

TAMAR & TAVY GIG CLUB

SQUAD STRUCTURE AND SELECTION POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to explain the structure of rowing squads and to outline the overall process and timelines for selection. The policy will be kept under review and both squad structure and selection process may change at the discretion of the Committee in line with the needs of the Club.

SQUAD STRUCTURE AND SELECTION PROCESS

Learn to Row

New rowers will ideally complete a Learn to Row course with a minimum of three rows before being allocated initially to the social squad. New rowers should continue to be coached and focus on gaining experience. New rowers with previous experience should be assessed by an experienced coach and may be allocated directly to a competitive squad.

Social Squad

The social squad is for rowers who do not wish to attend races. The social squad is coordinated by a dedicated squad captain who will organise regular rowing sessions and periodic longer picnic rows, etc.

The Club recognises that some social squad rowers, while not wishing to commit to the additional training required for racing crews, may still wish to participate in hard rowing sessions. The social squad leader will therefore organise social rowing sessions accordingly to provide a mix of harder/more leisurely rowing, as needed. Similarly, the social squad can request periodic coaching input if desired. Any rower can attend social rowing sessions, although priority must be given to the social rowing squad.

Competitive Squads

Those rowers wishing to participate in competitive racing are allocated to the main Men's or Ladies' squads, overseen by the respective squad captains. The focus is on technique and fitness training to prepare crews for competitive racing. Membership of a competitive crew requires a significant commitment in terms of training time and effort, and weekend attendance at regattas.

There will be three main competitive crew selection points within the year (unless otherwise specified by the Committee) in line with the major Championships:

- Scillies World Championships
- Mixed & Vets Championships/Summer regatta season
- Newquay County Championships/Supervets event

SCILLIES WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

All competitive rowers will be invited to put themselves forward for selection by end October. Rowers may be asked to specify a preferred side (stroke or bow) but not a preferred seat. Rowers putting themselves forward for selection must be 100% committed to attending all training and to booking travel and accommodation well in advance to ensure attendance at the event.

An informal observation period will take place during Nov/Dec during which the selectors will observe all rowers in the boat. Selectors may request to see specific combinations which may vary from summer crews.

Rowers may be required to complete a witnessed ergo test by a specified date unless an exemption is agreed by the selectors for a bona fide reason.

A selectors' meeting will be held around mid-December and crew selection will be finalised no later than end December. Scillies crews can then begin crew training from early January at the latest.

As a rule, A and B crews (senior and vets) of 6 rowers will be selected (ie not squads) to ensure maximum competitiveness. However, in the event that there are, for example, 13 rowers competing for 12 seats, the selectors may select a B crew squad of 7 with the agreement of the Club Captain and Squad Captains such that all 7 rowers are able to compete at Scillies.

Two named reserves from the B crew (one stroke, one bow) may be nominated by the selectors as replacements for the A crew in the event of injury, etc. Similarly, potential reserves for the B crew can be named. However, if occasional ad hoc replacements are required during training, any suitable competitive rower (whether attending Scillies or not) can be utilised at the discretion of the squad captain.

During January/February, the selectors will continue to observe all crews, and changes may be made. Final crew selection will be re-confirmed no later than end Feb but changes will only be made at this stage if this is unavoidable.

If a rower repeatedly fails to attend training, or falls below the required rowing/fitness standard, at any time during the training period they may be de-selected or moved to another crew at the discretion of the selectors.

The expectation is that Scillies crews should compete at Three Rivers and any other pre-IOS events as appropriate.

Non-Scillies Rowers

The Club must ensure that any competitive rowers not attending the Scillies in a given year still have an opportunity to row regularly throughout the winter training period. If sufficient numbers exist, these rowers will be allocated a dedicated weekly rowing slot. These rowers can also act as temporary replacements in the race crews. The selectors will make every effort to observe these rowers in the boat periodically throughout the pre-Scillies training period in readiness for summer selection.

SUMMER REGATTA SEASON

The selectors will meet in mid-May to review performance at Scillies and this will be taken into account for crew selection during the summer regatta season. If numbers allow, A and B crews should be re-selected and should continue to train as race crews. If there are insufficient rowers, the whole squad will train together over the summer and regatta crews will be organised on a regatta by regatta basis by each Squad Captain.

However, summer regattas (non-Championship) should be used to give all squad rowers an opportunity to row in races, unless there is a specific decision to field the strongest crew possible at certain events.

MIXED, VETS & SUPERVETS CHAMPIONSHIPS

All competitive rowers will be invited to put themselves forward for selection for these events and crews will be selected in sufficient time to allow at least a one-month training period. Crews will be allocated a weekly training slot.

NEWQUAY COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS

Crews for Newquay will be selected by end July to give a minimum 6 weeks training time. Eligible rowers will be asked to commit to training & attendance prior to the selectors' meeting. The Club may decide not to enter this event if potential crews do not meet the required standard.

JUNIOR SQUAD

The junior squad will have dedicated rowing slots, and U16 and U14 rowers will row in the relevant age group if there are sufficient numbers to do so.

There will be a dedicated (adult) Junior Squad Captain who will be responsible for organising training sessions and regatta attendance, liaising with parents, and looking after the welfare of the juniors.

As far as possible, the Club will keep the number of coaches allocated to the junior squad to a minimum to maintain consistency. The coaches will liaise with the Junior Squad Captain to produce a training plan to help ensure consistency and promote the development of the junior rowers.

The Junior Squad Captain will select crews for regattas, in consultation with the junior coaches.

WHOLE CLUB ROWS

Periodic “Club rowing events” will be organised which will be open to all members. These may include informal picnic rows, fun race events or participation in organised events such as the Ramsey Island row, the Great River Race, the Castle to Crane race, rowing the Caledonian Canal, etc. The widest possible participation should be encouraged across all squads with mixed crews where appropriate.

SELECTION CRITERIA

The club policy is to select the most competitive crews for race events. The most competitive crew may not necessarily consist of the 6 best individual rowers.

The following criteria will be assessed:

i) Technique

- ability to execute a technically good stroke

- ability to maintain form in difficult sea conditions

ii) Power

- ability to generate good dynamic power in the drive

iii) Attitude

- commitment & attendance to training
- discipline in the boat
- willingness to listen to cox/coach
- good team spirit
- "grit"

iv) Fitness

- fitness in the boat will be assessed
- ergo times may be used as an objective measure of fitness for Scillies selection

Note: ergo times are a helpful indicator of fitness but this is only one of many selection criteria and is not the most important. Rowers are advised not to rely too heavily on ergo times as a measure of which crew they expect to be selected for.

v) Balance

Selectors will also pay due attention to the balance of the boat and the ability of the crew to gel as a cohesive rowing unit and a strong team. Factors such as height & weight and physical compatibility for different rowing positions may therefore be taken into account.

vi) Membership

Rowers must be fully paid up Club members to be considered for selection. Rowers must also book travel and accommodation for events such as Scillies in good time as requested by the Club.

SELECTORS

The selectors are nominated by the Committee on the basis of rowing experience, coaching experience and/or coxing experience. Selectors must regularly cox or row with competitive crews to observe rowers before selection. Selectors will generally consist of Club Captain, Ladies' Captain, Men's Captain and relevant coaches/coxes.

Selectors will strive to select the most competitive squads/crews on the basis of the specific criteria above.

Selectors will be open-minded and objective, and must be prepared to make difficult decisions.

Selectors must have a clear rationale for decisions.

Selectors may only give feedback or vote on rowers they have personally observed in the boat.

Selectors cannot choose themselves or family members.

Decisions are made by simple majority vote.

Communication

The Club Captain will organise a selection meeting. Minutes of selectors' meetings will be sent to Committee for information only. Selection decisions do not require Committee approval.

Squad Captains are responsible for communicating selection decisions to squads. Major squad selections (eg Scillies) will subsequently be communicated to all Club members so that the whole Club can engage in these events and support the crews.

All rowers can request feedback on individual selection decisions through the Squad Captains. Selectors' decisions are final but in exceptional circumstances can be appealed to the Club Chairperson.