

Safety Plan

2018

Buffalo Scholastic Rowing Association
120 West Tupper Street
Buffalo, New York 14201

Reviewed and Revised:
April 3, 2018

1. Organization.

- a. **The Association.** The Buffalo Scholastic Rowing Association (BSRA) is a 501 (c)3 Not-For-Profit corporation with a mission of supporting the growth of the sport of rowing in Western New York and doing this as stewards of the Buffalo River. The BSRA strives to provide the resources necessary to begin and sustain rowing programs for high school, collegiate, adult, and adaptive athletes. This document establishes specific BSRA Safety rules and Safety guidance statements to participating member organizations.
 - (1) A member organization joining the BSRA must be sponsored by a 501(c)3 organization that maintains insurance for its athletes, equipment, and personnel engaged in supporting their rowing team.
 - (2) A BSRA member organization must agree to adhere to all BSRA Safety Rules as stated herein and strive to meet all safety guidance recommendations as stated herein.
- b. **Safety Monitors.** The BSRA Board will designate two to four members who will supervise the BSRA Safety Plan. In addition, each BSRA member organization must designate a safety officer that will supervise the safe operations of the member organization.

2. Facility Description.

- a. **Facility Location.** The BSRA rowing operations are operated at three proximal sites. The BSRA water operations are conducted at 405 Ohio Street, Buffalo, NY. The indoor land training facility is located within and hosted by the Old First Ward Community Center located at 62 Republic Street, Buffalo, New York. BSRA outdoor land training is conducted at the Father Conway Park immediately adjacent to the rowing facility and the indoor facility.
- b. **Facility Hazards.** Although located within a blossoming development area in the City of Buffalo there are hazards which must be identified and actively confronted by each member organization.
 - (1) *Remoteness.* The facilities are located within a mixed residential, manufacturing, and open space area. The park is spacious and open. Use of the Old First Ward Community Center requires athletes to walk across the park and an additional city block. Member organizations must accept full responsibility for their athletes and never permit them to be unsupervised during rowing operations. BSRA personnel will not accept this responsibility.
 - (2) *Traffic.* The athletes may cross or walk along Ohio Street, Louisiana Street, and or Republic Street. Although these are City Streets and the vehicle speed limit is 35 MPH, there are no practical pedestrian cross walks. Member organization athletes and personnel are responsible for safely crossing these streets. It is recommended that a brief pedestrian traffic safety class be held each season.
 - (3) *Water.* Rowing water operations are conducted upon the Buffalo River and its tributaries. This water course is used by pleasure boats, commercial vessels, and law enforcement personnel so proper boat operation and common sense must govern rowing operations. While BSRA maintains water safety equipment for its own programs, each member organization is responsible for providing waterborne safety equipment as set forth below for each of its coach/safety boats. No member organization personnel except coaches and boat-borne athletes and those directly assisting in docking operations are permitted on the dock. Especially, no children under the age of 12 are permitted on the dock at any time. In addition, it is strongly recommended that all waterborne personnel and athletes be swim qualified.
 - (4) *Terrain.* During the early years of BSRA operations the terrain at the rowing site must be expected to be rough and difficult to walk upon. In addition, as permanent facilities are constructed, construction will create additional walking hazards. Member

organizations must assume responsibility for their athletes and personnel as these conditions demand.

- c. **Facility Security.** The waterside facility is protected by intrusion devices and surveillance video cameras. In addition, the Buffalo Police Department regularly patrol the areas surrounding all facilities. But, each member organization must provide supervision for their athletes at all times. They may not be left at the facility without adult presence while waiting for rides, etc.
- d. **Construction Period.** During the coming construction phase of the BSRA permanent boathouse no unauthorized entry into the construction site is permitted.

3. Shore Side Safety.

a. **Vehicle Operation.** During the rowing season only BSRA personnel vehicles are permitted on the site. As possible, member organization coaches may also park on the site; however, parking must be closely controlled to permit movement of rowing equipment and for the safety of the athletes.

b. **Conduct.** Member organizations must assure that horseplay of any kind is controlled.

c. **Hygiene. (1)** The water of the Buffalo River and its immediate tributaries have been certified as safe for recreational purposes. However, this classification does not include swimming. In addition, unexpected water emergencies encountered when swimming cannot be quickly and safely responded to without placing others at risk. Therefore each member organization will not permit any swimming from the BSRA site. To assure that nominal rowing associated contaminants such as personal bacteria are controlled, member organizations shall provide suitable hand cleansing products for their athletes.

(2) Coaches must be diligent to strive to keep all equipment clean and to direct athletes to use the hand washing stations.

4. Waterside Safety.

a. **Docks.** All boats will launch with their bows pointing down river. All shoes will be placed in totes and removed from the dock before launching. All boats recovering will approach from up river. The docks will be cleared of all oars before the boat is removed from the water.

b. **Water's Edge.** The shoreline and walkways to and from the dock will be kept clear of trip hazards. No running is permitted on the site. All athletes are expected to exhibit controlled behavior while in or around the boathouse.

5. On Water.

a. **Rowing Athletes.** All rowing athletes will remain seated unless directed by the coach/safety boat for athlete changes or for safety reasons.

b. **Coxswains.** All coxswains must maintain control of their shell and their athletes. At any time if the coxswain is unsure of the shell or athlete's safety he must take immediate action to safeguard the shell and athletes including bringing the shell to a complete stop. It is BSRA policy that all coxswains wear, at a minimum, inflatable collar life jackets.

c. **Coaches.** All coach/safety boat occupants will wear life jackets or flotation jackets/suits regardless of water temperature. In the event of a water emergency the coach becomes the primary response person. If he/she is without flotation they become part of the problem. This is mandatory if the water temperature is 50⁰ F or below

6. Boat Operations.

a. **Safe Boat Operations.** **All safety launches, regardless of length, shall be safely operated in accordance with the BSRA Safety Plan** It is required that coaches and boat operators of member organizations take a free on-line Boating Safety Course and present the downloaded certificate of completion to the BSRA Safety Officer. This is a one-time requirement. (<http://www.boatus.org/online/course/NewYork.asp>).

- b. **Weather.** No rowing is permitted during potentially serious weather conditions. While, for the most part, this judgment is left to the supervising coach, the BSRA forbids rowing when thunder is heard or lightning is seen. If boats are on the water during this situation they will return to the boathouse immediately. The portable marine radio weather channel should be consulted before launching if there is any question.
- c. **Communications.** Given the traffic on the Buffalo River and the proximity to the U.S. Coast Guard Station, each coach/safety boat should carry a portable marine radio capable of monitoring emergency channels 9 and 16, the weather channel, and talking channels 19 (dredging operations) and 67 (BSRA communications channel).
- d. **On Board Equipment.** Before team shells leave the dock, the coach/safety boat should be running and properly equipped with throw ring, bag of nine athlete life jackets, life jackets for all boat occupants, a paddle, and sufficient fuel to complete the rowing session.
- e. **Other.** Coach/safety boat occupants should refrain from routinely standing in the boat, especially without a life jacket on.

7. Emergency Preparedness.

- a. **Safety Plan Review.** At regular intervals and immediately following any incidents, all coaches should review basic rules of safety on the rowing site, and then review them with the athletes. This Safety Plan is available on the BSRA website (www.RowBuffalo.org) and is therefore available to all coaches, athletes, parents, and organization officials.
- b. **Mental Rehearsal.** At regular intervals all coaches should review in his or her mind the appropriate action to be taken for basic emergencies: ill athlete, athlete in the water, collision, and allusion.
- c. **Request Help Immediately.** It is imperative that all coaches understand that calling for immediate assistance, whether ultimately needed or not, is required by BSRA.
- d. **Emergency Training.** The following training courses are required for personnel as indicated.
 - (1) CPR/AED – All coaches and BSRA personnel.
 - (2) First Aid – All coaches and BSRA personnel.
 - (3) An AED will be provided in the boathouse by BSRA. It will be located at the north end of the building near the man-door in an alarmed cabinet. Upon its removal and alarm activation, a designated person must call 911. (See 8.a. below.)
- e. **Appropriate Coach/Athlete Conduct.** With the growing awareness of the need for appropriate coach/athlete interaction, BSRA recommends that member organizations participate in VERITAS or a similar program.

8. Emergency Operations. BSRA recommends action for the following emergencies:

- a. **Medical Emergency.** The emergency training required above will prepare the responder to recognize unfolding medical emergencies. Once the emergency is recognized the primary responder should:
 - (1) Have someone call 911 giving the nature of the emergency and the location “405 Ohio Street, between Ohio Street and Michigan Streets bridges, across from Fr. Conway Park.”
 - (2) Take immediate action to treat the condition -**Within your skill level.**
- b. **Water Emergency.** Understand that water lies in wait for an accident, but it stalks those who are careless. Avoid collisions and allusions by anticipating what could go wrong and taking action beforehand. With a person or persons in the water act quickly. Cycle your marine radio to Channel 16 then say the following: *“Emergency! Emergency! This is Buffalo Scholastic Rowing Association with __ people in the water. Our location is (example) by the Ice Boom Storage at the foot of Hamburg Street.”*

- c. **Other Emergency.** For any other emergency first stabilize the incident if possible. Whenever you feel you cannot stabilize the incident call 911, and give them the nature of the emergency (fire, entrapment, auto accident, etc.) and the location of the BSRA site.