**Mercer Novice Rowing Spring 2016**

**Programming and Racing Schedule**

**Novice Coordinator: Maddie Alden Director of Rowing Programs: Justin Ochal**

**609-799-7100 x 103(office) 609-799-7100 x 102 (office)**

**609-306-5453 (cell) 215-520-1931 (cell)**

**Email:** **malden@rowpnra.org** **Email:** **jochal@rowpnra.org**

**2016 Spring Schedule:**

Novice Spring Start Date: Monday March 21, 2016

Spring Clean Up Date: Monday May 9, 2016

Novice Spring End Date: Saturday May 14, 2016

**2016 Spring Practice Times:**

Novice: Monday-Friday 4:00pm – 6:00pm (Additional practices at coaches discretion)

**Coaches:**

**Boy’s Novice:** Zach Spitzer, Susan Voorhees, Zach Vlahos

**Girl’s Novice:** Maddie Alden, Judy Gorberg, Katelin Snyder

**Attendance Policy**

We have standardized an attendance policy and procedure across all Mercer teams. As the program grows and we have more athletes rowing on every team, it is more important that our coaches are prepared to run practice. To facilitate this we are asking that all athletes give at least 24 hours notice for a missed practice. We are also asking all of our coaches to come prepared with the boatings for the day already assembled. If an athlete is boated and misses practice without notifying the coach, the athlete’s boat will not go out on the water that day and the athlete who missed practice will not be boated the following day.

We have created an online form for athletes to fill out when they know they will miss a practice. The form is located on our website by clicking “Programs” 🡪”Mercer Juniors” 🡪“Registration/Forms”. In the event that your absence is within 24 hours please attempt to notify the coach via email, text message, or phone call.

**MJRC Blog and Communication**

All of our additional communication for the 2016 spring season will be posted on our programming blog. You can find the blog by going to our website, www.rowpnra.org, and locating the “Programs” tab at the top. If you hover over the tab, a drop-down menu will appear. Find “Mercer Juniors,” and another drop-down menu will appear for “MJRC Blog”. Please check the blog regularly especially during racing season. Communication just among parents can be found on the “Parents of MJRC” Facebook page.

Please also take a moment to join the PNRA text list to receive our emergency messages (used in the cases of a weather event or last-minute schedule change).  You can do so by texting the message “PNRA” to 313131.

**Attitude, Work Ethic, Attendance, Competitive Spirit, Enthusiasm:**

As we have previously stated, rowing is physically and mentally demanding. Coaches are constantly challenging athletes to be the best they can, and through the response to this challenge athletes gain a level of confidence, determination, strength, and mental toughness that will stay with them for the rest of their lives.

We look for athletes who are team players and for those who bring a positive, can-do approach to practice. Furthermore we look for athletes who will handle the competitive nature of the sport with grace and react well to the difficult situations that come with selection and competition. We want athletes to work hard and demonstrate the desire to achieve their best performance through putting forth a relentless level of effort.

Finally, athletes can’t show us anything if they are not at practice. While we understand things come up and rowing isn’t everything all of the time, attendance at practice is crucial for making progress and contributing to fast boats.

**Criteria for Selection**

**Erg testing:**

*“Erg testing is to rowing as the SAT is to college admissions: you have to have a competitive score, but it is only one part of the puzzle.”* Physical testing on the rowing machine (ergometer/”erg”) allows athletes to demonstrate fitness capacity, power, and mental toughness. Mercer coaches will primarily use 2k tests in the spring.

We understand that not everyone is capable of pulling these times right now, but we are always looking for improvement over the course of the athlete’s career. Generally an athlete capable of producing one of those scores is a junior or senior who has been athletically competitive in rowing or another endurance sport for 3-5 years. It is important to us that no matter where the athlete starts out, they continually are striving to improve as the training continues.

**Technique:**

Similar to golf, technique in the boat is critical to being effective. Coaches spend a great deal of practice time working on drills to help athletes understand the best way to move the boat. It is important that the athletes are listening during drilling and other instructional parts of practice so they can form an understanding of what the coach is looking for. Just like they study math or science at school, when they are at rowing practice the athletes are students of the sport of rowing, and their coach is their teacher.

With technique, coaches are looking for improvement, “coachability,” and for the athlete to take individual ownership of his or her progress. All athletes will receive feedback on and off the water; however, if an athlete is not responding to that feedback, coaches will eventually move on to athletes who are responding, and selections will be made based on that experience.

Practice will include many drills and concepts that athletes can do on an erg on their own. The boathouse is equipped with mirrors to provide immediate feedback for athletes to make changes, as long as they understand what the coach is looking for.

***Race Schedule***

All novice races for the 2016 season will take place on our home course at Mercer Lake. Novice athletes should expect to race at least once during the spring season, however not all athletes are guaranteed to race.

Coaches will give the athletes a time to arrive at the boathouse prior to each race, but generally athletes should plan on arriving to the boathouse two hours before their scheduled race time.

Since all races are home events, no further registration is required. Please check the Mercer

Juniors Program Blog on our website for updated information as the race dates gets closer.

***Mercer Lake Sprints*** - Saturday April 16, 2015 – Mercer Lake, West Windsor, NJ

***Race Overview:*** Mercer Lake Sprints is our big home regatta for the season. Because it comes relatively early in the calendar, we expect to race only three novice eights for each of the boys and girls teams.

***Race Times:***

Novice Women’s 8 – between 8:00am and 9:20am

Novice Men’s 8 – between 9:40am and 11:00am

***Mid-Atlantic Regional Championships*** - May 7-8th, 2015 - Mercer Lake, West Windsor, NJ

***Race Overview:*** Mid-Atlantic Regional’s is in essence the championship regatta for the season, and out of all the spring events, this will be our focus. We will do our best to give all of the novice athletes an opportunity to race, but we cannot guarantee that this will happen.

***Schedule:*** Last year, the novice eights raced on Saturday and Sunday at around noon. The schedule may change depending on the amount of entries, but you should use this as a rough estimate of when racing will take place.

***MAPL Championships*** - Saturday May 14th, 2015 – Mercer Lake, West Windsor, NJ

***Race Overview:*** The MAPL (Mid-Atlantic Prep League) Championship is a race between

Peddie, Hun, Lawrenceville, and Blair Academy. These schools invite the Mercer Novices to race in their league championship. We usually expect to race three boats each of boys and girls athletes for this race.

***Race Times:*** Racing takes place from 3:00-5:30pm.

**Parent Coordinators**

Throughout the season, you may have questions about regattas, schedules, volunteering, etc. -- your parent coordinators are here to help! Please feel free to contact any of the parents listed below for help answering those questions that pop up along the way.

**Boys:**

Karoline Borup - kborup@me.com

Nanci Levine - mercer.nanci@hotmail.com

**Girls:**

Lorena Miller - lorenamjrcgirls@gmail.com

Amy Lustig - amymjrcgirls@gmail.com