

Quinsigamond Rowing Club

Coxswain Manual



The Club recognizes the special role coxswains have in safety and crew management.

This manual is intended as a supplement to the QRC Membership Manual.

It focuses on foundational topics specific to coxswains and is designed as a guide for coxswains rowing out of Bay 8. It is not a comprehensive instructional manual nor does it address every scenario.

Coxswains are responsible for reaching out to the QRC Board and/or the lead QRC coxswain(s) with any questions or concerns.

Created by the QRC Coxswain Workgroup

- ❖ Contributors: Lisa Hassler, Ana LoConte, Mike Ohl, Rebecca Russo, Lauren Sowersby, Anne Zettek-Sumner
- ❖ First release - 2024

Contents

Basic Tools and Coxswain Kit Contents.....	1
Bay 8 - Boathouse Floor Plan and Equipment.....	2
Contact Information.....	3
Coxing ad hoc (rowers filling in).....	4
Coxing Equipment: Inventory, Handling and Maintenance.....	5
Coxswain Levels/Privileges	7
Launching and Landing	8
Lights	10
Logging Boats	11
Map and Traffic Patterns (including reverse)	12
Meetings	13
Practices	14
Racing.....	16
Reserving Boats.....	17
Reporting Equipment Issues	18
Resources	19
Responsibilities	20
Rigging.....	21
Safety	23
Scheduling.....	24
Shared Docs Location.....	25
Tracking and Reporting Time, Payroll	26
Trailing	27
Using Steps for Boats on Upper Racks	28
Visiting Coxswains.....	30
Weather Policy.....	31
Working with the Coaches	32

Basic Tools and Coxswain Kit Contents

Since a coxswain's primary responsibility is the safety of the crew and equipment, it is expected that the coxswain carries at least a few basic safety items with them when on the water. If the coxswain does not own certain items, talk with the Bay Captain or a fellow coxswain in order to borrow key items when on the water. If borrowed, the item(s) must be returned to the club at the end of the row (or program if coxing for a club program).

1. Cell phone in waterproof case (recommend attaching big floatie or lanyard) – this is highly recommended at all times and **required** unless accompanied by a coach with a cell phone
2. Coxswain Kits – content can vary but these are a few suggested items
 - a. Adjustable wrench
 - b. Wrenches - have at least a 10 mm, 13 mm, and 7/16"
 - c. Roll of electrical tape
 - d. Zip ties
 - e. First aid: Band-Aids, balm, hand sanitizer
 - f. Extra bits
 - i. Spacers, just have a ton. 1/2s and full size.
 - ii. Bolts, washers, nuts. especially washers, nuts, and an extra wing nut – match the size of the hardware of the boat being used
 - g. Mini flashlight
 - h. Waterproof notebook and pen (optional)

Bay 8 - Boathouse Floor Plan and Equipment

The configuration and content of Bay 8 changes to meet the needs of the club. The boathouse contains both club and privately owned equipment. Orientation to the Bay is a requirement prior to coxing any crew. Along with returning items back to their original location, do not hesitate to reach out to the Bay Captain with any questions or concerns. The Bay Captain is charged with the management of the contents of the Bay.

Contact Information

The contact information for the Quinsigamond Rowing Club can be found below.

Club President: president@qrcrowing.org

Club Vice President: vp@qrcrowing.org

Club Secretary: clerk@qrcrowing.org

Club Treasurer: treasurer@qrcrowing.org

Bay Captain: baycaptain@qrcrowing.org

For any and all information on the club, please visit www.qrcrowing.org.

Coxing ad hoc (rowers filling in)

On occasion, rowers may be asked to fill in, temporarily, as a coxswain. Since this an important safety position, levels of privileges have been created and should be adhered to (See: [Coxswain Levels/Privileges](#)). To sit in the coxswain seat, the rower must be an official club member, and there needs to be a coach present at all times. Being an ad hoc coxswain is a great opportunity for rowers to experience the coxswain seat firsthand, or to enable a crew to get on the water when there are no coxswains available.

1. The coach is responsible for closely monitoring and guiding the ad hoc, due to their inexperience.
 - a. The coach will be responsible for calling the boat off and back on the rack and assist the ad hoc with calls until the boat is in the water.
 - b. The coach will be in a launch travelling with the crew throughout the entire practice.
 - c. The coach must be on the dock to verbally assist and receive the boat during landing.
2. Ad hoc coxswains must be made aware, before sitting in the seat, of the responsibilities of a coxswain, namely their responsibility for the safety of their crew and the equipment.

Coxing Equipment: Inventory, Handling and Maintenance

Coxswains routinely use club owned coxboxes and Coxmates for practices and races. Although the Bay Captain is ultimately responsible for all club equipment, including coxswain equipment, a coxswain is required to take full responsibility of it when in their possession. This section of the manual includes a guide on how to properly use and maintain these important tools throughout the year and stretch out the lifespan.

1. Location:
 - a. Coxboxes are located on the South wall of the bay near the TV, life preservers, and gas cans.
 - b. Coxmates are located in the cabinet above the sign-in desk.

2. Best Practices for Battery Maintenance:
 - a. Practices/ On-season:
 - i. Boathouse chargers are set on a timer so that coxboxes are not being charged constantly.
 - ii. When coming back into the boathouse after practice, be sure to plug it into a charger and confirm that it is actually showing as 'charging'. Also make sure the headset is properly placed over the peg for support.
 - iii. For batteries that have been relatively depleted over the course of a practice, alert the Bay Captain that the cox box battery might be draining. A typical 90 minute practice should not drop below 85% charge (if beginning practice at full charge).
 - b. Winter/ Off-season - must be stored at someone's house and not the bay due to low temps. in the bay during the winter:
 - i. Drain batteries 100%.
 - ii. Fully charge the battery to 100%.
 - iii. Disconnect the Coxbox/Coxmate from the charger.
 - iv. Remove battery (if model permits).
 - v. Recharge to full after 3 months. Disconnect from the charger, again.

3. Regular maintenance:
 - a. Coxswains are responsible for ensuring that equipment is functioning properly before use.
 - b. Coxswains are responsible for returning the coxbox to the charging station, and plugged in.
 - i. Verify that that charging station is functional and the coxbox is registering as charging.
 - ii. Headset is disconnected from the coxbox and the headset itself is hung up. Cables do not dangle to the floor.
 - c. Coxswains are responsible for returning the Coxmates to the drawer above the sign-in desk after use.
 - d. If any issues occur, be sure to contact the Bay Captain, including the coxbox number. Physically put an "out of order" label on non-functional equipment.
 - e. Monthly and recurring maintenance of equipment, documenting as completed.

4. Racing:
 - a. Before a race, coxswains are responsible for picking up and signing out all borrowed equipment, including the timeframe. Reserving process to be determined
 - i. Recommended that all coxboxes are accompanied by their designated bags, above the sign-in desk.
 - b. After a race, coxswains are responsible for returning the equipment and signing it back in.
 - c. If any issues occur, be sure to contact the Bay Captain, including the coxbox number. Physically put an "out of order" label on non-functional equipment.
5. Off season:
 - a. The bay captain is responsible for all club owned coxswain equipment in the off season.
6. General inventory:
 - a. The bay captain is responsible for all coxswain equipment throughout the year.

Coxswain Levels/Privileges

Coxswains of all skill levels are welcome at the Quinsigamond Rowing Club. In certain instances, Coxswains ought to be paid for their time. Quinsigamond Rowing Club is dedicated to ensuring that their coxswains are continuously gaining experience. Ultimately, the QRC board oversees all systems and functions of the club; however, the coxswain group within the club shall be relied upon for assessing capability and supporting coxswain development. The ultimate privilege/goal is for a coxswain to be able to go out onto the water, unsupervised, with crews of any experience level. Prior to being able to use any club equipment, coxswains must complete and pass the club evaluation. This process includes, but is not limited to:

1. Completion of coxswain membership in Regatta Central at no cost. It's good for one year just like other memberships. This would ensure that coxswains sign the appropriate waivers and also have access to signing out boats. This does not automatically allow persons to cox – that is a separate process.
2. Connect with the Coxswain working group and Lead Coxswain to proceed with the assessment process. This includes:
 - a. A conversation with an initial conversation to receive a general assessment of coxswain interests and capabilities.
 - b. Complete the Bay orientation.
 - c. Complete the Coxswain Competency Form per the Coxswain Competency Process.
3. For coxswains returning after a period of time away, they must reconnect with the Lead Coxswain and Coxswain working group prior to using any club equipment.
4. Lead coxswain shall share the credentials and assessment to the board for their final review and approval.

Launching and Landing

The purpose of understanding launching and landing protocol is to ensure the safety of your rowers, the equipment, and last but definitely not least, yourself. There are many different clubs and boats of all sizes operating out of the Donahue Rowing Center, and every athlete is expected to adhere to traffic patterns on and off the water.

Note: On certain occasions there will be reverse traffic patterns.

1. Pre-Launching
 - a. Take an environmental scan of the pathway to the dock and general activity of the surrounding bays.
 - b. Understand the conditions of the dock before practice such as ice, water levels, traffic levels, fog, etc.

2. Launching
 - a. Confirm with rowers that oars have been brought down to the dock.
 - b. Leaving the boathouse bow first, walk the boat down towards the launching dock.
 - i. On the way down towards the water, keep an eye on off-water boat traffic. Depending on the season, many other clubs are also utilizing the dock during peak traffic hours.
 - c. Launch off of the north section of the dock, bowball pointing towards the 290 bridge. Do NOT launch off of the southern dock. That dock is for landing.
 - d. Ensure there is enough room for your boat on the dock before proceeding down to launch.
 - i. There is enough room for one 4+ or one 8+ on either side.
 - e. Alert rowers to whether they are launching on Shrewsbury or Worcester side.
 - f. Place the boat into the water as close to the north end of the dock as possible, and quickly assign duties to rowers and have them prepare to launch (ex. ports oars, starboard oarlocks).
 - g. Install and test coxbox to ensure it's in working condition. Make sure boat lights are turned on.
 - h. Call your rowers into the boat, get into the boat, and have your rowers count their number down so that you know everyone is ready to launch.
 - i. Depending on the amount of traffic on the dock, it may be necessary for rowers to launch before strapping in.
 - i. Either push off the dock or walk the boat to the end of the dock and make sure the stern clears the dock before setting off to row.

3. Landing
 - a. Approaching the dock:
 - i. Well before reaching the southern dock, ensure there is clearance for your boat to comfortably land. If the dock is busy, wait.
 - ii. When there is clearance on the dock, alert your crew which side of the boat the dock will be on, and row towards the dock slowly.
 1. Note: There is almost no extra space for an 8+ to dock, so docking slowly is essential. It is easy to bump the dock.

2. Drop down the number of rowers, very light strokes, as you get close to the dock, as you will be docking bow first.
 - iii. Note: If you are concerned that your approach is not safe, the club prefers that you stop approaching, and retry.
 - iv. There is almost no current on Lake Quinsigamond, so in the last couple meters, you can let your boat glide in.
 - v. As you are approaching the dock, alert rowers in which direction they should “lean away”.
 - vi. Get out first, then call your rowers out. Have them quickly work to put on shoes/ prepare to walk the boat up to the bay, as well as moving oars off the dock. Depending on the season, there will be lots of boats trying to get off the water at the same time.
 - vii. Remove the coxbox from the boat and turn off boat lights.
 - viii. Walk your boat off the dock, and up towards the bay. *Boats must go into the bay stern first*. Place the boat back on the original rack.
 - ix. Assign some rowers to wipe down the boat whilst others bring up oars.
4. Notes when launching/ landing
- a. Keep an eye out for depth of water near the skeg. Depending on the season, the water can become very shallow and the skeg can scrape the ground.
 - b. Rowers generally know to bring the oars down to the dock before launching, and to bring them back after landing, but it’s always good to double check.
5. Special Cases:
- a. Upon occasion, when the lake traffic pattern is in reverse, one must launch from the southern docks, and land on the northern docks.

Lights

This section details when stern and bow lights are necessary for the safety of your crew and other crews around you on the water. Each boat is required to have *both* a bow and stern light. Lights are required when there is not sufficient visibility on the water, such as low light hours (from 30 mins after dusk to 30 minutes before dawn) and certain types of inclement weather (fog). It is the coxswain's responsibility to make sure that both lights are on and secured to the boat before launching in such conditions. The club provides lights for sweep boats. If lights are not present on the boat, they can be found in the cabinet in the back of the bay.

1. Before leaving the bay to launch:
 - a. Check to see if two lights, both a bow light and a stern light, are present on the boat.
 - b. If one or both lights are missing from the shell, they are kept in the cabinets above the paper boat log in the back of the bay.
 - i. Apply missing lights to the bow/stern of the boat.
 1. Make sure properly secured, bow light secured around bow-ball
 - c. Make sure they are on before leaving the boathouse
 - i. Extra batteries can be found in the tool cabinet, in-house of the oars.
 - d. Bow light is red (port-side) and green (starboard-side). Stern light must be white.
2. Upon Return:
 - a. Make sure both lights are off before logging the boat back in.
3. Trailering
 - a. Prior to trailering the shell, verify that both lights have been removed.

Logging Boats

The purpose of logging boats in and out of the boathouse is to keep record of who's on the water and when boats are expected to return. Logging boats is a necessary procedure in order to properly maintain equipment, track usage and overall safety.

1. Before launching:
 - a. Using the paper boat log at the desk in the back of the bay, record:
 - i. Your (coxswain) name
 - ii. Date of the row
 - iii. Time out
 - iv. Estimated time in
 - v. Boat code
 - vi. "Checkmark" if used for a program
 - vii. Name of program/Offsite event/Regatta/Loaner (if applicable)
2. Upon Return:
 - a. Completing the same line recorded before launching:
 - i. Actual time in

Map and Traffic Patterns (including reverse)

Understanding lake topography and traffic patterns is essential for everyone's safety. The rowable section of the lake is approximately 3 miles in length, and generally narrow with numerous shallow areas (in the fall and winter there is a lake drawdown that accentuates these shallow areas). Lake Quinsigamond regularly uses a counterclockwise traffic pattern for all crew boats, unless otherwise specified. Please note that other types of boats (i.e. kayaks, paddle boards, speed boats) are not required to adhere to any pattern, whatsoever. See <http://www.qrcrowing.org/lake-info/maps-rules-and-traffic-patterns/> for all applicable maps.

1. Lake topography hazards:
 - a. Multiple islands
 - b. Unmarked shallow areas, notably at:
 - i. Beaches
 - ii. Aforementioned islands
 - iii. The Narrows
 - iv. Between Sugarloaf and Coastguard islands
 - c. Buoys - be alert for buoys of all shapes and sizes as they drift along the lake.
 - d. Debris in the water, most notably after heavy rain.
 - e. Bridges
2. Regular Traffic patterns:
 - a. Most of the time, the lake will employ a counter-clockwise traffic pattern.
 - i. North of Route 9 bridge:
 1. <http://www.qrcrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/practicetrafficnorth.pdf>
 - ii. South of Route 9 bridge:
 1. <http://www.qrcrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/practicetrafficsouth.pdf>
3. Reverse Traffic pattern:
 - a. Implemented for regatta traffic.
 - b. Notification should be provided within the bay and email, but make sure to verify prior to launch.
 - i. Caution: Some crew boats may not be aware of the change in traffic pattern, so proceed with caution.
 - c. Upon occasion, when the lake traffic pattern is in reverse, one must launch from the southern docks, and land on the northern docks.

Meetings

An ad hoc group of coxswains meets monthly. They share best practices, touch base about what's working, welcome and initiate new coxswains to the club, and develop coxswain resources.

1. Topics for discussion might include:
 - a. Updates to club policies and procedures, especially if they pertain to coxswains
 - i. Coxswain Manual
 - ii. Scheduling/payment procedures
 - iii. Club policy
 - b. Equipment issues
 - c. Discuss experiences with various crews and coaches to gain insights and new strategies
 - d. Share experiences with racing, practices, and other various resources
 - e. General Q & A, tips and tricks
 - f. Welcome and introduce new coxswains to the club
2. Information is shared with the club
 - a. Minutes are shared to the drive
 - b. Verbal reports are given at monthly club meetings

Practices

Whether coxing a competitive boat or a green crew, Quinsigamond Rowing Club generally follows the same format for scheduled practice times. This section of the manual outlines what to expect of coaches and crew during seasonal practices and what is expected of the coxswain.

1. Before practice:
 - a. Be at the boathouse at least five minutes early.
 - b. Discuss warm up/practice plan with coach
 - i. Figure out boats/lineups
 - ii. Focuses for the day
 - c. Sign equipment out for practice
 - i. (See: [logging boats](#))
 - ii. Take charged coxbox and headset
 - iii. Attach bow/stern lights when necessary (See: [Lights](#))
 - d. Assemble crew and launch (See: [Launching/Landing](#))
 - i. Sometimes crew members need to be off the water by a certain time
2. Official practice (on the water):
 - a. Warmup
 - i. If unspecified by coach, QRC favors the pick drill and focus on length/stretch
 - ii. Before executing the practice plan, ensure rowers have time to make adjustments
 - b. Practice plan
 - i. Focus, in order of importance:
 1. Safety
 - a. Note: Make sure to fully understand traffic patterns of Lake Quinsigamond beforehand (See: [Traffic Patterns](#))
 - b. Be proactive, not reactive, to possible safety issues (other boats, buoys, shorelines, birds)
 - c. Make sure to keep coach *in the know*, as well as rowers when necessary
 - d. (See: [Weather](#))
 2. Steering
 - a. Follow traffic patterns
 - b. Utilize your rowers (pressure)
 - c. Less is more
 3. "Coaching"
 - a. Give feedback to rowers, both supportive and constructive, of technique in order to maximize success in the boat and support the coach's instructions
 4. Keep track of time (arguably coach's job but often helpful to your rowers if you keep track for them as well)
3. After practice (after coming off the water):
 - a. Bring boat back into boathouse
 - b. Assign rowers to wipe boat, bring equipment back up to the boathouse

- c. Sign equipment back in
- d. Put your equipment away (coxbox, should it be charged? [hyperlink to either coxing equipment or coxboxes/coxmates](#))
- e. Quick discussion with coach and rowers (time permitting)
- f. If your crew was the only boat out (check sign in sheet), lock up boathouse to leave

Racing

QRC participates in regattas from late spring until the end of October. Coxswains can race as a part of the QRC crew or another team if requested. Coxswains collaborate with the racing crew and applicable coach. Traditionally, QRC does not require the coxswain to pay any racing costs.

Fundamental responsibilities of a coxswain on race day include:

1. Having a race plan based on the needs of the crew.
2. Having a thorough understanding of the course, regatta rules, and attending the coxswain meeting.
 - a. Review the entire regatta information packet.
3. Coxswain is responsible for bringing the appropriate coxswain gear and checking steering fundamentals before racing.
4. Keeping track of time.

Reserving Boats

All club boats are reserved on regattacentral.com prior to physically taking them out on the water. Boats are reserved for specific time periods and must adhere to those timeframes. Any QRC member can reserve boats. Generally, this is not the coxswain's responsibility.

Reporting Equipment Issues

The purpose of this process of reporting equipment issues is to ensure that the working status of all equipment in the boathouse is known to the Bay Captain so that any necessary changes or repairs can be made in a quick and effective manner. This process also alerts other club members to what is safe or not safe to take out onto the water.

Note: It is the coxswain's responsibility to report equipment issues to the Bay Captain during practices/races; and implement the following procedures:

When any piece of equipment is broken and in need of repair by the Bay Captain:

1. Record on the whiteboard near the oars, as well as in an email to baycaptain@qrcrowing.org. An email with the following details is essential in informing the Bay Captain:
 - a. Date
 - b. If a boat, include the boat code
 - c. Quick description of the issue
 - d. Your name
 - e. In the email, a way to contact you if Bay Captain has further questions
2. Find the "Out of Service" sign hanging by the desk/cabinet, at the rear of the Bay where the boat log is.
 - a. Hang on a rigger if it's a damaged boat.
 - b. Hang on the motor if the launch is damaged.
 - c. Hang on the peg below, if a damaged coxbox.
 - d. If an oar, put the pair off to the side (not on the rack), and lay the sign on top.
 - e. Hang on the erg if an erg is damaged.
3. If the damage is to a launch, boat or erg, Bay Captain will reach out to those who are scheduled to use the equipment to let them know it's no longer available.
4. If the Bay Captain removes equipment from the bay, he/she will attach a "At Bay Captain's workshop for repairs" to alert club members of its status.

Addendum: If as a coxswain, you notice that there is equipment that would aid your role, discuss with the Bay Captain.

Resources

There are many resources for coxswains available in paper and online. The coxswain working group has provided some of their favorite resources for any curious coxswain. For future revisions of the manual, please feel free to share some of your favorite resources to the coxswain working group.

1. The Short and Snarky Guide to Coxing and Rowing <https://www.amazon.com/Short-Snarky-Guide-Coxing-Rowing/dp/1500906107>
2. Ready All, Row <https://readyallrow.org/resources>
3. The Down and Dirty Guide to Coxing <https://www.amazon.com/Down-Dirty-Guide-Coxing/dp/0971535604>
4. CoxPod <https://www.coxpod.com/>
5. Cox Talks by Cat Sheffler <https://www.youtube.com/c/CoxTalksbyCatSheffler>
6. Coxswain Encyclopedia <https://www.amazon.com/Coxswain-Encyclopedia-Margot-Zalkind-ebook/dp/B009ABTZ74>
7. Cox – Row Source <https://www.rowsource.com/cox>

Responsibilities

Coxswains are charged with multiple tasks, often simultaneously. Some fundamental (but not all) tasks and skills include:

1. Safety of the crew
2. Safety of the equipment
 - a. Off the water: bringing boat in and out of boathouse
3. Understand the body of water
 - a. Potential hazards and obstacles
 - b. Understand traffic on and around the water
4. Steering
5. Communication with coach
6. Communication with crew
 - a. Coaching your crew
 - b. Off the water: preparing for practice
7. Carrying coxbox, spare parts
8. Keeping track of time
9. Logging boat in/out of the boathouse

Rigging

Rigging (riggers and oarlocks) is a special subset of equipment. Rigging protocol guarantees that rowing equipment is secure and functions properly. Contact the Bay Captain for any adjustments or repairs that need to be made, as the only adjustments within the role of a coxswain and rowers are spacers. It's acceptable to make emergency temporary repairs out on the water to make it back to the dock safely. There may be times that the coxswain is responsible for the rigging/ de-rigging process.

Note: If in need of spacers/ spare hardware, reach out to the Bay Captain.

1. Reporting Issues/Adjustments:
 - a. It's critical to report rigging issues right away, see above. No issue is too small.
 - b. Report emergency repairs immediately, place signage on the boat.

2. Making Permissible Adjustments When:
 - a. Minor adjustments such as tightening hardware already present on the boat.
 - i. Do not overtighten. Two finger tight, maximum.
 - b. Shifting and adding spacers.
 - c. Adjusting tightness of the pin top-nut. Pin top-nut should be tightened until the oarlock barely moves freely.
 - d. Although not considered rigging, adjusting C.L.A.M.s on the oars is also acceptable.

3. De-Rigging for Transport:
 - a. Aluminum side mount riggers (Euro):
 - i. Lightly loosen the pin top-nut, and then the rest of the rigger hardware.
 - ii. Remove the washers and nuts whilst supporting the rigger.
 - iii. Remove the rigger by pulling it off the boat.
 - iv. Replace the washers and nuts on the boat, two fingers tight.
 1. Two flat washers (one on the inside and one on the outside of the boat) and one nut per bolt. Nuts and bolts should never be in direct contact with the carbon fiber shell.
 2. Some boats (black resolute 8+) may have special washers on the inside of the shell.
 - v. Pack riggers for transport.
 1. Some riggers will be bungee corded together in pairs.
 2. Some riggers have special bags that they're packed in for transport.
 - b. Wing Riggers:
 - i. Consult Bay Captain on rigging/de-rigging process for proper instructions
 - c. Boat seats:
 - i. Remove or bungee seats to the boat prior to transport.
 1. Removed seats are bungee'd together.
 - d. Cox box connector cable:
 - i. Cable should be secured to the inside of the hull with electrical tape.
 - e. If in a bow-loader there is a 'hammock', remove that and transport separately.

Rigging Post Travel:

- Note: Always wash all equipment, boats, oars, parts, etc., on the trailer before rigging and putting equipment away.
- Be sure to put seat with magnet back on the appropriate seat number to capture the stroke rate.
- Refer to Bay Captain's instructions regarding proper rigging.

Safety

Safety of your person and your rowers, and the equipment - in that order - is the utmost priority of a coxswain on and off the water. This segment of the manual outlines the responsibilities of a coxswain that directly impact and ensure the safety of yourself, your crew, and equipment.

1. On the water:
 - a. [Traffic patterns](#)
 - b. Skeg: Quinsigamond can be very shallow around the edge
 - c. [Bow/stern lights](#)
 - d. [Weather](#)
 - e. Knowing your crew: understanding that you want to push them but not overworking them and having anything bad happen
 - f. Having/staying with a coach/launch
 - i. If you are allowed and crew is more advanced, this is not *always* necessary (but still recommended)
 - g. Always take a phone with you in case of an emergency
 - h. [Cox bag/lit and first aid](#)
2. Personal floatation devices:
 - a. In stern loaded boats: when the cold weather policy is in effect, coxswains must use a personal floatation device.
 - b. In bow loaded boats: coxswains should never use an auto personal floatation device, or any floatation device that limits ability to exit from bow in an emergency situation.
3. On land:
 - a. Coxswain should be positioned behind the boat when moving on land.
 - i. Exception: If the more vulnerable area of the shell is in front of the boat (ie. high traffic areas, exiting the boathouse).
 - ii. Suggestion: Keep one hand on the end of the boat to help redirect, when necessary.
 - b. Do not go out until you have a full boat (each seat has an oarsman or oarswoman).

Scheduling

Opportunities to cox QRC boats may occur on both a regular and ad hoc basis. The club has a variety of sweep programs that require coxswains and will schedule them accordingly. Ad hoc requests will be managed by the club member(s) putting the ad hoc row together. (See: [Reserving Boats](#) and [Coxswain Levels/Privileges](#))

Shared Docs Location

Shared documents can be found in the [QRC Member Folder](#) (2022 location) in Google Drive.

Tracking and Reporting Time, Payroll

Upon formal agreement with the club, coxswains are eligible to receive compensation. It is the coxswain's responsibility to determine their eligibility based on NCAA guidelines and their coach's approval.

1. For financial compensation, it is the coxswain's responsibility to set up and complete payroll processes [here](#).
 - a. Bi-weekly timesheet can be found [here](#).
 - b. Contact the Club Treasurer (treasurer@qrcrowing.org) with any questions or concerns.
2. Coxswains shall track and report time on the appropriate spreadsheet. Request the most up to date process from the head coxswain.

Trailing

The coxswain is often responsible for assisting in the trailing process. Trailing boats are often involved when crews are heading to races. Although the coxswain is not responsible for trailing, he/she can play a supportive role. Refer to [Racing](#) section for more information on preparing for regattas.

Aspects of trailing for the coxswain to consider might include:

1. Sign out/in equipment in the boat log.
2. Call crew to take boats on and off the trailer racks, similar to that of the racks in the boathouse.
 - a. Make sure straps are properly tied down to the trailer and that the stern flag is attached.
 - b. Note: Often the boats have a specific location on the trailer, depending on boat size, number of boats, etc. being packed. Adhere to the specifics of this on an event by event basis.
3. Assure that all equipment is on the trailer, such as:
 - a. Riggers
 - b. Oars
 - c. Seats
 - d. Slings
 - e. Hardware

Using Steps for Boats on Upper Racks

There are times that you will need to access boats that are on the upper racks out of your reach. Crew coordination and safety precautions are required when taking these boats out and bringing them back in. **Caution: Do not attempt this process unless a discussion has been made about the strength and comfort level of the crew to safely and successfully complete this task. If applicable, discuss with the coach as well.**

1. Accessing an 8:
 - a. Call the crew to get three sets of stairs, lined up with and in alignment with the “rolling arms” of the upper rack.
 - i. Have rowers make sure the stairs are stable before going up to the stop step.
 - b. Select 6 rowers to go all the way up, 2 on each set of stairs, and have the remaining 2 rowers on the ground ready to help receive the boat.
 - i. Have each pair define exactly who will pull out the “rolling arm”
 - c. Coxswain commands attention and makes the following calls:
 - i. “Hands on the rollers and boat, wait for my call.”
 - ii. “Ready, [pause], pull.”
 - iii. “Up an inch, ready, up.”
 - iv. “Push the rollers back in.” (One person per pair, pre-selected).
 - v. “Down one step, ready, down.” x the number of times necessary to reach solid ground.
 - d. Meanwhile, the two rowers on the ground should have hands out and be ready to receive the boat as soon as it’s in reach. By the time everyone is on the ground, all should be up and over heads.
 - e. Have the rowers move towards the center of the bay and call them to split to shoulders.
 - f. Proceed as usual.

2. Re-racking an 8:
 - a. Outside the bay, call your crew to stop the boat.
 - b. Call two crew members who will not be taking the boat back up the stairs to assist you in setting up three sets of stairs in alignment with the “rolling arms” of the upper rack.
 - c. Bring the 8 back into house and line up parallel with the stairs, as well as lining the red tape on the hull with the rolling racks.
 - d. Call the crew to line up in pairs with the stairs. Make sure each pair knows who will be pulling out “rolling arms” before ascending the stairs.
 - e. Coxswain commands attention and makes the following calls:
 - i. “Up and over heads, ready, up.”
 - ii. “Up one step, ready, up.” x the number of times necessary to reach the top platform.
 - iii. “Pull the rollers out, and out.”
 - iv. “Put the boat down, and down.”
 1. If red tape on the hull is in line with the “rolling arms”, adjust the hull.
 - v. “Together, push the arms back in, and in.”
 - f. Put the stairs back where you found them.

3. Accessing and Re-racking a 4:
 - a. The overall procedure is the same, except instead of 3 sets of stairs, there are 2. Make sure all 4 rowers are bringing the boat up and down the stairs. The coxswain would be in charge of lining up the stairs.

Visiting Coxswains

On various rare occasions, outside coxswains may use club equipment such as cox boxes, boats, etc. These coxswains and crews must adhere to club visitor policies. The coxswain is responsible for becoming informed of the applicable policies of the Membership and Coxswain Manuals such as:

1. [Logging Boats](#)
2. [Reporting Equipment Issues](#)
3. [Map and Traffic Patterns](#) (Including Reverse)
4. [Launching and Landing](#)
5. [Weather Policy](#)
6. [Using Steps for Boats on Upper Racks](#)

Visiting coxswains who are coxing QRC members need to follow the Coxswain Competency Process to document the visiting coxswain's information and the process the approver used to verify competency.

Weather Policy

Rowing is an outdoor sport. The club has developed a weather policy on the club website that provides directives about rowing in various weather conditions. Some of those directives are absolutes, while others may come down to a judgment call. Since safety is the coxswain's number one priority, even if the weather permits given the weather policy, if the coxswain and/or crew is uncertain about current or evolving weather conditions, they should not launch. In instances where a coach is present, the coach's presence and a launch will factor into this decision.

Note: Weather conditions can change once on the water and vary depending on location. Coaches and coxswains shall readjust the practice plan accordingly, and head back to the dock if safety is uncertain.

1. Precipitation
 - a. Ensure that coxswain and crew are dressed appropriately.
2. Wind
 - a. Decisions depend on the skill set of both coxswain and the crew.
3. Thunder and Lightning
 - a. Recommended to wait 30 minutes after the last thunderclap or lightning strike prior to launch.
 - b. If heard or seen in the immediate vicinity while on the water, find the closest place to dock or land.
 - c. If heard or seen from far away while on the water, head back towards the DRC and closely hug the shoreline.
4. Fog
 - a. Refer to QRC Fog Policy.
5. Cold weather
 - a. Refer to QRC Cold Water Policy.
 - b. Personal floatation devices:
 - i. In stern loaded boats: when the cold weather policy is in effect, coxswains must use a personal floatation device.
 - ii. In bow loaded boats: coxswains should never use an auto personal floatation device, or any floatation device that limits ability to exit from bow in an emergency situation.

Working with the Coaches

Most club programs have coaches that the coxswain will be working with regularly during practice. Effective coach/coxswain communication is fundamental to a successful crew.

1. Coaches are responsible for the following:
 - a. Crew Lineups
 - i. Optimally, this will be provided in advance of the practice.
 - b. Activities on the water
 - i. Optimally, this will be provided in advance of the practice.
 - c. Establishing crew objectives
 - d. Give/receive feedback about rowers/workout
 - e. Being a coxswain's point of contact for safety on and off the water.
2. Coxswains are responsible for supporting the coach in their lineups, workouts, and feedback on the water. Any questions or concerns can be discussed off the water and in a private setting.