



## **Henley Rowing Club**

### **Selection Policy Junior Girls and Senior Women Squads**

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## **1.0 Club Capacity and Selection policy**

This outlines the selection policy for those Coxes, Novices, J13s, J14s, J15s, J16s, Development and Senior Women wishing to row at HRC. If the operational capacity of the squad in question is exceeded, the club reserves the right to select athletes based on the selection criteria outlined.

There is a capacity in each year group of approximately 12 depending on the numbers in the other year groups.

### **J13, J14 & J15s**

If the numbers for the year groups are exceeded, the top athletes will be selected according to the criteria below. This will be done formally at half term, (October) by contacting parents to update them on their daughter's progress where the following will be considered:

Attendance: 70% (J13s & J14s), 85% (J15s)

Physiological ability assessed through testing.

Sculling and rowing trials 1x/ Doubles Matrix.

Seat Racing will be used for further rankings.

J15s will start sweep rowing when the Head Coach Junior Women/Women and the Crew Coaches assess that it is safe for Girls to do so.

### **J16s, J17s, J18s & Senior**

If the numbers for these squads are exceeded the top athletes will be selected for each group according to the criteria below. This will be done formally at half term, (October) by contacting parents to update them on their daughter's progress where the following will be considered.

Attendance: Greater than 90%.

Physiological ability assessed through testing.

Sculling and Rowing trials Pairs/1x / Doubles Matrix.

Ergo times.- Watts per kg will be considered.

Seat Racing will be used for further rankings. Seat Racing or doubles/pairs matrix will always be the final determining factor for selection into the squad.

**All selections are at the professional discretion of the Head Coach Junior Women/Women and Crew Coaches who will use the Process and Methodology set out in the following section**

## **2.0 Competition Selection Policy.**

All crew selections are at the professional discretion of the age group coach and in conjunction with the Head Coach's approval. Crews must be submitted to the Head Coach Junior Women/Women prior to entry and can only be entered if approved by the Head Coach Junior Women/Women who has the final say on selections. These selections are final and will not be changed unless illness, injury or a drop in performance requires changes. By signing the parental consent on the Membership form, parents agree to these selection policies.

### **Cox Selection Strategy:**

All coxes are expected to attend all training sessions at the Club. All coxes will be asked to cox all age groups.

All coxes will need to demonstrate the following:

Boatmanship (Handling and awareness).

Use of a wide range of calls within a race plan or training session (Linked to what the race / coach requires). A recording is required. Responsiveness to coaches is important.

Race strategy.

All Coxes are assessed by the Crew Coaches and Head Coach Junior Women/Women. Please note, there is a limit as to how many coxes can race at each regatta. This is determined by the crews we enters.

### **Crew Selection**

For all events takes into account the best interests of the club. No selection "gives an athlete a turn in a 'top' boat" at the expense of other rowers or crew members. You are welcome to query selections, however challenging a selection or intimidation of coaches will result in rowers being de-registered from the club.

Crews will be selected on ability ie: A coxed quad (5 rowers) will have top 4 girls available rowing and top cox coxing. HRC does not enter "A crews" with weaker members in the boat to simply "give them a chance being in the top boat". This would only result in better rowers losing out.

### **Priority Events**

Priority events are those in which the club will develop the training program and selection dates towards. The priority events are:

| <b>Event</b>                  | <b>Approx Time of Year</b> | <b>Who it involves</b> | <b>Location of event</b>              |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Fours Head                    | Oct                        | J16s and Up            | Putney, London                        |
| Women's Head                  | March                      | J16s & Up              | Putney, London                        |
| Schools Head                  | March                      | J15s & Up              | Putney, London                        |
| Junior Sculling Head          | March                      | J14s & Up              | Dorney, Eton                          |
| Junior Inter Regional Regatta | April                      | J14 to J16s            | Nottingham                            |
| The National Schools Regatta: | May                        | J14 to J18             | Nottingham                            |
| Women's Henley Regatta        | June                       | J15 & Up               | Henley                                |
| Henley Royal Regatta          | July                       | J16 & Up               | Henley                                |
| British Junior Championships  | July                       | J14 to J18             | Nottingham (Strathclyde Glasgow 2015) |

Other events at which the squad may compete can be found in the club calendar.

### **3.0 The Selection Process**

#### **The Strategy:**

The Head Coach Junior Women/Women and Crew Coaches discuss the selection strategy for the squad. Rowers are seeded based on data obtained from previous assessments (Ergometer, sculling results, and seat matrix/racing results).

#### **The assessment:**

The Head Coach Junior Women/Women and Crew Coaches will run the selection process. See Selection Methodology for how the process works.

#### **Coaches Meeting:**

The Coaches, Heads of Squads and The Head Coach Junior Women/Women will discuss the selections. The Crew Coach has an open question/answer critique of what has been selected. In this way, every possible eventuality is discussed and questioned.

#### **Outcome:**

If needed, further assessments may take place: see also section on "Factors out of Coaches Control"

#### **Time Trial:**

Once results are obtained, the Top boats may do a time trial (2 \* 1000m at race pace) to obtain % of Gold Medal Times.

Gold Medal Times: The % of Gold Medal time will give an indication if the boat class chosen is indeed the correct one and if the crew is fast enough to compete at the Priority Events.

If not considered fast enough even top boats may not be entered for Priority Events.

Boats are not limited to a year group: Younger girls in different age groups may be used to strengthen older boats.

#### **Assessment Dates:**

Athletes will be given prior notice of the dates of specific assessment tests such as ergo tests time trials seat racing etc. Every training session though is used to assess an athletes performance and taken into consideration when selecting crews.

#### **Head Races Selections:**

Done in January and February Half Term. Please see calendar dates. Those missing from selection dates should notify coaches by the first week in October.

J15 – J18: Ergometer results and sculling trials. A doubles matrix may be used. All data recorded up to this point will be used. If necessary, seat racing or a pairs matrix will be used.

#### **Regatta Season Selections:**

Done in April primarily at the Easter training Camp and should not be missed.

The club may need additional days after the training camp to finalise selections.

Those who wish to be selected to race at Priority Events need to attend the selection trials noted above. The club understands that some people have various commitments throughout the year, and these may clash with some of the trials dates. Should this happen, the club will need to know about any clashes by the first week in October. NOTE: All selections are subject to change. Dorney lake is not always available. Other venues may be used including the river at Henley.

## 4.0 The Selection Methodology

### Rowers

#### Land Based assessments:

Ergometer: 1km to 5km ergo trials OR various times between 2min to 30min where distances and average pace per 500m is taken. Calculations such as watts per kg are calculated. All those who have aspirations to row in the senior squad, the J16 GB France trials or attend the GB trials will need to make the ergo cut off standards (Please keep in mind that these are minimum standards and should not be seen as a reason in itself to be selected).

Core Stability and Flexibility: Assessed in line with injury prevention. Minimum standards are expected in order to race safely.

Weights and circuits: The ability to complete given tasks in line with the training program and requirements.

#### Water Based assessments:

Steering and Boatmanship: All rowers must be able scull safely. All rowers must demonstrate that they can steer a boat, be it a single scull, pair, double or Coxless four/Quad on the correct side of the river while being aware of their safety and those around them. As the steersman of the boat, they are held responsible for any damage or injury caused by their boat.

Sculling Trials: This forms the basis of the seat Matrix (ie: if it is a 3 boat doubles matrix, the top 6 girls will go into the A matrix). Girls are required to race over a specific course and are ranked according to speed from fastest to slowest.

Seat Matrix: A favourite among coaches as every result is 100% accurate hence the reason why this is the assessment criteria Henley uses: i.e. 6 rowers race in doubles/pairs (2 rowers in 3 boats). Each strokeside rower races with every bowside rower in different boats (not necessarily every different boat), where athletes are properly competent on both sides they may be allowed to race on both sides. At the end of all races, the cumulative time for all 3 - 5 races for each rower is calculated. Each rower is then given a ranking based on their cumulative times.

Seat Racing: Two crews are raced. The difference between these two crews is taken. Two rowers are swapped. The difference is taken again. I.e. If, in race one, crew 1 (Rower A) beats crew 2 (Rower B) by 2 seconds. Then Rower A and B are swapped. The crews race again, and rower A wins by 1 second. Therefore Rower A is 3 seconds faster than Rower B. Those being raced do not know the order of racing, or amount of races.

### Coxes:

#### Land Based assessments:

Weight: Cox's should preferably be within 3kgs of race weight, 45kg (J13s – J15s), 50kgs (J16 & Up & Seniors).

Coach and crew: The cox will need to communicate with the coach as to what is required. This will then need to be demonstrated on the water during sessions or races. The cox will need to demonstrate clear instructions to the crew in the safe handling of equipment.

#### Water Based assessment:

Steering and Boatmanship: As the steersman of the boat, they are held responsible for any damage or injury caused by their boat. Steering is vital, and every time the rudder is on, the boat slows down by approximately one foot per a stroke. The lines coxes take can win or lose a race. On a straight 1km or 2km race course, the cox is expected to steer a straight line in the middle of the lanes. During head races, demonstrating good use of the stream, reading the wind and water conditions, selecting the fastest possible lines with the minimum use of rudder. If there is a cross

wind, the cox will need to compensate accordingly. During training, steering on the correct side of the river, selecting safe lines with minimum use of the rudder.

Recordings: Coxes are expected to own their own Dictaphone and use it at most sessions and all races. Coxes should record every race and should be able to present a Dictaphone recording on request, be it a session or a race. It is an essential part of their development and continued selection. The ability to follow race plans, or emphasise aspects of the stroke to get the most out of the boat are assessed. Tone is important. The ability to keep calm and get the most out of the crew is important.

## 5.0 Selection Issues

### **Rowing is absolutely objective in its assessment:**

HRC Coaches are currently or have in the past been involved with the selection processes towards selecting teams for numerous J16 GB France Matches; GB Coupe de la Jeunesse; GB World Junior Championships GB World Senior Championships and the Olympics. These are international teams that undergo the highest scrutiny in selections. The same standards and scrutiny are applied by the coaches when selections are made at the Club.

Ergometer times, Seat Racing results and Seat Matrix results allow coaches to make decisions based on results from a stop watch (It never lies). They cannot be disputed as these are the results that the rower has produced. In sports such as running, one can rank runners from fastest to slowest. In a rowing matrix, it produces the same ranking. In Seat Racing, a result is produced: A is faster than B.

### **Attendance:**

HRC encourages rowers to participate in a number of different activities. However, as they move up through the squads, the club recognises that in order for one to master a discipline, one can not be doing several other disciplines at the same time. To this end, as the rowers develop through the age groups, their attendance, should they wish to continue, should increase in proportion with the challenges that will face them on the water.

For those who want to excel in rowing, the attendance quotas ensure that they will be able to be competitive in the events at which they want to compete. If girls do not meet the attendance quotas, the club reserves the right to deregister them from the club or disallow them from racing.

No one is exempt from the attendance quotas. Coxes are required at all sessions (within the attendance requirements) and will need to support the coaches where necessary.

### **Factors out of Coaches Control:**

There are factors that are out of the coaches control when doing selections. One would ideally like to be able to select crews as outlined in The Selection Process. There are however the occasions when the following occur:

1. Illness / Injury within the boat club is so widespread that it makes it impossible to tie in/link all the athletes to one another in the selection process.
2. Weather conditions are such that Dorney Lake and our own stretch of river at Henley are un-rowable for weeks on end (As was the case in 2013/14).

In these cases, HRC will not be able to fully seat race or complete a full pairs matrix that links all rowers. The coaches will make a professional judgement on data that they have collected to that point. Coaches deal with athletes on the water or on the rowing machines on a daily basis. In the club, more so than any other sport, coaches get to know athletes ability: How they perform under pressure, how they react to increasing work loads or how they make technical changes. These are taken into account. What parents often do not know is that coaches have weekly meetings to discuss the strengths, weaknesses and potential of squads and athletes. 99% of the time, the selection process confirms what coaches already know. It is therefore important to respect and trust the decisions made by coaches, who ultimately have to pass all selections through the scrutiny of their fellow coaches and the Head Coach Junior Women/Women before the crew is entered for racing.

What happens if the coaches get the selection wrong?

This is impossible! The stop watch never lies and the selection process is such there is no room for error. Those who have risen to the top of the group through the selection procedure are those who are selected to row in the "Top" boats.

How do I make a query about selection:

Feel free to approach coaches if you have queries about the selections made while keeping in mind that, as professionals, the coaches have already undergone the scrutiny and questions from The Head Coach Junior Women/Women and fellow coaches. The final selection has in fact been passed by The Head Coach Junior Women/Women . Any complaints should be directed to The Head Coach Junior Women/Women in writing.

Please Note: Once a crew has been selected, it will not be changed. This ensures that the professional judgement of the coaches is respected.

No selection "Gives a girl the chance to be in the top boat" at the expense of a better rower!