

SAIL MARTHA'S VINEYARD

Connecting to Our Maritime Heritage and Building Skills for Life



Rowing Program Handbook

January 1, 2018

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Sail Martha’s Vineyard acknowledges the Cornish Pilot Gig Association and US Rowing from whose Health and Safety Guidelines and Water Safety Guidelines and Coaching Candidates Manual parts of this document relied heavily upon. We also acknowledge the efforts of Carol Salguero in drafting the first handbook for the rowers, much of the content from which is included herein.

SAIL MARTHA'S VINEYARD CODE OF CONDUCT

- Safety is Sail Martha's Vineyard's highest priority; it is considered in everything the organization does. All participants in the organization's programs and activities must likewise set safety as his or her highest priority.
- The requirements established by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the Federal Government with regard to child protection, health, general safety and sea safety are adhered to by Sail MV at all times.
- Sail Martha's Vineyard's programs and activities are designed and operated in consideration of the age, health, physical size, experience and ability of each participant. All participants (or their parent or guardian if a minor) in the programs and activities must likewise determine if he or she is suited for any particular program or activity.
- Sail MV expects that its members will comport themselves with courtesy, a sense of fair play and good humor.
- The organization, its members and participants will . . .
 - * Promote respect...respect for one's self, one's fellow rowers, the competition, coaches, umpires, Sail MV, its boats and equipment, the sea and most importantly, safety.
 - * Set a good example, valuing fair play, friendship and good humor.
 - * Welcome new members and actively support them up in the process of learning to row.
 - * Display high standards in the use of language and manners.
 - * Value an individual's performance and that of others more than results.
 - * Establish and communicate realistic expectations both individually and for the group.
 - * Promote the benefits of our sport with an emphasis on enjoyment.
- Members and participants accept responsibility for his or her own actions while being a team player.
- Any person who exhibits disruptive or inappropriate behavior and/or speech and who does not respond appropriately to the verbal warnings of the individual in charge (instructor, coach, coxswain or other) may be taken ashore, parents called (if a minor) and discharged from the day's activity with a warning and/or dismissed from the program (see Sail MV Behavior Policy).
- **All Sail MV members, participants, instructors, coaches and guests shall wear Coast Guard approved personal flotation devices ("PFD's") at all times while on or about the water. If automatic inflating PFD's are used, inflatable tabs shall be pulled out when boarding a boat.**

OVERVIEW OF SAIL MARTHA'S VINEYARD'S ROWING PROGRAM

How Cornish Pilot Gig Rowing Came To Be On The Vineyard

The spark that ignited interest in building the two 32' Cornish Pilot gigs came from Ross Gannon, who saw Vinalhaven, Maine gigs under oar and thought, "Why not on the Vineyard?" Under the organizational umbrella of Vineyard Voyagers, *Grace and Cassie* were the result. Both boats were built by community volunteers under Ross' and Nat Benjamin's supervision. The boats' names honor two late representatives to the Steamship Authority board.

The July 2005 launching of *Grace*, named for Grace Grossman of Nantucket, brought the community program into being. *Cassie*, launched six months later in January 2006, remembers Katherine Roessel of the Vineyard.

During a Vineyard Voyagers reorganization in late 2006 the ownership of the gigs and the responsibility for the rowing program were transferred to Sail Martha's Vineyard. The *Whitehall*, *Ark Royale II*, built by Gannon and Benjamin in 2005 joined the fleet shortly thereafter, a gift to Sail Martha's Vineyard for the rowing program from Bill Hall of Vineyard Haven.

The rowing program operates year-round and is open to all permanent and seasonal residents of Martha's Vineyard. People join for many reasons - exercise, the pleasure of being part of a team or simply because there is joy in being out on the water. Some rowers elect to form crews to compete in regional rowing regattas.

Our Priorities

- Safety First.
- Fun Always.

Our Programs

- Recreation For Youth And Adults.
- Competition For Youth And Adults.
- UK Style League Competitions.
- Instruction And Coaching.
- Coxswain Training.

In an environment where safety and fun are non-negotiable priorities the Sail Martha's Vineyard adult, youth and league rowing programs seek to teach and promote sound seamanship and skilled rowing technique at both recreational and competitive levels.

Rowing Committee

Each year the rowers select a number of their fellow rowers to serve on the Rowing Committee and each year that Committee elects a chairperson whose responsibility is to organize monthly meetings and represent the committee in front of the Sail Martha's Vineyard Executive Committee ("EC")

should an issue present itself that the rowers wish to take before the EC. The purpose of the Committee is to oversee all aspects of the rowing program, communicate with the Program Director regarding maintenance priorities and scheduling requirements, organize fund raising events and promote rowing to the Island community on behalf of Sail Martha's Vineyard.

Rowing Program Handbook

All participants (including all adults, minors and minor's parents or legal guardians) in Sail Martha's Vineyard Rowing Program must become thoroughly familiar with the contents of this handbook.

GETTING STARTED

Arranging for a Trial Row

Anyone wishing to give rowing a try is entitled to one trial row, either at an oar or in the pilot seat. To arrange a trial row, contact the Sail MV office, and you will be put in touch with the scheduling coordinator who will find you a trial seat in a boat. You (or a parent or guardian if you are a minor) will be asked to read and fill out Sail MV's Release of Liability/Waiver of Claims prior to going onto the water.

If you have arranged for a trial row through a member, report to the boat as planned and the coxswain will give you (or a parent or guardian if you are a minor) a Release of Liability/Waiver of Claim which must be signed and returned to the coxswain before you will be permitted to board the boat and row.

The coxswain must submit the signed document to the Sail MV office within 24 hours after the row.

Requirements For Participation In Rowing Program

Before participating in rowing (except for a one-time trial row):

- All rowers and coxswains must be members of Sail Martha's Vineyard as follows:
 - * \$50 Youth Individual.
 - * \$100 Adult Individual.
 - * \$150 Family.
- Adult rowers and coxswains must pay an annual \$100 activity fee.
- Membership and activity payments are due by January 31st each year unless an individual has made arrangements with the Sail MV office to make installment membership payments. Membership and activity fees will be prorated to 67% of the annual dues and fees for each new member joining after September 30th of each year.
- A completed and signed Medical and Emergency Form must be on file at the Sail MV office.
- A completed and signed Release of Liability/Waiver of Claim must be on file in the Sail MV office.
- Each participant who has not already received a current copy of this Rowing Program Handbook will be provided with a copy of it. It is expected that he or she will read and study it carefully before taking to the water. If you have any questions about the materials presented, please contact the Sail MV office who will help you, to the extent possible, with your questions and/or concerns.

How To Obtain A Seat

The Sail MV office will advise the scheduling coordinator who will contact the new rower to arrange for a crew seat. Membership entitles you to row as often as you like, subject only to the availability of seats. When you register, you will be given a list of the other members and their contact information to facilitate your finding a sub when needed.

Once You Have Obtained A Seat

Once you are assigned to a boat, you are part of a tight unit. You have a responsibility to your crew mates, and you are expected to show up on time and appropriately dressed for the weather.

If a rower or coxswain is going to miss a session, he or she should notify (i) the other rowers and cox in their boat at their earliest possible opportunity, (ii) electronically notify all other rowers of the seat availability and (iii) make sure the coach/instructor if present) is made aware. Learn who is willing to substitute. Try calling first, and only as a last resort send out a broadside to the membership list.

If you want to switch the day or time of your row, please contact the scheduling coordinator at least one week ahead of your scheduled row.

If you need to drop out for an extended period of time because of an injury, travel plans, etc. let the scheduling coordinator know, so he or she can offer your seat to someone else. Also, let your coxswain know you are going to be out for some period of time.

Any rower and/or coxswain has the individual right to elect to not row or not cox at any particular session if when arriving at the boat's location he or she does not feel comfortable with the weather conditions or any other matter at that particular time. If such is the case, other rowers and/or the coxswain(s) shall not pressure the individual to participate.

Coxswain Requirements

If no coach/instructor (if present) and no coach boat is on the water at all times during a given session with a specific boat, the coxswain of such boat must have satisfied the requirements for coxing, as established by Sail MV and as follows:

- Have at least two years experience rowing a gig.
- Take and pass an eight hour Sail MV provided "Coxswain Training and Seamanship Course" (held annually during the winter months), or if previously certified take and pass a modified refresher course every three years.
- Be trained, certified and hold a current certification in CPR and Basic First Aid.
- Demonstrate a thorough knowledge of all aspects of rowing, as well as a command of all safety procedures and protocols to either the coach/instructor (if present), the Rowing Committee or the Sail MV Program Director or all at the discretion of the Program Director.
- Serve as a coxswain in training on board with all of the responsibilities of the coxswain under the guidance of a certified coxswain at least five times.

Inclement Weather Responsibilities

When weather precludes a scheduled row from going out, the crew of that boat is responsible for checking the gigs and bailing them. In the event they are not able to bail them due to sea state or some

other uncontrollable condition or circumstance the crew of the boat is responsible for notifying Sail MV's Program Director.

CORE SKILLS BASICS

The following is an outline of the minimum skills required for safe and enjoyable rowing. It is expected that all rowers and coxswains be knowledgeable and skilled in all of these areas. A coxswain's knowledge base and skill set shall include the following plus additional requirements described elsewhere in this Handbook. If you are uncertain about your knowledge or skill in any particular area, please contact your coxswain, the coach/instructor (if present) or the Program Director at the Sail MV office to discuss your questions and/or concerns before boarding a boat.

- Proper and safe behavior and attitude on and around the water.

- Respect ...
 - * For the sea.
 - * For yourself and each of your fellow rowers.
 - * For your instructor/coach.
 - * For your vessel, equipment and facilities (SMV boathouse, headquarters and of facilities of others when at away events).
 - * For your competition.
 - * For Sail Martha's Vineyard.

- Safety (A separate Core Skills Checklist Covering Safety Requirements is included in this Handbook).
 - * Safety - first and foremost and at all times.
 - * A watchful eye on the other person...be aware of what is around you.
 - * Demonstrate an ability to be comfortable in the water...to swim and tread water.
 - * Understand the impacts of cold water immersion and hypothermia.
 - * Know how to determine the right size PFD and put it on properly.
 - * The value of looking around BEFORE you get in a boat.
 - * Accident protocols.
 - * MOB (man over board) recovery.
 - * Capsize recovery.
 - * Life raft operation.
 - * Storm preparation.

- Weather and Sea State.
 - * Have a general knowledge of our local waters.
 - * Traffic patterns.
 - * Hazards to navigation.
 - * How to find the time of sunrise or sunset (as appropriate).
 - * How to know the direction of the current...ebbing or flooding.
 - * How to access local maritime forecast (short term).
 - * Reading the existing conditions - wind direction and velocity, water temperature, sea state (waves, temperature, ice), tide state, probability of freezing spray (impact of ice build-up on the boat).

- Radio Operation and Protocols
- Parts of the boat
- Basic knots (square knot, clove hitch, two half hitches, figure eight knot, bowline) and cleating
- Proper mooring/docking technique
- Relevant Navigational Rules of the Road
- Rowing Technique – the following are the basic components of proper rowing technique that will be introduced to new rowers by the coach/instructor (if present) or the coxswain.
 - * Positioning stretchers.
 - * Proper seat (where and how).
 - * Back position.
 - * The catch.
 - * The drive.
 - * The finish
 - * The release.
 - * The recovery.
- Commands:
 - * Commands are issued by the coxswain only and should be loud and clear for the whole boat to hear. Commands should always be prefaced with “**Prepare To**” to give the rowers adequate lead time to execute a command. Once timing and pace is established by the coxswain everyone should take his or her lead from the stroke. Whatever the stroke does, everyone else should follow that lead, unless the coxswain gives specific commands to specific sides (referred to as bow side and stroke side) of the boat or to specific people or seats.

The bow seat is referred to as seat 1 and each seat moving aft is sequentially one greater (2,3,4,5) so with stroke following seat 5 at seat 6.
 - * “**Select And Toss Your Oars**” – often followed by “**Beginning With The Bow**” (or stroke). Take a look at the oars you have in the boat and select the one which is yours (the number of stars on the blade will correspond to your seat number); raise the oar in the air with the blade towards the sky, the shaft between your knees and the handle in the bilge.
 - * “**Come To Oars**” - All rowers should lower their oars into the position where they are ready to row with the shaft parallel to the water and the blades squared. Oar placement between the thole pins is roughly half way between the ends of the leather. If the coxswain gives this command while you are rowing, all rowers should raise their oars out of the water, hold them parallel to the water while feathering the blades. The boat should glide. Sometimes the command “**Let Her Ride**” is used for this latter instance.

- * **“Prepare To Give Way”** - Rowers should reach forward as if they were about to take a stroke, but only place the tip of the blade in the water. Everyone is sitting at the ready waiting for the next command.
- * **“Give Way Together”** - This is the command to begin rowing forward. Everyone should already be reaching out from the “prepare to give way” command, so when the crew hears the word *together* rowers should drop their oars in the water all at the same time with the full blade just below the surface and begin to row. It is important that all rowers follow the stroke and have their blades enter and come out of the water in time with the stroke’s oar.
- * **“Fall In”** - This command has rowers join in with someone else. An example: If the bow side is sitting at oars (in response to the command “come to oars” and the stroke side is rowing, the coxswain may say “bow side fall in”. That means the bow side should begin rowing with the stroke side, in the same cadence (rhythm) that has been established by the stroke side.

Note: “Give way together” and “fall in together” are different. “Give way” always means to row forward. “Fall in” can mean either forwards or backwards, depending on the command that has been given. An example: In turning the boat, one side is usually asked to “prepare to give way” and the other side to “prepare to back water”. With the command “fall in together” both sides do as commanded rowing either forward or backward.

- * **“Hold Water”** - This command is really the brakes for the boat and means put your oar in the water and hold it still in a position at a right angle to the boat. Whether you are headed forward or backward, this will stop the boat’s momentum. Remember that if you are going fast, holding water is difficult to do and rowers can get knocked out of their seats.
- * **“Prepare To Back Water”** - This is like “prepare to give way” but backwards. Everyone is getting ready to back the boat up, so you should pull the oar close to you but keep the blade out of the water ready to take a backwater stroke.
- * **“Backwater Together”** - Everyone should begin rowing backwards together. Rowing backwards requires shorter strokes than going forward.
- * **“On The Paddle”** - This is actually a racing term, not a gig rowing term, but it is useful, particularly when approaching a dock or a mooring. “On the paddle” means rowing very lightly, providing just enough momentum to be able to control the boat.
- * **“Toss Your Oars”** - When you’re done rowing and want to put the oars away again, the command will be “toss your oars”. With this command everyone places her/his oar in the vertical position again.
- * **“Lay Down Your Oars”** - This means to lower your oars and stow them back in the boat on the seats (thwarts) where they were at the start of the row. This command is usually given with a bit of direction, such as “lay down your oars, starting with the stroke.

CORE SKILLS SAFETY PROTOCOLS and EQUIPMENT

Introduction

- These Safety Requirements which include the following documents are provided to each rower and coxswain (by virtue of having a copy of this handbook) and are posted at the Sail MV Headquarters and the Sail MV Boathouse on Lagoon Pond.

- * An emergency plan (**Emergency Plan**) dealing with the following contingencies. The coxswain and/or coach/instructor (if present) will review it with all rowers and new rowers before they embark on their first row:
 - Capsize.
 - Life raft deployment.
 - MOB.
 - Reduced visibility.
 - Sick/injured crew member.
 - Available resources.
 - Delineation of responsibilities (who's in charge?).
 - Prevention Plan.

- * An emergency contact list of telephone numbers (**Emergency Contacts**) is carried in each boat's "Go Box" and is posted at the G&B equipment storage box.
 - Emergency Services (police, ambulance & fire).
 - Tisbury Harbor Master.
 - Oak Bluffs Harbor Master.
 - United States Coast Guard.
 - Sail Martha's Vineyard.
 - Sail MV Program Director.

- * A chart of the waters (**Chart**) to be rowed, drawing attention to the applicable navigation rules required to be followed as they relate to hazards likely to be incurred.

- A checklist (**Pre-Row and Post Row Checklist**) to assist in the inspection of and proper handling of equipment and gear.

- A video showing the risks of cold water immersion and hypothermia (**Cold Water Immersion & Hypothermia Video**) is available at the Sail MV headquarters. All rowers and coxswains are required to watch this video.

- Safety and First Aid equipment is carried in each boat and is readily available at the Sail MV headquarters and at the Sail MV Boathouse.
 - First Aid Box.
 - Thermal/Exposure Blankets.
 - Life Buoy.

- A master accident log (**Accident Log**) is maintained and available for inspection at the Sail MV headquarters during office hours. The log includes time, place and nature of accident; damages/injuries sustained; the names and addresses of the injured; the names and addresses of any witnesses.

General Considerations

- All rowers, coxswains, coaches, instructors, guests and any others shall wear Coast Guard approved personal flotation devices (“PFD’s”) at all times while on or about the water. If automatic inflating PFD’s are used, inflatable tabs shall be pulled out when boarding a boat.
- Any rower and/or coxswain has the individual right to elect to not row or not cox at any particular session if when arriving at the boat’s location he or she does not feel comfortable with the weather conditions or any other matter at that particular time. If such is the case, other rowers and/or the coxswain(s) shall not pressure the individual to participate.
- The coxswain is considered the captain and therefore in charge of the boat and her crew at all times subject to the oversight of the coach/instructor if the latter is present.
- When a coach/instructor is present, he or she will have responsibility over and above the coxswain in all matters. Coaches/instructors will maintain visual and aural contact with all boats on the water and under their care at all times and always have the ultimate responsibility and authority for the safe operation of each boat.
- Prior to any on-the-water session a visual and technological (instrument, weather service, internet and radar) review of the prevailing and forecasted weather conditions will be done by the coxswain and coach/instructor with the final decision to row resting with the coxswain if the coach/instructor is not present or by the coach/instructor if he or she is present.
- Every rower will have a “buddy”
 - * Seat 1 (bow) will buddy with seat 2.
 - * Seat 3 will buddy with seat 4.
 - * Seat 5 will buddy with seat 6 (stroke) and cox.
- Prior to leaving the beach/dock the boats and their equipment will be carefully inspected by each rower and the coxswain. All non-standard, improper and/or potential problematic matters shall be brought to the attention of the coxswain who will then bring the matters to the attention of the coach/instructor (if present) prior to embarking on a row.
- Prior to boarding the boat each rower’s personal equipment will be carefully inspected by her/his buddy.
- Personal equipment shall be consistent with the prevailing weather conditions and shall include:
 - * Proper attire for the weather/conditions.
 - * Hat.
 - * Water bottle.

- * Sunscreen.
- * Coast Guard approved PFD with whistle attached.
- In the event of any capsize the coxswain will defer control to the coach/instructor (if present) who will then direct recovery. Otherwise the coxswain shall be in control.
- In the event of a cold water capsize the crew shall deploy and board the life raft. The coach boat or in its absence a rescuing boat will transport rowers from the life raft to shore.

Safety Equipment

- For the safety of all concerned, rowing equipment shall be maintained in good condition and stored neatly in the appropriate storage lockers.
- The following safety equipment is carried on board each boat and it is the responsibility of the boat's coxswain to assure that it is present prior to commencing a row:
 - * An adequate supply of replacement thole pins.
 - * A tow line of adequate length to be permanently affixed to the vessel's stem.
 - * A bailer for each seat attached to the vessel with a 4' line.
 - * A life ring with 50' of line to be carried aft of the coxswain's thwart.
 - * A life raft between November 1 and May 15.
 - * Side lights and a stern light, as defined in Navigation Rule 25, during those months when sunrise occurs before 0630 hrs (6:30AM) and sunset occurs before 1700 hrs (5:00PM).
 - * A properly charged and pre-tested VHF radio attached to the coxswain's PFD. The radio shall be tuned to Channel 16 and be on at all times when on or about the water.
 - * A properly charged cellular telephone in the possession of the coxswain. Sail MV does not provide this. It is expected that the crew or coxswain will make at least one personally owned device available for each row.
 - * A "Go Bag" which shall contain:
 - A whistle or other sound making device which emits a sound within the 70-700Hz range.
 - Three hand held red flares.
 - Thermal blanket.
 - First aid kit.
 - Strobe light.
 - Laminated emergency contact list and emergency shore side "go to" locations.

Oarsmen and Coxswains

- Rowing is a physically demanding sport and all persons participating must be in good health. If a rower has any doubt as to his or her fitness, he or she should consult a doctor before beginning to row.
- All rowers should be comfortable with being on and in the water and must be able to tread water with a properly worn PDF for a minimum of five minutes or they may not row. This is a self-evaluated and self-enforced requirement. If you are concerned about your swimming skills or other physical abilities or state then you should not participate in on the water activities.

- Although it is the coxswain's or coach/instructor's (if present) ultimate responsibility as to the proper condition of the boat, each rower is individually responsible that the equipment he or she is using is in proper working order each and every time he or she rows.

Coxswains

- A coxswain's primary responsibility is the safety of the crew and the vessel at all times, and as such a coxswain must be an individual with significant experience on the sea. Coxswains are required to receive and have training and skills which are described in the section entitled "Education".
- It is the coxswain's responsibility along with the senior most rower on board to decide whether or not prevailing weather conditions and/or equipment matters and/or any other conditions or matters warrant cancelling the row.
- A coxswain shall ensure that every crewmember for which he or she has responsibility shall be aware of appropriate safety procedures and that a pre-row briefing quickly review those procedures relevant to the conditions expected to be encountered.
- Coxswains shall ensure that the whole crew, including themselves, is dressed suitably and adequately protected for the weather conditions likely to be encountered.

Rowing Equipment

- All equipment for rowing and coaching shall be properly maintained to ensure that it is safe for its intended purpose and does not expose the user to danger.
- Prior to leaving the mooring, the boat should be checked to ensure that it is in safe condition and that all equipment is sound and in place.
 - * Bail all water and remove any debris.
 - * Remove all ice.
 - * Assure that the bow light and stern light are in working order and properly positioned.
 - * Check for leaks.
 - * Check seats and stretchers for security.
 - * Check rudder lines, steering mechanism and rudder to ensure that everything is secure and in working order.
 - * Check oars and pins for any damage.
- If any equipment is damaged or its integrity suspect, do not use it and report it to the Program Director immediately.

Education for all Rowers and Coxswains

- The purpose of ongoing education is to lessen the possibility that no one places themselves or others in any risk when on the water.

- All participants deserve and will receive proper instruction in seamanship, rowing technique and water safety. Such instruction will be provided by fellow rowers and/or coxswains with substantial experience. In some instances, but not all, Sail MV may employ coaches and/or instructors that have completed the US Rowing Level 1 Certification course or its equivalent to provide this training.
- Capsize drills, man-over-board recovery, cold water immersion technique and knowledge in the use of all safety equipment will be required of all rowers and coxswains.
- All rowers are encouraged to take the “Coxswain Training and Seamanship Course” and to be trained in CPR and Basic First Aid.
- All rowers shall see the most current video on cold water immersion at the Sail MV offices and be familiar with the body’s initial reaction to immersion in cold water...”the first minute syndrome”.

Weather

- Rowing is heavily subject to the vagaries of the weather in whatever form that might take.
- Part of the allure of more advanced pilot gig rowing is contending with difficult weather conditions. It is not the intention of these guidelines to completely remove that challenge.
- However, safe enjoyment is our priority not foolhardiness.
- Especially in colder weather transiting the main ferry channel should be avoided except in the absence of ferry traffic when there is virtually no sea state.
- Coxswains should always conduct rows in the lee of the Chops, remaining as close to shore as proper seamanship would permit. All rows must remain inside a line from the West Chop light to the East Chop light. Exceptions to this require advance approval from the Sail MV’s Program Director.
- It should be noted that Vineyard Haven Harbor is completely exposed to the N and NNE, and a substantial seaway will build in relatively short order when winds exceed 15 knots (approximately 17 mph) sustained from those directions.
- If rough conditions are expected, particular care should be given to making sure that a bailer is affixed to each seat with a lanyard long enough to permit aggressive bailing.
- The coxswain (or the coach/instructor when present) will be the senior authority to advise on the cancellation of any rowing activities in the event of adverse weather if it is believed the conditions to be unsafe.
- No boat may leave its mooring if any of the following conditions exist:
 - * The ambient air temperature is (or is predicted during the time of the row to fall) lower than 20° Fahrenheit.

- * The sustained wind velocity exceeds (or is predicted during the time of the row to exceed) 20 knots (approximately 23 mph).
- * The wind chill factor is below 20° Fahrenheit.
- * If the NOAA forecast for Nantucket Sound speaks for the possibility of freezing spray.
- * If fog prevents at least ½ nautical mile visibility.
- * If it is at night.
- * If it is more than 30 minutes before sunrise.
- * Or if the planned time of the row will not end prior to 30 minutes after sunset.

Ferry Traffic

- Vineyard Haven Harbor is exposed on average to no fewer than 32 ferry arrivals and departures each day. For the purposes of our rowing activities, it is to be assumed that each ferry is restricted in its ability to maneuver and, as such, has the right-of-way over the gigs. Coaches/instructors and coxswains should be well aware of the ferry schedules during the times of planned rows.
- Each coxswain should make every effort to maintain visual contact with the bridge of an approaching ferry.
- If a ferry sounds five quick blasts of her whistle, she is indicating that she does not know your intentions and that a danger of collision circumstance exists. The coxswain should make a substantial change of direction away from the ferry, so as to make it perfectly clear the gig's intentions as to its course.

Coaching

From time to time Sail Martha's Vineyard may employ a rowing instructor and/or rowing coach. If you feel your skill level is such that you need to have an instructor and or coach on the water while you are participating in a Sail MV program and there is none employed, or if you feel your coxswain and crew are not giving you sufficient instruction/direction, contact the Program Director and every effort will be made to address your concern(s).

- When a coach/instructor is present and on the water at all times during a specific row and associated with a specific boat and in proximity at all times to that specific boat, the coach/instructor shall have seniority over that particular boat's coxswain in all matters including safety matters. If a single coach/instructor is on the water with multiple boats, the coxswain shall have seniority in all matters regarding his or her boat.
- Besides his or her regular duties, a coach/instructor is responsible for:

- * Filling empty rowing slots as long as notified 48 hours in advance.
- * Making the final call of whether or not to row given prevailing weather conditions and/or equipment matters and/or any other conditions or matters warrant cancelling the row. .

Coach Boat Requirements

- For youth programs (not when a youth (minor) is present on a boat during a non-youth program row) there must be a coach boat on the water for each gig rowing.
- Safety/coach boats will only be operated by trained coaches/instructors or other employees of Sail MV who have the appropriate credentials. Anyone on the safety/coach boat must wear a PFD at all times as described elsewhere in this Handbook.
- Safety/coach boats must carry the following equipment:
 - * A bucket bailer.
 - * A proper horn or other warning device.
 - * Three hand held red flares.
 - * A 50' heaving line.
 - * Thermal exposure blankets x 7.
 - * Life jackets (Coast Guard approved PFD's) for all on board + two extra.
 - * First Aid kit.
 - * An oar or paddle.
 - * A knife and sheath.
 - * An anchor and 50' line.
 - * Laminated emergency contact list and emergency shore side "go to" locations.
 - * A properly charged and pre-tested VHF radio. Maintain Channel 16 when on the water.
 - * A properly charged cellular telephone.
 - * Any other Coast Guard required equipment.

CORE SKILLS COXSWAIN TRAINING COURSE SYLLABUS

The following is syllabus of the Sail MV's Coxswain Training Course and represents the minimum knowledge base necessary for certification by Sail MV as a "Coxswain" and be allowed to take a boat out on his or her own.

- Required for Coxswain Certification:
 - At Least Two Years of Experience
 - Current certification in CPR and First Aid
- Annual Drill Requirement
 - MOB Recovery Drill
 - Capsize Drill
- SMV Code of Conduct... "The Sail MV Way"
 - * Driven by Pride and Respect
- The Boat
 - * History, Design and Construction
 - * Specs
 - * Parts
 - * Equipment
 - * General Day-to-Day Maintenance
- The Mooring
 - * Set-Up
 - * Proper Use
 - * Maintenance
- Navigable Waters
 - * Maritime Charts
 - * Boundaries and Hazards
 - * Tides (Eldridge)
 - * Sunrise/Sunset (Eldridge)
 - * Currents
 - * Lagoon Bridge
- Weather
 - * Forecast Sources
 - * Current Conditions Sources
 - * Clouds
 - * Winter Conditions
 - * Prevailing Breeze (summer)
 - * Sea Breeze (summer)
- General Navigation
 - * Compass...magnetic...variation
 - * Aids to Navigation
 - * Rule of the Road
- Safety
 - * PFD's
 - * Buddy System
 - * Life Raft Operation
 - * Storm Preparation
- Communications
 - * Options
 - * VHF Radios
 - * VHF Channels
 - * VHF Protocols
- Man Overboard
 - * Sequence for Recovery
 - * Recovery
- Capsizing/Swamping
 - * Possible Causes
 - * Recovery Techniques
- Cold Water Immersion and Hypothermia
 - * Awareness of initial involuntary response
- Emergency Plan
 - * Who to Contact?
 - * How?
 - * Identify Boat and Position
 - * Communicate Nature of Emergency
 - * Communicate Description/Condition of Victim
 - * EMS Requested?
 - * Where to Meet?
- Marlinspike Seamanship
 - * Basic Knots
 - * Cleating
 - * Coiling
- Review of Coxswain Responsibilities
 - * Know Crew Capabilities/Limitations
 - * Ensure Buddy System in Place
 - * Condition of boat and equipment
 - * Evaluation of Weather and Sea State
 - * Instructor/Coach/Cheerleader (with emphasis on LEADER)
 - * YOU are the responsible party when on the water

APPENDIX 1 EMERGENCY PLAN

In The Event of an Emergency

- Take every step that prudence and sound judgment dictate and
- Direct a specific person to call 508.693.1212 (MV Communications Center) if a cell phone or land line is available or (i) call the USCG on VHF Channel 16 (year-round) or (ii) the Vineyard Haven Harbormaster (summer only) on VHF Channels 9 or 69, if no phone is available.
- Communicate the following:
 - * **Who you are** – Example, “This is the rowing vessel Grace. We are a 32’ white rowing gig with seven on board.”
 - * **The nature of the emergency** – Example, “We have an approximately 50 year old male on board who collapsed, is not breathing and has no pulse. We have begun CPR.”
 - * **Your location** – Example, “We are approximately 200 yards south of the Douglas Rock stake and proceeding towards Vineyard Haven YC on Owen Little Way in Vineyard Haven.”
 - * **Status** (if other than illness or injury) and assistance required.
 - MOB (Man overboard).
 - Swamped.
 - If on the water and the evacuation of an injured or ill crew member is required, the proposed location to meet EMS (see above).
- **If a crew member has gone over board:**
 - * Yell “Man Overboard!”
 - * The coxswain should command “Hold Water” and STOP the vessel and have all rowers leave their oars in the water awaiting the coxswain’s next command.
 - * The person rowing bow should ship her/his oar and physically point to the victim and keep pointing until the victim is alongside. **DON’T TAKE YOUR EYES OFF THE VICTIM!!** While pointing, instruct the victim through his or her life vest inflation.
 - * The coxswain should then free up the life ring and toss it towards the victim, if he/she is conscious. Make sure the painter is attached to both the ring and the vessel before tossing.
 - * Institute recovery, ideally bringing the victim aboard between seat 3 and 4, that part of the boat with the lowest freeboard and thus the easiest place to get someone back on board.
 - * Rowers not directly assisting getting the victim back on board should shift their weight towards the other side of the gig to counter balance the extra weight on the opposite side of the boat.
 - * If the victim cannot be located, call the USCG and the VH Harbormaster on VHF Channel 16 using the “May Day, May Day, May Day” call, identifying the vessel, its location and the circumstance and requesting immediate assistance.
- After any emergency:
 - * Notify the Sail MV office as soon as practicable.
 - * Refer all inquiries by the press to the Program Director. **PLEASE DO NOT MAKE ANY STATEMENT ON YOUR OWN**, as there are legal considerations such as the privacy of the victim that must be honored and regulatory considerations which Sail MV must honor.

APPENDIX 2 EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Phone Numbers:

- Tisbury/Oak Bluffs Ambulance (landline) 911
- Tisbury/Oak Bluffs Ambulance (cell) 508.693.1212
- Tisbury Harbormaster (harbor office) 508.696.4249
- Tisbury Harbormaster (Jay Wilbur cell) 508.714.9441
- Martha's Vineyard Hospital 508.693.0410
- Coast Guard Station Woods Hole (landline) 508.457.3277
- Coast Guard Station Woods Hole (VHF) Channel 16
- Sail Martha's Vineyard (office) 508.696.7644
- Sail Martha's Vineyard (Brock cell) 508.627.0509
- Sail Martha's Vineyard (Brock home) 508.645.9525
- MV Shipyard 508.693.0400
- Gannon & Benjamin 508.693.4658

Shore-side "Go-to" Locations:

- Vineyard Haven
 - * Owen Park
 - * Vineyard Haven Yacht Club
 - * Base of Grove Avenue
 - * Beach Road Ramp (Lagoon Pond)
 - * Hines Point Public Access (Lagoon Pond)
- Oak Bluffs
 - * Eastville Beach
 - * Sail MV's Boathouse (Lagoon Pond)

**APPENDIX 3
CHART OF LOCAL WATERS**

APPENDIX 4 PRE-ROW & POST-ROW CHECKLISTS

Pre-Row

- General release signed by any non-member (Coxswain responsible for getting to Sail MV)
- Check local weather forecast and conditions relative to available crew
- Oars
- Blades not cracked
- Leathers firm
- Thole pins (with extra)
- Thole pin leathers
- Seat pads
- PFD's on for all on board with whistles attached and yellow pull tabs out
- VHF radio (check for operation)
- GO BOX
- Running lights (if required)
- Bailers at each seat
- Check condition of rudder and rudder hardware
- Pump/Bail gig dry...remove ANY and ALL ice
- Secure retrieval line to post before casting off

Post-Row

- Remove trash from gig, beach (if necessary) and storage box
- All equipment put back in storage area
- VHF radio turned off and placed in charger
- Thole pin leathers oiled
- Oar leathers and thole pin leathers oiled
- Maintenance/repair list prepared (if necessary) and e-mailed to Sail MV
- Injury report prepared (if necessary) and e-mailed to Sail MV
- PLEASE REPLACE OARS IN TUBES CAREFULLY**

APPENDIX 5
MONTHLY SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

- **JANUARY**
 - * Cox School
 - * Boat #1 Maintenance
- **FEBRUARY**
 - * Cox School
 - * Boat #2 Maintenance
 - * Hull Indoor Erg Event
- **MARCH**
 - * Snow Row Regatta
- **APRIL**
 - Champlain Regatta (Youth)
- **MAY**
 - * Essex River Race
 - * John Magnus Row
 - * Spring Wave
- **JUNE**
 - * Afternoon Rows Start
- **JULY**
 - * League Practice And Races
 - * Blackburn Challenge
 - * Vineyard Cup
 - * Lake Champlain Ch. Race
 - * Belfast Regatta
 - * Monument Island Race
- **AUGUST**
 - * League Practice And Races
 - * Gloucester Heritage Race
- **SEPTEMBER**
 - * Soundkeeper Race
 - * Afternoon Rows End
- **OCTOBER**
 - * Head Of The Weir
 - * Vinalhaven Regatta
- **NOVEMBER**
 - * Plymouth Bay Row
 - * Pemberton Sprints
 - * Icebreaker
- **DECEMBER**

Sail Martha's Vineyard
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508-696-7644
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