NGRC Events and Racing Update

Version 1 - 13.5.19

Since Newhaven Gig Rowing Club formed in 2016, we've taken part in a number of organised events and regattas. We've had some feedback that it's not always clear how members get to row in these kinds of events.

To improve, we've realised we need to make things more open. It's not an easy task when you've got 12 seats and 180 members, but we've really tried to make sure there's a place for everyone. Below, we've suggested a structure with three kinds of row and explained how they'll be accessed. The last two types deal with organised events.

If you have any questions, comments or suggestions, please email admin@ngrc.co.uk. We're still a new club finding our feet and trying to balance access is a challenge. It's everyone's club and your input is very important.

Community Rows

What are they all about?

Our community rows are about socialising, enjoying the water and taking part. For newer members, they provide an opportunity to develop skills and fitness with a view to taking part in some of the more challenging events.

How are they accessed?

Community rows will continue to operate exactly as they do at the moment. They're the learner and open rows we all know and love! They are open to all members according to their competency level. They are generally available on a 'first-come, first served' basis.

Challenge Events

What are they all about?

Challenge events are about... whatever the crew want. Some might decide they want to train hard and place as high as possible. Some might wish to gain experience racing, or it might be about doing something new. Examples include the Great River Race and Hamble River Raid.

How are they accessed?

- The race secretary will notify all members which events the club will be participating in that year and request names of those who are interested.
- One or more members will be appointed 'race organiser'.
- Members who wish to take part will contact the race organiser and they'll work together to agree on crews and understand how many boats are required. NB: A meeting in a pub may be required :)
- Crews decide *their* aim for the event and the kind of training to make that happen.
- It is the responsibility of each crew to secure a cox and arrange transport for boats
- The club will make at least 1 weekly training slot available for each crew who wish to take part in an event.

Racing Events

What are they all about?

These tend to be Cornish Gig based events and arranged by other similar clubs. Examples include Appledore, Langstone, Swanage and London Cornish Regattas. These kinds of row are about pushing yourself. They're about giving members who want the chance to be competitive a chance to train and improve with a like-minded crew. Ultimately, we want to be challenging more established clubs and 'bringing home the tin'.

How are they accessed?

- The race secretary will notify all members of the racing events the club is taking part in that year.
- Every 3 months, the race secretary will ask all members whether they wish to be considered for selection
- Race crews will be selected by a panel of experienced coxes, the club coaches and the club captains. More detail on the selection process will be published separately as a club policy, but it will involve on-the-water and rowing machine based assessments.
- Selection to a crew will be based on a number of factors including;
  - Availability for regular training
  - Commitment
  - Technical ability
  - Fitness
- Depending on the number of members who come forward for selection, it may not be possible to allocate everyone to a race crew
- Those crews will be expected to train at least once a week on the water and/or rowing machines.

- If a crew member cannot make a training session it is their responsibility to find a replacement from another race crew
- Initially, NGRC will form men's A, B and C crews, and women's A, B and C crews (subject to numbers), rather than age categories e.g. Vets, Supervets. This will be reviewed at each selection stage and consideration will be made to the categories in upcoming regattas.

What next?

- The committee will appoint a race secretary
- The committee will confirm the list of challenge and race events
- The race secretary will invite members to challenge events and race crews
- For each challenge event, we'll need a volunteer organiser
- For each racing event, we'll select one or more crews and start training.

Q&A's

Q) Why now?
We've had some feedback that access to events can feel closed and that there's no way for people who wish to race (especially newer members) to get involved.

Q) Why aren't we forming age category (vets, supervets) crews straight away?
Initially, it's really just for simplicity. We want to try this new (and very different) approach for a short while and iron out any issues, but will almost certainly split into age category crews slightly further down the road.

Q) Can members request we take part in events which are not on the list?
Yes. There are some limits (wear and tear, availability of the boat for community rows etc). But if you see an event you'd like to take part in please contact the race secretary and make a request. The committee will review it and let you know.

Q) If a race crew want to take part in a challenge event (or vice versa), can they?
Yes. Priority access to club boats will always be given to crews who match the event type (race or challenge) but if there's a spare boat at an event, any crew can use it!.

Q) I'm not superfit - does this all mean I can't race now?
Not at all. Selection is based on a lot more than fitness. Commitment, technique and availability are very important, and we hope to have crews at all levels. We'll be giving clear and honest feedback on why selections have been made, so people know exactly what to work on if they want to improve.

Q) How do I give feedback or comment on the proposal above?
Email your feedback to admin@ngrc.co.uk.