

Rowing Terminology

EQUIPMENT

Blade - End of oar in contact with water, most commonly cleaver-shaped (older, elliptical oars are called “spoons”) - ideally stationary in water, allowing levering of boat forward

Boat - members of the crew rowing to propel the shell - **Bow** - front of the boat (the rowers’ back faces toward the bow)

Bow-ball - ball fixed to front of the boat (for safety/ref. point for judging races)

Deck - material covering stern and bow segments

Erg – Short for ergometer. Rowing machine that closely approximates the actual rowing motion. CCDS uses Concept II which have a flywheel and a digital readout so that rowers can measure strokes per minute and distance covered

Gate – The bar across the oarlock that keeps the oar in place

Gunwale (pron. “gunnel”) - topside of a shell’s hull (lateral to slides)

Handle - end of an oar to which is affixed a grip to be held by the rower

Inboard – (oar shaft) toward the central axis of the boat

Loom - shaft of an oar

Port - direction left compared to the axis drawn from stern to bow (for a rower, this is the right side; left side of coxswain)

Oar - Used to drive the boat forward; rowers do not use paddles

Outboard - (oar shaft) away from the central axis of the boat

Rigger - frame affixed to side of shell, holding the oarlock mechanism

Rudder - hinged fin mounted beneath hull; allows steering of boat

Sculling - use of two blades (oars) by a rower to propel boat; one port, one starboard

Shell - a craft propelled by oars for racing (note: “boat” describes rowers in a shell)

Slide - the mechanism comprised of the seat, wheels, and tracks

Starboard - direction right of the axis drawn from stern to bow (for a rower, this is the left side; right side of coxswain)

Stern – The rear of the boat; the direction the rowers are facing

Stretcher - adjustable foot-anchoring mechanism (shoes, footboard, etc.)

Stroke Coach – Computer mounted on shell or worn on rower that measures stroke rate, stroke count, elapsed time and distance

WORDS ON THE WATER

Backing - with blade buried in water, apply forward pressure with arms and back; stable motion prevents uneasy set -when spinning a boat, backing occurs when the non-backing side's blades are on recovery

Blade work - precise manipulation of the blade during a stroke (feathering)

Catch - point of the stroke when the oar strikes the water -shins are perpendicular to bottom of boat - back is straight and angled as 1 o'clock on a clock-face -arms are extended fully and wrists are flat

Check - rough interference of smooth recovery and run due to rush. Alt: squaring of the blade in the water to slow boat.

Crab - loss of control of an oar due to inappropriate angulation of blade in drive

Drive - course of rowing exertion augmenting forward momentum; "pulling" on the oar (by pushing with the legs) -Starting at the catch position, the oar is pulled by pressing the legs, then prying with the back, then brought toward the body and lifted out of the water by the hands.

Feathering - turning of the blade by spinning the oar in the oarlock; decreases boat check from drag during recovery -for sweep rowers: accomplished with the inboard hand only -for scullers: accomplished by extending the fingers while lowering the pad of the palm, thus rolling the grip to the base of the fingers (no wrist motion)

Finish - end of the drive -back is positioned straight and angled as 11 o'clock on a clock-face -wrists are flat and arms do not allow firm contact of handle and abdomen -handle is level with middle of the chest

"Let it Fly" - way enough of the stroke followed by rowers' suspension of all blades out of the water at hands-away, balancing the boat

Paddle - slowest pace in rowing; just enough pressure to move the shell. Precise technique is still used, but with lower ratio (slower drive)

Power 10 - A call for rowers to 10 of their best, most powerful strokes

Puddle - Residual swirl of water after the blade is extracted from the water. More pronounced puddles result from greater pressure on the drive, which produces larger pockets of air behind the blade.

'Ready All' - get ready to row!

Release - see "Finish"

Recovery - relaxed part of rowing stroke; in sequence opposite of drive. Attention is paid to smooth motion to avoid deterring boat-run. -Arms extend fully, after which the back leans forward from the 11 o'clock to 1 o'clock position on a clock-face. -The legs begin to bend only after the handle has passed the knees. Leg motion is light, preventing check of boat. -Un-feathering of the blade occurs gradually, beginning only after the handle has passed mid-shin

Run - distance a boat travels between strokes

Rushing - a rower is out of sync with the rest of the boat (due to excessively fast recovery) -caused by rower pulling themselves up the slide -interrupts forward run of boat

Sculling (sweep) - used for adjusting the course at a platform start; one rower passes their handle to the seat ahead of them, who rows hands-only to accomplish angular adjustments to the boat position.

Set - the balance of a shell, from side-to-side -determined by alignment of the center of gravity of the rowers with the center of the boat -also effected by precise agreement between all boat members' actions

Settle - reduced cadence subsequent and relative to the starting sprint of a piece.

Skying - error in which a rowers' blade reaches upward (away from water) on recovery -corresponds to lowering of hands near the catch (on recovery) -affects center of gravity of the boat and timing of the catch, therefore damages the set of the boat and efficiency of the drive

Square - blade is held perpendicular to the surface of the water -position is equivalent to saying "unfeathered"

Start - first strokes of a race; usually truncated on the forward-end of recovery. Quick timing, but medium pressure to build boat-speed and avoid washing out. Normally followed by a brief sprint period.

Striking - the frequency with which strokes are occurring, as established by the stroke -interchangeable with "stroke-rate" or "cadence."

Stroke - the action of moving an oar into, through, and out of the water. Alt: the oarsman seated nearest the stern of the boat. The stroke-seat establishes the striking and ratio for all boat-members.

Swingpick - rowing without the use of the slide (arms and back only); useful for drills or floating-start alignment.

Washing out - the blade is not adequately placed in the water before pulling, resulting in splashing of water and truncated drive.

"Way Enough!" - stop whatever you're doing immediately