

Mount Vernon  
Crew  
Team Handbook  
2009-2010

Welcome Letter from Head Coach	2
Team/School Requirements	3
Requirements Prior to Season	3, 4
Expectations/Discipline	4, 5
Communications	5
Practices-General and at School	5, 6
Practices-at Marina	6, 7
Regattas	7, 8
Regattas- Outside Local Area	9, 10
Team Awards	9, 10
Misc. Information	10, 11
Fundraisers	12
Handbook Information Form	13



Hello Rowers and welcome to the Mount Vernon Crew Team.

Mount Vernon Crew Team members will gain strength, speed, and endurance as well as make new friends in the ultimate team sport.

In this handbook you will find necessary information for you and your parents. Read it carefully as the season ahead presents many challenges and we must be prepared to turn them into triumphs.

It is my hope that you will enjoy the sport of rowing as part of the Mount Vernon Crew.

Thank you and see you on the water!

Ryan Ward,  
 Head Coach  
 MV Crew Team

## Team Requirements

Mount Vernon Crew team requires that you have a willingness to learn the sport of rowing. To be eligible to row all students must be in good standing at Mount Vernon High School in grades 9-12. Other requirements (a health physical, swim test, US Rowing registration/forms, payment of fees, and participation in fund-raisers (see Requirements Prior to Start of Season for a detailed description of all requirements).

## School Requirements

Crew is a varsity/club sport at Mount Vernon High School and is not funded by either the school or the county. Team members must meet all school requirements in order to participate in crew. These include:

- all county requirements related to participation in team sports
- a current, valid health physical on file with the school
- a health care form on file with coach/boosters
- signed school participation and academic pledges

## Requirements Prior to Start of Season

There are many requirements that must be taken care of before an athlete can practice. Basic school forms can be obtained at the athletic office, sub school office, nurse's office and the front office of the high school. Crew specific, and many of the other basic forms can also be found on our website ([www.mvcrew.com](http://www.mvcrew.com)).

### **Before getting on the water you must have:**

#### Forms:

- a current, complete, valid health physical on file with the school (we strongly encourage making copies of your physical before turning it in)
- an Emergency Information/Health Form on file with the coaching staff
- US Rowing Liability Waiver signed online
- signed Swim Test Form
- Stotesbury Liability Waiver signed online
- signed school required forms (participation and academic pledge)
- signed Handbook Information Form
- Accountability form on file with the coaching staff

**Swim Test:** all members on the MV Crew team must take and pass a swim test. This test must be taken **each year**. Testing days will be arranged and paid for by the boosters. Sign up sheets for specific test days will be available on Orientation night. The swim test will consist of swimming 100 meters in any style(s), treading water for 5 minutes and then putting on a life jacket while in the water. Parents/guardians must then sign the swim test form and return it to the boosters before the rower will be allowed to row. There will be no exceptions to this policy.

**Safety video:** all team members must view the safety video **each year**. There will be several viewing days during winter conditioning in February.

**Membership fee:** Membership fees must be paid to the Mount Vernon Crew Boosters before an athlete can practice.

**Uniform:** team members are required to have a MV Crew unitard (Uni) and JL (a long sleeved warm up shirt) to wear on regatta days.

## **Expectations**

### **Athletes are expected to:**

- Work hard to improve and strive to achieve goals
- Be supportive of the team
- Attend practices and regattas
- Accept and support coaching decisions
- Seek feedback from coaches
- Maintain passing grades in all subjects
- Stay drug, tobacco and alcohol free
- Participate in fundraising activities

### **Coaches are expected to:**

- Ensure safety of athletes
- Train athletes
- Encourage team members to maintain grades and good study habits
- Provide feedback on strengths and areas needing improvement
- Make fair assessment of athletes

### **Parents/guardians are expected to:**

- Help ensure that their athlete attends practices and regattas
- Monitor their athlete's academic performance
- Be supportive of the team and coaches
- Respect coaching decisions on boat selection and rowing matters
- Bring questions or issues to the booster board
- Volunteer for at least one position assigned to the team at regattas
- Participate in fundraising events

### **Discipline:**

Mount Vernon Crew team members are expected to exhibit the highest standard of personal conduct at all times. Athletes will not use or possess alcohol, drugs or tobacco products. Inappropriate language will not be tolerated by any member of the team. This includes swearing or remarks based on sex, color, ethnicity, religion, etc. Behavior that disrupts the team will not be tolerated and may result in suspension or removal from the team. The Coaches will decide disciplinary actions.

## Communications

**Orientation Meeting:** parents/guardians and team members are required to attend the orientation meeting held prior to the season (date, time and school location to be announced). All necessary forms, volunteer sign ups, uniform ordering and practice schedules will be available. Coaches will also talk about their plans and expectations for the season.

**Email:** updates and upcoming events are sent to the team listserv. Email is the team's main form of communication so it is VITAL to have correct rower **and** parent/guardian email addresses. Check your email often during the season.

**Website:** our website, [www.mvcrew.com](http://www.mvcrew.com) is filled with information, maps, pictures, forms and the team calendar.

**School Announcements:** changes to the day's scheduled practice will be announced during the end of day announcements.

**Booster Meetings:** The Crew Boosters meet monthly from September through June, usually the third Tuesday of each month. Held at the high school, meetings start at 7:30 PM and usually last about an hour. These meetings are for parents/guardians to receive information and help determine the direction of the team.

## Practices:

Practice time, both on and off the water, is vital to all team members. At practice novice rowers learn proper techniques and how to row as a team while returning rowers improve their skills and increase their speed. Not attending practices affects the individual rower and the entire team. Team members are expected to be at every practice. Attendance will be taken before every practice to include during Spring break. Absences will affect your placement in a boat and your chance to race on regatta days. Your participation in the Stotesbury Cup regatta trip will also be affected by your absences through the rowing season.

### **General:**

- It is your responsibility to get to practice. Carpools are usually available to get rowers from the school to the marina but you must be proactive in obtaining a ride if you need it.
- A list will be submitted by the boosters to the county transportation office requesting permission for specific rowers to ride the school bus that drops off at the marina. Team members who would like to ride this bus are responsible for getting on the list.
- Rowers are expected to arrange appointments outside of practice times and notify coaches of absences before they occur when possible.
- Rowers are expected to be at practice the entire scheduled time. Coaches cannot return rowers to the marina during a practice as it disrupts the practice time for the entire boat/team.
- Rowers should be on time and ready to row at the time announced by the coaches.
- Rowers are expected to remain at the marina, in the crew area, during the entire practice.

- Rowers are expected to respect the personal belongings of other team members and coaches.
- EXPECT TO ROW DURING SPRING BREAK-most days will have 2 rowing sessions-one in the morning and one in the afternoon.
- Team members may ROW TWICE DAILY DURING MAY-once in the morning before school and the regular practice in the afternoon. These additional practices may be necessary to ensure the team is in the best possible form for championship races.
- Bring extra clothes, water, sunscreen and any medications (inhalers, etc.) to ALL practices

### **At the School:**

- If coaches choose to have practice at the school (erg testing, indoor training due to weather, low tide, etc.) the team will meet at the erg closet at 3 PM. School practices will end at 5 PM.
- Coaches will request that the office announce any change to the practice during the afternoon announcements. LISTEN DAILY TO ANNOUNCEMENTS!
- Team members will be expected to stay the entire practice.

### **At the Marina:**

**Base access/parking:** Because we practice at the marina on Ft Belvoir, access through the base gate is necessary. A list will be made of all those needing a pass for the season and will be submitted to Fort Belvoir. If you will need base access at any time during the season or are unsure if you will, you need to get on the list. Once the list is approved, registered owners of vehicles entering the base will go to Tulley Gate to get your temporary pass.

Drivers and rowers MUST have photo ID every time you enter the gate. NO EXCEPTIONS. Rowers can also be dropped off outside Walker gate and walk into the base but will still need photo ID.

- Do not bring any item that can be considered a weapon onto the base.
- Do not harass or cause problems with the gate guards and be polite and respectful when entering the gate.
- Display your temporary pass and have ID ready. If you are sent for inspection - cooperate.
- Parking is currently just inside the marina gates on the right side. Park as close as possible to other team cars to conserve space
- Do not block boats or other vehicles parked inside the marina
- No one except coaching staff should drive through the marina to the crew area. Parents are requested to drop off their rower at the marina gate for practice.
- Parents are asked to wait for their rower at the front of the marina after practice.

### **Marina practices:**

Team members will be required to move their name to the “present” side of the attendance board when arriving for practice each day. Coaches will only use names from this side of the board to boat seat assignments for water practice. Do not move names on the boat board. If you have a conflict on your assigned seat, speak to the coach.

- Practices at the marina are from 3 PM until 6:00 PM. Practices can sometimes run longer due to water and weather conditions, completion of the practice schedule and storing of equipment. Parents are asked to be understanding and flexible about the time practice ends. Rowers will not be released until all equipment is stored.
- Friday practices can run later once regattas begin because rowers are responsible for loading boats and equipment onto the trailer in preparation for the next day's race. Rowers will not be released until all equipment is loaded on the trailer and coaches give their pre-regatta briefing.
- Boy/girlfriends, friends or siblings are not allowed at the marina during practice times.
- When land training, stay in assigned area doing assigned workout.
- If you have a conflict with anyone at the marina, tell a coach immediately.
- At the marina rowers are expected to show appropriate behavior and to respect the equipment (Mt. Vernon's and especially those who pay to store their boats at the marina). **Sitting or standing on the pleasure craft and trailers and pushing/ jumping off the dock will not be tolerated.** Damage to the equipment or pleasure craft stored at the marina will be the responsibility of the rower and his/her parents/guardians.
- All shells will be accompanied by a coaching launch once launched from the dock. **DO NOT ROW** if a coach is not in sight.
- In case of ejection from the boat, swamping or capsizing, **STAY WITH THE BOAT**, the coaching launch has life vests and safety equipment and coaches are well trained in safety procedures.
- Listen to your coxswain and coach while on the water. Your safety as well as that of other team members, teams and the equipment depends on your ability to hear and follow through on commands.
- Rowers riding in the coaching launches are required to wear a life vest.

## Regattas

Races begin the last Saturday in March and occur every weekend until the end of May. Anticipate that the team will race EVERY Saturday during this time. Your boat and team depend on you to arrive **on time** and ready to race. At the Friday pre-regatta meeting, rowers will be told their expected arrival time to the race site. Rowers who have not checked in with the coach at the race site by the assigned time may not race. The event dry erase board will be at the team tent at each regatta. This board will give pertinent information on the day's races. Team members are expected to know what time to meet at the boat/trailer for their race.

On Thursdays before regattas, team captains will have a sign up sheet of food items to bring for the team to share during the regatta. Rowers are encouraged to bring their own water/sports drinks to the regatta.

### **Boat Seat Selection:**

There are a limited number of seats available in each shell as well as restrictions on how many and what kind of races the team can participate in at regattas. Therefore, all team members may not race at every regatta. Coaches determine boat seat assignments.

Rowers will be evaluated for boat selection based on:

- Attitude
- Consistency of rowing ability
- Attendance at practices
- Erg scores
- Seat races
- Subjective analysis by coaches of boat rowing/moving ability

Coxswains will be evaluated for boat selection based on:

- Attitude
- Consistency
- Attendance at practices
- Technical knowledge
- Leadership and ability to motivate rowers
- Subjective analysis by coaches of coxing ability

### **Items to bring to regattas:**

uni and JL  
 waterproof jacket, warm clothes (**no cotton**)  
 snacks and drinks (water, sports drinks)  
 small amount money (if you want to purchase food or t-shirt)  
 sunscreen  
 inhalers/required medication

During regattas there will be times when the team tent is not secure and unattended. Bring expensive items such as iPods, MP3 players and cell phones at your own risk. Rowers are expected to respect the belongings of other team members in the team tent. Only members of MV Crew are permitted in the team tent.

### **Local Regattas:**

- The coaches will tell each boat what time to arrive at the race site. Be on time. Plan for long lines to enter the site, parking issues, etc.
- Rowers are expected to be in proper race attire (team Uni and JL).
- Rowers will behave appropriately, exhibiting the highest standards of sportsmanship to other teams, officials and spectators.
- Foul language can exclude your boat. Use appropriate language both on and off the water
- You will be required to stay at the regatta until released by the coaches. The coaches will not release you until all equipment and boats are loaded on the trailer, tents are down and the team area cleaned. Plan on being at the race site until at least mid afternoon. Team members must talk to a coach or captain before leaving the regatta.
- Inappropriate behavior that causes other team members to be uncomfortable in the team tent will not be tolerated.

### **Regattas outside the local area:**

The team may travel to regattas outside the local area. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have a way to the regatta. For some races, carpools are set up to get rowers to the race site. Respond quickly to requests for sign up of car pool seats.

## **Stotesbury Cup Regatta-Philadelphia (“Stotes”):**

Each May the team travels to Philadelphia to compete in the oldest and largest high school regatta. **There is an additional cost per rower to participate** in this 3 day, 2-night event. The team travels by chartered bus and stays in a hotel in Philadelphia.

- All rowers on the Stotes trip will be required to ride the bus to Philadelphia and to all events while there.
- If your parent/guardian approves alternate arrangements to get you home from Stotes, plans must be in writing and given to the head coach **prior** to trip departure on Thursday. In Philadelphia, you must speak directly to the head coach before leaving.
- Team members will not leave the hotel or go into rooms of the opposite sex unless an adult is present.
- Appropriate behavior is expected at the hotel, no running or loud talking in the halls.
- Once final room check is completed each night, the safety bar on the door should be engaged. Any problems at the hotel should be brought to the coaches or a chaperone immediately.

## **Scholastic Nationals:**

At the end of the regular crew season, selected boats are invited to attend the Scholastic Nationals. This 3 day, 2-night event is held in a different city each year. If any of our boats are invited and the coaches determine that the boat would be competitive, members of the boat will be asked to participate. Team members carpool to the event and stay in a local hotel. This is a voluntary trip and there is **an additional cost per rower** to go.

## **Team Awards:**

Mount Vernon Crew awards several types of recognition at the end of each season. The coaching staff determines all awards. Awards are presented at the end of year picnic and the spring sports banquet, both held in June.

### Award types:

Novice Patch  
JV Pin  
Varsity Letter  
Varsity Pin  
Most Improved -Male and Female  
Hammer Award-Male and Female: for fastest erg times

### **Mount Vernon Crew Thiel Award**

This award is named in honor of Dr. James Thiel and his family for their dedication and support of the Mount Vernon Crew Team. The Mount Vernon Crew Thiel Award is awarded to the member(s) of the crew who exemplifies outstanding character, leadership and commitment in support of the team.

The award reads:

Through your leadership among fellow athletes, enthusiasm for the sport for crew and motivation to go above and beyond team requirements, the Mount Vernon Crew team has continued to grow and achieve success. You personify Dr. Thiel's example of leadership, selfless service and commitment in support of the team. The Mount Vernon Crew presents you with its highest honor, the Thiel Award.

### **Mount Vernon Women's Crew Prism Award**

The Mount Vernon Women's Crew Prism Award is presented to the female Crew member who best characterizes the spirit of the team. This female athlete is chosen by her peers as the team member who reflects the finest qualities of the Mount Vernon Women's Crew.

The award reads:

This individual is an inspiration through her leadership, positive attitude, kindness, and friendship. She brightens every practice with her contagious energy and boundless enthusiasm. Her dedication and commitment to the crew team provides a lasting effect which raises the bar of excellence. We row, compete and perform better because she is in the boat. She takes pride in being part of the Mount Vernon Women's crew team, is loyal to its traditions and believes in its future.

### **Misc. information:**

**Pre-season conditioning:** the coaches hold conditioning workouts for any Mount Vernon High school student beginning in late October at the erg closet in the high school, three days a week (to be announced) from 3-4:30 PM,. Winter conditioning is held 5 days per week closer to the start of the season. Team members are encouraged to attend these sessions. Your strength and endurance at the start of the season will be affected by your participation in winter conditioning.

**Team Dinners:** beginning at the end of March, the team has a dinner each Friday night throughout the season. Crew parents sign up to host a dinner and generously donate the food and supplies needed. Attendance is not mandatory but is encouraged to help build team unity. Team members are expected to behave appropriately at the dinner and to help clean up.

**Lost and Found:** items left for an extended period at the erg closet, marina or found in the team tent will be donated to a local thrift store. Mark **ALL** your team t-shirts, hoodies, uni's, JL's and jackets with your name or initials.

**Membership Fee:** team members are required to pay the membership fee before they can row. The fees pay for insurance, coaching stipends, race entry fees and needed equipment. You will not be able to get on the water without first taking care of this obligation. Members who may have difficulty paying the fee should contact the booster president or treasurer to discuss payment options.

**Membership Fee Refund Policy:** if a team member chooses not continue in crew within the first 2 weeks of the season, the membership fee will be refunded excluding \$100. After the first two weeks, there will be no refunds unless there are extenuating circumstances sent in writing to the booster president for a board vote.

**Uniform:** a Mount Vernon Crew uniform consisting of a unitard (Uni) and a long sleeved JL is required of all team members in order to participate in regattas. The cost of the uni and JL are in addition to membership fees. Because the uniform is custom made for each team member, there are NO refunds given. Orders are pre paid only.

Team t-shirts, hoodies and jackets are usually ordered twice during the year and are an optional pre-paid purchase.

**Other expenses:** Day trips to regattas outside the local area require only minimal money for food, drinks and t-shirt if desired.

Stotesbury Cup and Nationals are overnight trips and require an additional fee. Participation in these events is voluntary and expenses are kept as low as possible.

## **Fund-raisers:**

During the off season, team members are required to participate in fundraising events set up by the boosters. Money collected from these events is used to purchase newer equipment, pay for equipment repairs and insurance.

### **Fund-raisers may include:**

**Phone book delivery:** 2-3 day event usually held in November. The team delivers over 8000 phone books to local homes and requires all team members and many parent volunteers.

**Gift-Wrap:** held in December. The team wraps gifts at the Barnes and Noble/Borders bookstores in Springfield, which requires team members to sign up for 2-hour shifts and a parent volunteer per shift.

**Erg-a-thon:** one or two day event. The team rows on ergs in front of a store and collects donations. This requires team members to sign up for one hour on an erg or one hour of collecting donations. A few parent volunteers are needed to supervise throughout the day.

**Tag Day:** one-day event held the last Saturday of February. The team goes to local homes requesting donations. This is the team's largest fund-raiser and is mandatory for all team members. Many parent volunteers are also needed.

**College Regatta Concessions:** one-day event held the first Sunday of May. Team parents run the concessions for a George Mason regatta at Sandy Run Regional Park. This event requires several parents to run the concessions as well as volunteers to collect needed food items, get ice, and transport supplies to Sandy Run.

### **Car washes, Yard Sales**

### **Other events**

**Mount Vernon Yacht Club Commissioning Day:** a one-day event held the first Sunday in May. Rowers attend this community event and provide an exhibition race following opening ceremonies.

**End of year picnic:** one-day event family event usually held on a Saturday the second week of June at the Fort Belvoir marina. Team families sign up to provide food items.

**Handbook Information Form**

Season: 200\_\_\_-201\_\_\_

Check here if you DO NOT want your contact information released in the crew booster roster

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Male\_\_\_ Female\_\_\_ Grade\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/guardian Cell phone:\_\_\_\_\_

Rower cell phone:\_\_\_\_\_

Email: Rower:\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/guardian:\_\_\_\_\_

**Rower's military affiliation:** Dependent of AD Dependent of retired military None  
**(Circle one)**

Dependent of government contractor Dependent of base civilian worker

Base Access Information:

Currently have base access yes no

Rower will drive to practice yes no occasionally

Full, legal names of ALL who will enter base:

\_\_\_\_\_

I have read the Mount Vernon Crew Handbook and understand what is expected as a member of the Mount Vernon Crew team including attendance requirements.

Signed:\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_

I have read the Mount Vernon Crew Handbook and understand what is expected of my child as a member of the Mount Vernon Crew team.

The coaching staff and chaperones have permission to give my child over the counter medications.  
(circle one) yes no

I give permission for my child to ride in vehicles driven by the coaching staff, parent volunteers and chaperones. (circle one) yes no

Parent/  
guardian signature:\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_