3.5 miles long.

**Spring Season:** In the spring, boats race against each other in races known as “sprints”. This is what spectators traditionally understand as a crew race. Several boats, often a many as five, line up at the starting point and race to the finish. Races are usually 2000 meters long, also known as a 2K, but High School distance is 1500 meters.

Note: Rowers are not required to participate in both seasons.

## Spectator Protocol

Encouraging and cheering the team before, during and after the race is very important. The race itself can be viewed from several different vantage points and it is important to remember that, unlike other sports, there is no stadium, gym or bleachers. Some regattas provide seating, but more often than not, it is best to bring your own chair. For races at Quinsigamond, fall races finish at the QRC and spring races finish down at Regatta point. When you arrive at an away race, please look for the blue canopy with the gold letters: “Shrewsbury Crew”. Please introduce yourself...the parents of the veteran rowers will be very happy to see you.

PLEASE NOTE: The area near the dock is often crowded with boats and crews, and is potentially dangerous due to the movement of equipment. We recommend that you keep a safe distance from the dock as you congratulate our teams as they leave the water.

## Advice for First Time Crew Parents

As a parent, being involved with crew can be a challenging experience. We hope that the information and advice contained in this handbook will help make this an enjoyable experience for you as well as your child.

As the parent of an athlete on the crew team, oftentimes, you will:

Travel for over an hour to attend a race...

Position yourself along the water's edge...

Try to guess if the boat you see in the distance is your son's/daughter's boat coming toward you...

When you finally realize that it is their boat, there is a frenzy of cheering as they quickly row by you....

And then.....

It's over!

Although it may seem that your involvement is marginal, the effect of your presence on the morale of the team is beyond measure.

Knowing that mom/dad/friends are on the shoreline is one of the greatest motivators that the team has.

And, always remember the first rule of watching a crew race...BRING BINOCULARS!



## Advantages of Participating in Crew

Statistics show that students who participate in crew have higher grades, more self-discipline, an improved sense of self, and over all better health than students who do not participate in crew. Also, for college bound students, crew is considered an outstanding achievement on college applications.

## How to Help Your Child

Crew is a very demanding sport both in terms of your child's time commitment and in terms of the physical demand that it places on your child. During the season your child will burn 1500+ calories a day, so it is important that the athlete eats regularly (no skipping breakfast) and appropriately (protein, carbs & veggies). The importance of rest and nutrition is obvious, but just as important is the extra encouragement and patience that your child will need to help him/her get through the season.



## How to Help the Team

Many students report that one of the most attractive aspects of crew is that there are no “stars” on which all the attention is focused. More than any other sport, crew is selfless and represents the essence of “teamwork.” So, as often as you cheer for your child, it is also very helpful to cheer for the team.

In addition, like any school system, the need for equipment and supplies always outweighs the school's resources. So, participation by parents in any and all aspects of fund raising is crucial to the success of the team. Get involved with the Friends of Shrewsbury Crew, where there are many volunteer opportunities.

Overall, parental involvement is the anchor that stabilizes the crew team and it is also the rudder that helps to steer the team to overcome challenges and remain successful.



## Friends of Shrewsbury Crew



The Friends of Shrewsbury Crew is a grass-roots organization of parents and community

members that supports the crew program at Shrewsbury High School.

It is our goal to help the high school teams to promote themselves and to raise awareness of the sport of rowing throughout the town. Through our fund raising efforts, we hope to supplement the budget for the high school program to keep the teams' equipment up to date and well maintained.

We also hope to reach out to alumni rowers of the program and to give them a forum to share their enthusiasm and fond memories of the SHS crew program.

Contact Judy Lindeborg (email [jlindborg@townisp.com](mailto:jlindborg@townisp.com), phone 508-8842-4099) for more details of FoSC activities.

## Directions to Regattas

Thanks to the help of many dedicated parents, we have a web site that is updated on a consistent basis. Whenever possible, directions will be posted on the web site at:

[www.shrewsbury-ma.gov/schools/SHS/](http://www.shrewsbury-ma.gov/schools/SHS/)

If directions are not available on the web site, "paper" directions will be sent home with your child.

In the event that directions are not sent home, directions to nearly any crew location in America can be found at [www.row2k.com](http://www.row2k.com) or you can use the general location finding capability of [www.mapquest.com](http://www.mapquest.com)