Corporate Challenge 2015
Welcome to the Somerset Rowing Corporate Challenge

I would like to welcome you all to the 2015 Somerset Rowing Corporate Challenge.

Rowing at Somerset College has proven to be very beneficial to the personal development of the Somerset students and now the Corporate Challenge offers an opportunity to share in the benefits that Rowing has to offer. Each crew member will have individual responsibilities to their own skill development and training, but the ultimate goal is to learn how communication, commitment and personal responsibility can help individuals to develop as a team and to work towards a common goal.

The challenge will not only be one of personal development but, most importantly how to extract the best performance from your crew. To achieve this, your crew will need to be patient, persistent and understanding. It will be important for you to communicate openly and honestly with your crew and to respect each and every crew member whilst drawing on their areas of expertise.

Good luck and enjoy!

Andrew Butler
Head Coach – Rowing
Communication and Safe Lifting  
– Handling Equipment Correctly

Lifting the Rowing Boat from Rack to Trestle
The Stroke of the crew is to ensure that the crew is spaced correctly around the boat. Stroke and Three should be at the Stern end, and Bow and Two should be at the Bow end. Care needs to be taken when placing the boat on the trestles.

Rolling the Boat
The crew should be in their correct positions around the boat (Bow and Two at the Bow end and Stroke and Three at the Stern end) with two people on either side. The Stroke will direct the crew when to lift and which direction to roll the boat, preferably by directing to roll towards or away from the water. The dialogue needs to be loud and clear ie “Hands on” once all crew members are ready the Stroke should call “Lift, Roll towards the water”.

Carrying the Boat
The Boat can be carried at waste height or at shoulder height, depending which position is safe, secure and comfortable for the crew. It is the responsibility of the Stroke to communicate which option is to be taken.

Placing of Boat onto the Water
All crew members need to be on the same side of the boat, away from the water. Under the command of the Stroke the crew should slowly walk towards the edge of the pontoon and feel for the edge with their toes. Once all crew members are in position the Stroke will tell the crew to “place”. The boat should then be placed into the water, holding the boat level, ensuring that the boat or the fin on be boat does not get damaged. The crew members should bend from the knees and take as much load as possible with the legs.

Lifting the Boat Out of the Water
The Stroke should command the crew to place hands on the boat and usually lift on the count of three. Crew members should have knees bent in a crouching position and do the majority of the lifting with the legs.
Introduction to Equipment

Information on the names of the boat parts and other equipment is found towards the back of this Handbook.

Correct Setting of Equipment

**Oars**
Correct sides, bow side in the left hand and stroke side in the right hand.
Cleaver facing down towards the water.

**Gates**
Facing towards the Stern and may need some adjustment depending on the size of the crew.

**Foot Stretcher**
Set for appropriate leg length, hands approximately two fist widths apart at the finish position.

Introduction Day

Terms and Concepts to Learn and Establish

1. **Touching/Tapping**
   Maneuvering the boat in a forward motion
   Normally arms only
   One hand at a time or both hands

2. **Backing**
   Opposite to touching
   One hand at a time or both hands

3. **Easy Oar**
   Stop with hands away with body at finish position

4. **Check the boat**
   Digging the oars into the water to act as brakes

**Focus:** Safe maneuvering and handling of the boat.
Week 1

Terms and Concepts to Learn and Establish

1. **Correct Grip and Cross Over**
   
   Left hand above right hand.
   
   Left hand in front of right hand.
   
   Hands close together.

2. **Feathering and Squaring of the blade**

   **Squared Blade**
   
   Blade is vertical and the correct angle for the drive phase.

   Sleeve and Gate should meet flush to create correct angle.

   Thumbs on end of the handle, wrists flat, fingers wrapped around the grip.
Feathered Blade

Blade Horizontal
Correct blade angle and grip during recovery phase.

Thumbs on end of the handle, slight bend in wrist, grip slightly out of the palm of the hand.

Squaring and Feathering Action

Feathering
Slight bend of wrist, finishing the action with the fingers.

Squaring
Rolling with fingers and flattening the wrist.

Grip should be as relaxed as possible when in Drive or Recovery phase acting as a hook rather than squeezing the handle.

3. Catch Position

Catch position is the furthermost point that the rower can reach whilst maintaining good posture.

Catch position is where the blade should enter the water for the drive phase.
4. Finish Position

Finish position is the point where the rower leans back without dropping down into the boat, again maintaining good posture.

Finish position is where the blade should exit the water at the end of the drive phase.

Focus: Blade Skills, Posture

Video of the Week
Stop Rowing – http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M0Oq2gi_p4Q
Week 2

Terms and Concepts to Learn and Establish

1. **Drive Phase**
   Refers to the propulsion part of the stroke.
   Needs to be done in order or sequence.
   Correct drive sequence is Legs, Bodies, Arms.

2. **Recovery Phase – Arms, Bodies Legs**
   Refers to the gliding forward part of the stroke.
   Also needs to be done in order or sequence.
   Correct recovery sequence is Legs, Bodies, Arms.

3. **Blade entry into the Water**
   Blade needs to be squared up before reaching the catch position.
   Blade should be placed quickly into the water by moving only the arms and hands.
   Blade should be placed just under the surface of the water.

*Focus*: Order of the Stroke, Sequence

**Video of the Week**
Boat Control – [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DcbwMDb2NnQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DcbwMDb2NnQ)
Week 3

Terms and Concepts to Learn and Establish

1. **Maximum Length Strokes**
   
   Re-establish Catch and Finish positions ensuring correct ‘tall posture’.
   
   Achieve maximum reach whilst maintaining catch and finish positions.

2. **Leg Drive for Power**

   Leg drive should be the first and only movement directly after the blade placement.
   
   Leg drive should generate over half of the propulsive force of the stroke.
   
   Aim to push legs down completely before starting body swing or arm draw.

3. **Blade Exit from the Water**

   Blade should be exited from the water whilst still squared.
   
   Blades should feather in the air like they are looping over the top of a buoy.

   **Focus:** Length and Leg drive.

**Video of the Week**

Hugh Laurie on Rowing – [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cHq0kYgD1ZI](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cHq0kYgD1ZI)
Week 4

Terms and Concepts to Learn and Establish

1. **Timing**
   The crew needs to be aware of the length and rating that is best for the whole crew.
   Ensure that you are trying to maintain a constant and consistent rhythm.
   Learn about rating, for example 20, 25, race pace.

2. **Clean Blade Work**
   Entry and exit from the water needs to be done with blade squared.
   Avoid the temptation to feather early as this will check the boat and not let it run between strokes.
   Ensure that the blade is squared on the way forward to prepare it for the entry.
   Move only the arms to place and exit the blade.

3. **Establish Race Plan**
   Crews need to establish a race plan that every member is clear about.
   The coxswain will need to be aware of the plan to instruct the crew.
   The crew should have a contingency plan in case of a crab.

*Focus:* Crew Timing and Goal setting.

**Video of the Week**
Inspiration! Watch how these top crews are very horizontal, no up and down movement
– [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vOPgE50fSRY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vOPgE50fSRY)
**Week 5**

**Terms and Concepts to Learn and Establish**

1.  **Race Start**
   Start should be as fast as possible whilst maintaining technique.
   Starting at catch position at ¾ Slide position.
   The start usually moves out to full slide over a series of strokes. With the coach you will need to establish a start that is best for your crew.

2.  **Practice Race Plan**
   Ensure that the race plan is clear and well communicated before practicing the plan. The crew should practice the race plan at a ‘steady speed’ a couple of times before trying at race pace.

3.  **Maintain technique**
   Now comes the time to try to hold it all together under pressure. Try to keep it simple and rely on your preparation.

   **Focus:** Race preparation.

**Video of the Week**
Never Give Up, Searles – [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q9Ave90kGpQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q9Ave90kGpQ)
Rowing Traffic Rules

- Always, keep the riverbank to your extreme left.
- Do not proceed out into the middle of the river unless you are overtaking a slower craft, and even then be very cautious of traffic heading in the opposite direction.
- Craft being overtaken must give way to the overtaking craft.
- Never enter the middle of the river unless you are turning around.
- Boats entering or returning from the canals must give way to crews training on the small lake and must follow the traffic flow.
- Upon leaving the Boatshed, fixing up of boats is to be done well away from the beach.
- Proceed to pass close to the river bank and follow a large arc through the bridge, making sure to check for traffic entering the bridge, moving down towards or coming from the weir before you proceed to cross under the bridge. Inbound traffic must create a wide arc towards the pontoon and clear the area as quickly as possible once out of the boat.

Pontoon Usage Guidelines

- All crew members must pay attention and follow directions when handling the boats on the pontoon to avoid damaging the equipment.
- Outgoing crews must put oars in the gates and exit the pontoon as quickly as possible.
- When boating in Quads, oars are to be left on the grassed area until the boat is on the water and one crew member and the coxswain should hold the boat whilst the remainder of the crew quickly retrieve the oars.
- Incoming crews must give way to outgoing crews and stay well clear to allow for safe passage.
- Incoming crews must remove their oars from the pontoon immediately after putting the boat on the trestles.
Important Rowing Terminology

These are a collection of terms that are used by the coxswain, coach or person in the boat responsible for directing the crew.

**Easy Oar or Easy**
STOP ROWING! Sit in the finish position and hold your hands straight out in front of you.

**Touch it Up**
Short rowing strokes to manoeuvre the boat in the forward direction. Normally done with arms only, pulling the blade towards your body. “Touching” is very important for regattas to align the boat at the start of a race. (Done with one hand at a time to point the boat in the right direction.)

**Back It Down**
This is the reverse of touching also used for manoeuvring the boat. It may need to be done with one hand at a time or both hands to go backwards. (Very important to avoid crashes.)

**Check the Boat or Check it**
This is where the rowers dig their oars in the water to stop the boat quickly. This is also very important to avoid crashes.

**Finish Position**
This is the position where the rower takes the blades out of the water. Can be used as a starting point for the crew when training.

**Catch Position**
This is the position where the stroke starts and is the position where racing starts from.

**Stroke Seat or Stroke**
This is the name given to the person sitting in the rowing seat closest to the stern of the boat. The stroke is responsible for setting the rhythm and timing of the boat.

**Bow Seat or Bow**
This is the name given to the person sitting in the rowing seat closest to the bow of the boat.

**2 Seat and 3 Seat**
These seats are numbered in order from the bow. It is important to know which seat you are sitting in, in case the coach or coxswain needs to give you instructions.

**Bow Pair**
The two rowers closest to the bow of the boat. (Bow and 2)

**Stern Pair**
The two rowers closest to the stern of the boat. (Stroke and 3)
BLADE
This is the wide, flat section on the oar at the head of the shaft, also known as the spoon. This term is often used when referring to the entire oar.

BOW SIDE
Side of the boat to your left when you are rowing.

BUTTON
It is a plastic fitting tightened on the oar to prevent it from slipping through the gate and to adjust the gearing of the oar. The yellow plastic piece on the Croker oars.

CANVAS
The decked over section of the bow. This term is also used to describe how far a crew was in front or behind another, ie “Jeez, that crew must have only won by half a canvas!”

COXSWAIN (COX)
The person who steers the boat.

The person who is in command of the boat and is responsible for steering the boat in Quad Sculls and directs the crew, keeping the crew safe by following the traffic flow.

COLLAR
The protective plastic piece of the oar that sits in the gate. The bright pink piece on the Croker oars.

CRAB
This is a problem encountered by a rower when their oar fails to be released from the water at the end of the stroke. It is caused by improper squaring or feathering, and is a common problem with new rowers. The movement of the boat overcomes the rower’s control of the oar, and the oar is often swung parallel to the boat. In extreme cases with speed involved, a rower can be thrown out of the boat and/or the oar can be broken. If this happens to you, stay under the water until the crew has rowed over the top of you so you don’t get hit. You do not want to get hit.

FEATHERING
The process of rotating the oar in the fingers to make the blade parallel to the water’s surface.

FOOT STRETCHER
An adjustable bracket to which the rower is secured by putting their feet in the shoes or clogs.

GATE
Used to be called an oarlock and is used to fasten the oar to the boat.

RATING
How fast you are moving up and down the slide. This is measured in Strokes Per Minute, or SPM. For example a rating of 16 is slow, a rating of 38 is fast.
RIGGER
The big metal thing that connects the gate to the boat hull. It can either be a wing rigger, which is one large, almost wing-shaped piece of metal, or a conventional rigger, which is almost like a wire frame.

SCULL (SINGLE)
A term used to describe a one-person boat or a boat in which a rower has two oars each.

SCULLING
A term used to describe a boat in which the rowers have two oars each. Can be in a Single Scull, Double Scull or a Quad Scull.

SLIDE
The track that the seat moves on.

SQUARING
The process of making your blade perpendicular to the water’s surface.

STROKE SIDE
The side on your right when rowing.
These seats are numbered in order from the bow. It is important to know which seat you are sitting in, in case the coach or coxswain needs to give you instructions.

DRIVE
This is the part of the stroke where the blades are squared in the water and the rower is propelling the boat.

RECOVERY
This is the part of the stroke where the blades are feathered and out of the water and the rower is relaxed and travelling forward to take the next stroke.
Equipment and Parts

Oars

**Blade**
This is the wide, flat section on the oar at the head of the shaft, also known as the spoon. This term is often used when referring to the entire oar.

**Button**
It is a plastic fitting tightened on the oar to prevent it from slipping through the gate and to adjust the gearing of the oar. The yellow plastic piece on the Croker oars.

**Sleeve**
The protective plastic piece of the oar that sits in the gate. The bright pink piece on the Croker oars.

**Shaft**
The long black tubular section of the oar, normally made from carbon fibre

**Bow Side**
The side of the boat to your left when you are rowing.

**Stroke Side**
The side of the boat to your right when you are rowing.
**Boat**

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**Foot Stretcher**
An adjustable bracket to which the rower is secured by putting their feet in the shoes or clogs. The adjustment has a similar result to changing the seat height on a bike.

**Gate**
Used to be called an oarlock and is used to fasten the oar to the boat.

**Rigger**
The big metal thing that connects the gate to the boat hull. It can either be a wing rigger, which is one large, almost wing-shaped piece of metal, or a conventional rigger, which is almost like a wire frame.

**Slide**
The track that the seat moves on.
## Activities Check List

### Introduction Day
- Paperwork completed
- Go Rowing DVD
- Correct Handling of Equipment – Boats and Oars
- Correct Handling of Coaching Equipment
- Safety Position
- Touching
- Backing
- Easy Oar (Stop Rowing)
- Checking the boat (Putting the brakes on)

### Week 1
- Correct Grip
- Crossover, Left hand in front
- Feathering
- Squaring
- Correct Finish Position
- Correct Catch Position
- Time per 500m if possible

### Week 2
- Drive Phase – Legs, Bodies, Arms
- Recovery Phase – Arms, Bodies, Legs
- Catches – Blade entry into the Water
- Maintaining Correct Posture at the Catch
- Time per 500m if possible

### Week 3
- Maximum Length Strokes
- Understanding of Distance per Stroke for Boat Speed
- Leg Drive for Power
- Blade Exit from the Water
- Time per 500m if possible
### Week 4

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<td>Leg Drive for Power</td>
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<td>Discuss Race Plan/Goal Setting with the Crew</td>
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<tr>
<td>Establish Race Plan</td>
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<td>Time per 500m if possible</td>
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### Week 5

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<td>Race Start</td>
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<td>Practice Race Plan</td>
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<td>Maintain Technique Under Race Pressure</td>
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<td>Time per 500m if possible</td>
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Important Safety Advice

Capsize
In the unlikely event that you capsize, the safest option is to stay with the boat.
Your coach should be close at hand to help you to deal with this situation.
You may attempt to re-enter the boat from the water, you may also swim the boat to shore and re-enter from the shore.
In the highly unlikely event that you think that a shark may be present we advise that you leave the boat and get out of the water as quickly as possible.

Lifting
Please follow the lifting instructions as explained in the introduction. If you are unclear, uncomfortable or feel that you can not lift the equipment let your coach know immediately.

Training and Racing Injury or Illness
If at any time of training or racing you feel unwell or that you have caused or aggravated an injury let your coach know immediately. You are not letting your team down if you are unwell or injured.
Your health is our number one priority.

Emergency
You are required to provide an emergency contact with your registration.
In the case of emergency our coaches will have mobile phones and will be able to call medical assistance if required.

Valuables and Belongings
Whilst all care is taken with security, whenever possible it is best not to leave valuables in the shed.
Please feel free to give your keys and phone to your coach. There will be a waterproof bag available to put belongings in.
Thank you to Somerset Rowing’s Corporate Challenge partners!
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