

Santa Clara University Crew-Information

Basics of the Sport:

- There are two types of competitive rowing, sweep rowing and sculling. In sweep rowing each boat member holds only one oar and rows on only one side (Port or Starboard). In sculling each oarsman holds two oars, one in each hand. In the US only sweep rowing is competitive on the collegiate levels.
- Sweep rowing shells are pairs (2 oarsmen, 1 port and 1 starboard), fours (4 oarsmen, 2 ports and two starboards), or eights (4 ports and 4 starboards). Pairs and fours may or may not have coxswains and eights always contain a coxswain. The coxswain is responsible for steering the shell, motivating the crew to push harder, and helping with technical aspects of the rowing stroke.
- Eight man shells are approximately 56 ft in length, 2 ft. in width and weigh just over 200 lbs. Most new racing shells are made of carbon fiber and cost about \$25,000.
- The racing distance for the spring season is 2000 meters and it takes about 6:00 minutes to complete a piece.

The Athletes: Women- typically between 5'6" and 6'0" in height. Men – typically between 5'10" - 6'8" in height and weigh between 160 and 220 lbs. Coxswains (Male and Female coxswains compete for the Men's Crew, only Female coxswains for the Women's Crew) – must weigh approximately 125 lbs or less.

Who makes a good novice rower? All successful novice rowers have one thing in common; they are willing to work hard because they want to compete at the highest level of college athletics. High school and recreational athletes from many different sports backgrounds have developed into successful rowers. The most common sports that transition well into rowing are cardiovascular sports like track/cross-country, swimming, and soccer, as well as athletes from basketball, football, and volleyball because of the emphasis on height and size. However successful college rowers have also come from a wide variety of sports such as cycling, golf and skiing.

Can novices be successful against athletes who rowed in high school? Definitely! All major programs in collegiate rowing have freshmen/novice boats that compete against other freshmen/novice boats. The year of rowing against similar competition helps prepare novices for the step up to varsity in their sophomore, junior and senior seasons. For example, of the 12 top heavyweight Olympic male rowers (the Men's 8 and Men's 4-) who represented the US in Athens, seven were novice oarsmen new to the sport when they entered college.

Does rowing take away from school grades? Absolutely not! Rowing teaches discipline, planning, and prioritization all concepts that help rowers achieve in school. The crew team generally has had one of the higher GPA of the sports team at Santa Clara University and the average GPA for the varsity team is also generally higher than the average GPA of the SCU student body. Academic support and even individual tutoring is available for student athletes who need help. Members of the team are granted priority registration times, allowing athletes to choose the classes and schedule that best fit their needs.

When does the team practice? There are many misconceptions and myths about the crew practice routines. We do NOT practice at 4:30 in the morning. In the Fall, we meet at the boathouse at 6:15 AM on Tuesday and Thursday and at 7:30 AM when we practice on Saturdays. In addition, there will be afternoon practices on campus a couple times during the week, focusing on building strength and fitness. The crew trains for 6 six weeks in the Fall and resumes training in January, following the Winter Break. Our main racing season is from March until May.

Where does the team practice and race? The SCU boathouse is located on Lexington Reservoir, 15 minutes South of campus, in Los Gatos. The crew competes throughout California, from San Diego to Sacramento, as well as in Philadelphia, Boston and New Jersey. There are about forty crews on the West Coast, all of whom we see throughout the year, in addition to the many East Coast crews we face.

Are there tryouts for the team? There are not official try-outs. We encourage anyone who is interested in the sport to give rowing a chance. The crew is open to anyone who is willing to put in the work that is necessary to be a competitive collegiate rower and demonstrates the potential to positively impact the team.