

# **Table Mountain Rowing Club**

# **TMRC**



## **Safety Policy**

**Effective May 2018**

# Table Mountain Rowing Club



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# Table Mountain Rowing Club



## Program Safety Policy Administration

### **Purpose:**

Participation in **TABLE MOUNTAIN ROWING CLUB (TMRC)** activities and programs carries potential risk for injury or even death. Because of this, TMRC has created this comprehensive Safety Policy to help guide safe participation behaviors and ensure best practices are effectively communicated, acknowledged, and adhered to.

Rowing is a safe sport when conducted with due consideration for the risks inherently associated with any outdoor water sport. There is the risk of personal injury from collision and the risk of drowning when rowing participants find themselves in the water. All risks are heightened in cold water. While contending with difficult weather conditions is part of the sport, safe enjoyment of the sport is the aim. Concern for personal safety must be paramount. TMRC has assessed the risks unique to the club and the area of operation and has prepared the safety procedures in this Program Safety Policy to minimize those risks. Nothing in this document in anyway limits an individual's responsibility for assessing his or her personal skills and for the outcome of his or her decisions and actions.

These policies are binding to all activities undertaken by the Table Mountain Rowing Club, a program of the Feather River Center (FRC).

### **Policy Statement:**

All TMRC members, program participants, and all guests and visitors are required to be familiar with and adhere to this Safety Policy at all times. Failure to do so may result in loss of rowing privileges.

### **Review and Revision:**

The TMRC Safety Policy will be reviewed annually by the TMRC Safety Committee in May of each year, with draft revisions being submitted for approval of the Board of Directors at the June Board meeting so they can be included in the New Member Participation packet.

### **Procedures:**

The TMRC Safety Committee shall:

- Annually review and suggest revisions to strengthen TMRC Safety Policies and ensure they are relevant to risks associated with the club's activities.
- Ensure that this Safety Policy is conspicuously communicated and that all members, participants, their guests, and all visitors have access to this policy through the medium appropriate to their reason for access. This will include but not be limited to the TMRC website, printed documents, and posters placed in conspicuous areas, and anecdotally through verbal means between program leadership and participants as our culture of safety is communicated via the spoken word.
- Ensure that all TMRC members, and program participants provide written acknowledgement of the receipt, understanding, and adherence to these Safety Policies once each year.
- Formalize and communicate a verbal and written procedure to communicate safety incidents and/or concerns and a response/remedy protocol visible and transparent to TMRC members. Provide for a storage plan for documentation of these issues. Communicate all issues to the TMRC Board of Directors.

- Oversee the safety requirements of USRowing Organizational membership.
  - ✓ Ensure that each member watches the USRowing Safety Video each year and signs that they have done this.
  - ✓ Ensure that all TMRC Board Members and Junior Crew coaches pass a background check available through the USRowing website.
  - ✓ Ensure that each new TMRC Board Member, coach and volunteers that have direct access to Junior rowers over the course of several days takes the **SafeSport** training provided free of charge on the USRowing website.
  - ✓ Ensure that all coaches involved with Junior Crew take the **SafeSport** refresher course bi-annually.
  - ✓ Ensure that all TMRC coaches have current CPR/AED and First Aid certificates within 30 days of their providing coaching services and maintain these certifications as required. TMRC will pay for these certifications if pre-approval is given by the TMRC Board in advance of a course being taken.
  - ✓ Ensure that all coaches receive the California Safe Boating Certificate offered by the Department of Boating and Waterways.
  - ✓ Ensure that all participants complete a medical consent form identifying any medical conditions that they may have including allergies and medications that may be important to emergency response personnel should they require treatment. Coaches or activity supervisors must have these forms accessible during practice sessions or while traveling for TMRC races or events.

### **Swim Test:**

All TMRC members and participants must provide a swim test certificate provided by a Red Cross certified Lifeguard or a WSI (Water Safety Instructor) **or** wear an approved US Coast Guard PFD (Personal Flotation Device) at all times when on the water.

- The swim test consists of demonstrating the ability to tread water for 10 minutes, put on a life vest that is thrown while treading water and to swim 50 yards.
- Swim tests will not be conducted by TMRC coaches.
- Swim test forms are available for download on the TMRC website at [tablemountainrowing.org](http://tablemountainrowing.org).
- PFD's are of little benefit if they are not sized appropriately for the user or adjusted to fit correctly. All supervised programming that requires the use of a PFD will be the responsibility of the TMRC coaches to correctly choose and adjust the PFD for the participant.

Note: Although TMRC has ample PFD's to choose from, participants who do not feel they have a good fit with a TMRC PFD should choose not to participate and are encouraged to either obtain the required swim certificate or provide their own PFD and be responsible for its correct use.

### **Safety Launch:**

All coached practices will have a safety launch present on the water.

The following safety equipment must be maintained in a safety launch:

- Enough PFD's for each occupant in the largest boat the coach is following (9 for an 8 oared shell), and that each occupant of the safety launch is wearing a PFD.
- A paddle, a bailer, a first aid kit, a small tool kit, a flashlight, a whistle, an emergency space blanket to match the number of PFDs, and a throw bag.
- Running lights for up to 30 minutes before and after sunrise/sunset.

Launch drivers will carry a charged cell phone to call for other coaches or emergency numbers if needed. Each launch driver is responsible for the safety of all occupants and serves legally in California as the "Captain".

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These policies are binding to all activities undertaken by the Table Mountain Rowing Club, a program of the Feather River Center (FRC).

### **Policy Statement:**

All TMRC members, program participants, and all guests and visitors are required to be familiar with and adhere to this Safety Policy at all times. Failure to do so may result in loss of rowing privileges.

### **Safety Rules for All TMRC Members and Participants:**

1. SAFETY is the highest priority.
2. Each TMRC member must watch the USRowing Safety video each year and sign off that they have done this. (30 minute video - US Rowing>Member Services>Resources>Safety> Safety Video)
3. Each person is 100% responsible for the whole boat and 100% accountable for his own oar, rigging, foot-stretchers, seat, slides, bolts and rigger. Each person checks to make sure that all equipment is functioning properly before leaving the dock.
4. All TMRC members and participants must provide a Swim Test certificate provided by a WSI (Water Safety Instructor) which includes:
  - a. Demonstrating the ability to tread water for 10 minutes,
  - b. Donning a PFD (Personal Flotation Device) that is thrown while treading water, and
  - c. Swimming a distance of 50 yards.

Swim test forms are available for download on the TMRC website at [tablemountainrowing.org](http://tablemountainrowing.org).

5. If a swim test has not been completed, a rower must wear an approved US Coast Guard PFD, which can be an inflatable one, at all times when in a boat on the water.
6. All TMRC members must have a PFD available when rowing in a single, double or pair boat. If they have passed a swim test, the PFD may be stored by the foot-stretchers. If they have not passed a swim test, the PFD must be worn at all times.
7. All TMRC members must complete a Medical Consent Form identifying any medical conditions that they may have including allergies and medications that may be important to emergency response

personnel should they require treatment. Coaches or activity supervisors must have these records accessible during practice sessions or while traveling for TMRC races or events.

### **Traffic Pattern on the Thermalito North Forebay:**

1. Following the correct traffic pattern is one of the most important things our members and program participants can do to reduce risk while on the water. This waterway has a counter-clockwise or left hand traffic pattern, which means vessels underway should divide the waterway in half and the boat proceeds on the right half side of the waterway.

### **Weather Restrictions and Precautions:**

1. All TMRC members must acknowledge, and understand special circumstances for high winds, very cold or very hot weather conditions or limited visibility.
2. Boats cannot be launched or must return to dock immediately in the following conditions:
  - a. Fog reduces visibility such that the launch dock cannot be seen from the rowing dock.
  - b. Lightning is visible. If thunder can be heard, lightning is close and boats cannot launch during this time. Boats must wait at least 30 minutes after the last time thunder was heard or lightning was seen.
  - c. Winds above 12 knots or 13 mph or there are white caps on the water.
  - d. Ice or other surface conditions on the ground or docks make carrying a shell dangerous from boathouse to the launch area.
  - e. Cold Weather:
    - i. Small boats (1x, 2x, 2+) may only launch when the combined air and water temperature is 90F+
    - ii. Bigger boats (4x, 4+, 8+) may launch when the combined air and water temperature is 80F +
3. When rowing 30 minutes or more before sunrise and 30 minutes or more after sunset, all boats including rowing shells are required to have lights.

### **Potential Hazards and Risks:**

1. Although rowing is a relatively safe sport, there is, due to its nature, the potential for accidents, injury and even death. It is essential for all TMRC members to be aware of the hazards and risks associated with the sport of rowing, in order that the risks can be minimized. Hazards and risks include the following:
2. Weather and Meteorological Hazards
  - a. Heat / Cold
  - b. Darkness
  - c. Fog
  - d. Wind
  - e. Lightning
  - f. Hail
3. Hazards on the Water
  - a. Waves, wakes, swells
  - b. Rafts, buoys, moored boats
  - c. Other boats, paddleboards, swimmers
  - d. Logs, deadheads, and other floating debris
  - e. The shore or docks
  - f. Other rowing shells and their oars
4. Hazards on Shore
  - a. Objects in and around the boathouse, including boats on racks
  - b. Pedestrians
  - c. Slippery surfaces (e.g. grass, dock)

5. Risks
  - a. Drowning (without doubt, this is the most serious risk of all)
  - b. Collisions with objects on the water (especially other rowing shells-a very serious risk)
  - c. Being in a shell that capsizes or is swamped
  - d. Hypothermia
  - e. Collisions off the water (in the boathouse, on land, on the dock), causing knocks, scrapes, and cuts
  - f. Dehydration, cramps
  - g. Heat-related conditions (e.g. sunburn, heat cramps, heat exhaustion, heat stroke)
  - h. Soft tissue injuries (e.g. muscle pulls, strains, tears)

#### **Self-Rescue:**

1. All TMRC members who wish to row singles, doubles, or pairs unsupervised must be certified by the TMRC Board of Directors or their designee to demonstrate additional skills in order to undertake this special circumstance safely, including acknowledgement, understanding, and adherence to special circumstances for high winds, very cold or very hot weather conditions.
2. These members must:
  - a. Demonstrate the ability to get back into a flipped hull that he/she/they intend(s) to row (Flip Test).
  - b. Demonstrate adequate skills in maneuvering a single, double or pair.
  - c. Have coach's approval.
3. The Flip Test will be conducted annually for all TMRC members wishing to row singles, doubles, or pairs unsupervised.
4. Flip Test forms are available on the TMRC website at [tablemountainrowing.org](http://tablemountainrowing.org).

#### **Safety Rules for TMRC Members Rowing Singles, Doubles or Pairs Outside of Regularly Scheduled Practices:**

1. SAFETY is the highest priority.
2. All rowers going out while not supervised by a safety launch must be at **least** 18 years old and graduated from a Junior rowing program, and/or cleared to row alone by the TMRC Board or their designee. They must demonstrate additional skills in order to undertake this special circumstance safely, including acknowledgement, understanding and adherence to special circumstances for high winds, very cold or very hot weather conditions.
3. Each person is 100% responsible for the whole boat and 100% accountable for his own oar, rigging, foot-stretcher, seat, slides, bolts and rigger. Each person checks to make sure that all equipment is functioning properly before leaving the dock.
4. Each Rower is responsible for independent launch and landing.
5. All rowers must pass a swim test, including putting on a PFD while in the water.
6. Rowers must wear a PFD at all times when unsupervised by a safety launch or rowing in a single or other small boat. The boat is considered only an emergency floatation device.
7. If unattended by a safety launch, rowers must annually pass an open water boat re-entry test or Flip Test. Small boat rowers who venture more than 300 meters away from a coach launch during a supervised practice session are considered rowing unsupervised with all requirements intact.
8. Rowers must be aware of all boat safety rules (traffic patterns, hazards, environmental awareness), weather restrictions for safe boating (whitecaps or winds above 12 knots or 13 mph, water temperature, and daylight, etc.), and contact phone numbers for emergency assistance (911, supervising person at dock/boathouse).
9. Options for independent rowing include: rowing with private coaching; rowing when FAC (Forebay Aquatic Center) is open for access and assistance as needed; independent rowing with TMRC Board and coach approval.

10. If a TMRC Member privately owns a single, double or pair, they may use their boat at any time during hours that the park is open but must abide by the Logbook and Monitor System below.
11. Rower's Logbook and Monitor System:
  - a. All rowers/boat that are not accompanied by a safety launch will sign in and out of a Logbook located in the TMRC table area. Rower's Logbook will require the following information:
    - i. Name, Boat Taken, Anticipated Time of Return, Actual Time of Return (sign-out), Monitor's Name and Phone Number.
  - b. If a rower is rowing without the benefit of a monitored Logbook, they must let someone know where they are rowing and what time they should be expected in. Their contact information must be in the Logbook and the monitor must be aware of the rower's anticipated time of return and to alert the proper person/agency if they are unable to make contact with the rower. Remember, a Logbook is only useful if someone checks the book to see if there is still a boat on the water.
  - c. During FAC hours, rowers must check in and out with attendant and Logbook.
12. Reporting of any adverse boat issues should be made to a TMRC Board Member and a TMRC coach after recording the issue in the Logbook.
13. No minors are allowed to be on the water unsupervised.
14. It is recommended that independent rowers carry a phone in a waterproof pouch.
15. The rower in the bow seat of a club owned sculling boat is strongly recommended to use a sculling mirror.

**Safety Rules for TMRC Members Rowing Privately Owned Fours, Quads and Eights Outside of Regularly Scheduled Practices without a Safety Launch:**

1. SAFETY is the highest priority and all safety rules apply.
2. All rowers must have passed the swim test and must have a PFD with them in the boat.
3. This option is available only during the months of March to October with care taken that all weather restrictions are followed.

**Additional resources to explore for rowing safety include the following:**

<http://www.usrowing.org/safety/safetyguidelines>

<https://www.britishrowing.org/knowledge/safety/rowsafe/>

<http://www.mendotarowingclub.com/Rules>

<http://www.capitalrowing.org/crcwp/about/resources/safety/>

<http://www.sarasotacountyrowingclub.com/page/show/2281680-scrs-safety-manual>