

# FAQ



## OJR Wildcat Crew Club – 2020/2021

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### When was OJR Wildcat Crew Club established?

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OJR Wildcat Crew Club was established in August of 2017. We were established as a non-profit organization, and granted our 501c(3) status in January of 2018. This allows us to solicit organizations and businesses for donations and hold fund raisers like a charitable organization.

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### Where do practices take place?

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The OJR Wildcat Crew Club is happy to be able to provide student athletes with a paid coach, Stefan Sztanska. Coach Stefan has competed on the world stage many times and brings a terrific coaching style that focuses both on safety and technique as well as the student's well-being.

During the Spring and Fall seasons when the weather is warm enough, water practices will take place on the Schuylkill River in Royersford, PA just off of Bridge Street next to our boathouse. During the Winter season or when inclement weather or water conditions are not safe, we practice on rowing machines (called "ergs") in the High School cafeteria. We take student safety very seriously and closely monitor weather and water conditions.

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### Where is the OJR Wildcat Crew Club 'Boathouse'?

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The boathouse is located at 135 First Avenue Royersford, PA 19468 (Specialty Extrusion, Inc.) The boats are stored next to the building and in the basement of the building along with all the other equipment. There is a port-a-potty available for kids within the fenced area where the boats are stored during water practice seasons.

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### Where and when do races take place?

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Our races, known as "regattas", are typically held at the following locations. The Wildcat Crew Club has 3 large tents that are usually set up at each race for the kids and their families. We also have a chuckwagon (food trailer) complete with tables, chafing dishes and cooking equipment. **We eat very well and have a great time!**

- Schuylkill River off Kelly Drive by Boathouse Row in Philadelphia, PA (mostly)
- Cooper River by the Cooper Training Center in Pennsauken, NJ
- Mercer Lake in West Windsor, NJ

Each year the Coach and our Board review the regattas being held at different locations that could offer the most benefit to our athletes (along with cost). High School Regattas are typically held on Sundays. Schedules are published at the beginning of each season on *TeamSnap*.

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### What are the indoor rowing competitions?

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Typically, indoor rowing competitions are one-day erg sprint races (usually 2,000 meters) and are held in various locations during the off season (usually Winter). In 2021, some rowers may participate in the *C.R.A.S.H. B's Championship* competition in Boston, MA, the *Main Line Slide* in Ardmore, PA and the *Center City*

*Slam* in Philadelphia. These are optional events and the kids choose and train to do them. Cost to participate in these competitions is separate from dues and each rower is responsible to pay for their own registration, travel, and accommodations.

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### How much are dues?

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The dues are variable with the seasons, Fall, Winter and Spring. We are still acquiring equipment and paying off some new boats, so we rely on some of the dues to assist with these payments. Dues cover a portion of our operating costs, including paying our coach(es). In the 2018-2019 seasons, Fall dues were \$1,200, Winter training dues were \$200 and Spring dues are \$1,200. We do not receive funding from the district, which is typical of most rowing clubs.

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### How do I communicate with the coach?

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Per the codes of conduct, The Board is the first point of contact, and you should direct any questions or concerns to the Board. It is encouraged that rowers advocate for themselves, speaking directly to the coaches about any issues, questions or concerns. You should not interfere with or interrupt practice or regattas in order to speak with coaches. Regattas are not the time or place for discussing lineups etc., as coaches are busy ensuring the safety of all rowers as they are preparing for their races.

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### What sort of success have our kids have?

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Our kids have been successful in team building, camaraderie, and relying on each other for moral and physical support. They are building mental toughness, endurance and focus. *Please see our awards page at [www.ojrwildcatcrew.com](http://www.ojrwildcatcrew.com) and click on the trophy icon for a list of all our races to date where we placed in the top 3!*

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### Are colleges looking at our rowers? For scholarships?

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Colleges are currently recruiting several members of our club. Some colleges that have reached out are Drexel, Boston College, Loyola Marymount, Temple and more. The colleges are currently offering scholarships to a select few of the team.

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### What is Jr. Day and should my rower attend?

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Some colleges that are heavily recurring for their rowing team hold a Junior day, where High School Juniors could visit the college and meet the coach and the rowing team. You typically register for Junior day in advance, depending on the collage. It typically includes a campus tour, tour of all athletic facilities, indoor training facilities and more.

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### Can I buy my way out of fundraising?

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While some clubs have an option to 'buy out' of fundraising, per the OJR Wildcat Crew Club codes of conduct, fundraisers are an important part of financial support for the club. While they are not mandatory, parents and rowers are encouraged to participate, and suggestions are welcome.

Currently OJR Wildcat Crew Club is not financially supported by the school district, and fundraising helps lessen the financial responsibility placed on parents. Because we are a young club, we try to defer some costs for dues and purchase extra items the club needs by doing fundraising activities.

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### Can I just give money instead of donating the items assigned for the chuckwagon?

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When it is appropriate for the chuckwagon committee to request donations, they will do so. Otherwise, if you are assigned a food item to bring for a regatta, you are expected to drop it off at the river during a Friday or Saturday morning practice so the folks cooking the food the day of the regatta have all the ingredients prepared ahead of time and so the rowers have an opportunity to eat healthy before and after their races.

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### What if my rower can't make it to practice or a regatta?

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**Communication is key! Please alert the Director of Communications (mvallino@ojrsd.net) via *TeamSnap*** as soon as you know your rower is not available for practice to a regatta. The coach is many times in route to practice or the location, so he and the Director of Communications are in close contact at all times. The rower or family must notify the Director of Communications as soon as they know they are not able to attend a regatta. Knowing attendance ahead of time for a regatta is extremely important because line ups are due weeks ahead of time and any change in the lineup requires a lot of unnecessary work on the coach to reconfigure timelines or not having the boat row at all. In the spring, rowers are not allowed to row twice due to PSRA rules – there is no hot seating or rowing twice in the same regatta, whether it be a rower or coxswain. Communication is key.

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### What about kids missing practice for other activities or work?

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Crew is an intense sport requiring a high level of commitment to ensure success and safety on the water. We understand that an occasional absence may be necessary, but in order to develop race lineups while maintaining safety standards and due to the unique nature of the sport (we can't run a full water practice /boat if we are missing seats – so the other kids in the boat miss out also), practice on water and off is mandatory and allows us to develop cohesive lineups for regattas.

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### How do we communicate a sick child not being able to make practice?

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**Please use the message or email function in *TeamSnap* to get a notice to the Board and coach and also communicate directly to mvallino@ojrsd.net, the Director of Communications.**

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### How can my rower get to practice if I work and am not able to?

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The team has a great system of carpooling. Use *TeamSnap* to communicate if your rower does not have a ride. We have older rowers who drive and are always willing to give rides to rowers of working parents.