

Season Information Packet - Spring 2026

March 2, 2026 to June 13, 2026

“Rowing is perhaps the toughest of sports. Once the race starts, there are no timeouts, no substitutions. The coach must therefore impart the secrets of the special kind of endurance that comes from the mind, heart, and body.” – George Pocock, U.S. Olympic Rowing Team

Season overview

Our athletes have been hard at work during the off-season, conditioning to be ready for the Spring season! The Spring season features some more intense competition. The races are sprints, where generally the boats are in heats and start at the same time, with top boats advancing to the next round. The season itself also increases in intensity - building to the WMIRA Conference Championships, the Stotesbury Cup, SRAA Youth Nationals, and, our new addition this year, the CSSRA Regatta in St. Catharines, Ontario in June. We are looking forward to a great season of racing!

We hope to start water practices the week of March 2. But that will be weather dependent - Stay tuned for updates. The Board has been working through the Winter to determine the most efficient and cost effective way to manage transportation to Bladensburg on weekdays and the best schedule for our rowers. Bus costs have increased, and this Spring season will be longer than has historically been the case.

We got estimates from 6 additional bus companies, explored other transportation options, and evaluated the effect of the schedule we followed in the Fall (where the squads rotated land days / days off, and Friday was the only day all 4 squads went to the water). After much review, we will be going back to our historical practice schedule, and all squads will go to the waterfront Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, and have land practice on Wednesday. To help cover the increased bus costs (including having bus service for longer because of the longer season), we are increasing our planned registration fee for the Spring by \$100, to \$1,900.

As was discussed in parent meetings and the Winter Season Information Packet, **the team will hold practices during Spring Break (March 30 to April 3) and there is a local regatta on Saturday, April 4.** Monday through Thursday will be 2-a-day practices, with morning and afternoon sessions, and a lunch break. Friday will be a morning only practice. The April 4 regatta is the first regatta of the season! Make sure your rower communicates with the coaches about their schedule.

The details on the schedule for all the regattas is on page 3, with dates, locations, and some information about likely participation. But to hit a few highlights: The entire team will participate in the first 4 regattas of the season. For the Stotesbury Cup in Philadelphia (May 14 to 16) and the CSSRA Regatta in Ontario (June 4 to 8), a significant portion, but not all, of the team will participate. And for the SRAA Nationals in Tennessee (May 21 to 24) only select boats that qualify will participate. If your athlete has questions about which regattas they are likely to participate in, have them talk to their coaches.

Schedule

- **February 28** - Open Boathouse (weather dependent!)
- **Week of March 2** - Start water practice (weather dependent - stay tuned for updates)
- **March 12, 13, 14** - Free Trial for new participants
- **Week of March 30** - Spring Break 2-a-day practice, and local regatta April 4
- **Sunday, May 31** - Year End Party at Capitol View-Homewood Local Park! We know, the year won't quite be over yet . . .
- **Week of June 8** - End of season wrap-up (store boats, etc.).

Weekly schedule:

- Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday - All Squads Water Practice 2:45-7:00
- Wednesday - Land Practice 2:45 to 4:30 or 4:30 to 6:15 - Stay tuned for which squads are at which time!
- Saturday - Water Practice 8:00-11:00 Unless racing on Saturday or Sunday
- Round Trip transport is provided to Water Practice on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. No bus transport Saturday
- As a reminder, rowers should keep iCrew updated with their practice availability.
- WJ Crew is a no-cut program. However, regular attendance and participation at practices and regattas is expected. Given the true team nature of rowing, a rower's attendance, or lack thereof, may impact their rowing development and placement in competitive boats. Most rowers will get the chance to compete during the season, but not all rowers will compete at every regatta.
- Try to schedule tutoring and appointments for Wednesdays, to prioritize water practices.
- If MCPS is scheduled for an early release, practice will be on the normal schedule. If MCPS is closed, there may be a modified practice schedule, or no practice, determined on a case by case basis.
- There are times that practice needs to be canceled due to weather. This decision is usually made by noon - please be checking your email for updates.

- When we get close to Championship Season (during the second half of April), land practices will become water practices to prioritize preparing for Championship Races.

Regatta Schedule:

- April 4 – Darrell Winslow Regatta, Occoquan VA - **Second Saturday of Spring Break**
- April 11 – Tri Meet Scrimmage, Bladensburg, MD/Anacostia
- April 18 - TBC Scrimmage, Georgetown, DC
- April 19 - Battle of Bladensburg Scrimmage - Girls v. Holton Arms; Boys v. DeMatha
- May 3 – WMIRA Championship Regatta, Occoquan, VA
- May 14 to 16 – Stotesbury Cup, Philadelphia, PA (Many, but not all, rowers will race)
- May 21 to 23 – SRAA Scholastic Nationals, Oak Ridge, TN. (Select boats that qualify only)
- June 4 to 8 - CSSRA Regatta, St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada (Many, but not all, rowers will race)

Pasta Dinners:

- April 10 - Before Tri Meet
- April 17 - Before TBC Scrimmage
- May 1 - Before WMIRA

Parent schedule:

- | | |
|---|------------------------|
| - Dining Out! - No Regrets Pizza, 5454 Nicholson Ln | February 18 |
| - Registration deadline for Spring season | February 28 |
| - Dining Out! - Panda Express, Montgomery Mall | March 20 |
| - Plant Sale Pre-Orders due | April 1 |
| - Plant Sale | April 25 |
| - Parent Social Event - Stay Tuned for Location!! | April 25 |
| - Dining Out! - TBD | Week of April 27 |
| - Parent Row | May 9 (after practice) |
| - Middle School Learn To Row | May 28 to 30 |

Other school events:

- | | |
|--|-----------------------|
| - MCPS Closed? May be Snow Day makeup | March 20 |
| - Mulch Sale | March 13 to 14 |
| - Spring Break (see regatta & practice schedule) | March 28 to April 6 |
| - End of 3rd quarter | April 14 |
| - MCPS Closed? May be Snow Day makeup | April 15 |
| - Prom | April 24 |
| - AP exams: | May 4 to 8 & 11 to 16 |

Note: May 14 & 15 Exams Conflict with Stotes. Make-up exams May 18 to 22.

Arrange by the end of February.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------|
| - Choral Spring Concert | May 19 |
| - Instrumental Spring Concert | May 21 |
| <u>Conflicts with SRAA</u> | |
| - Memorial Day - MCPS Closed | May 25 |
| - MCPS Closed | May 27 |
| - Graduation Ceremony - WJ Closed | June 9 |
| - Last day of School | June 17 |

Volunteer positions

WJ Crew could not function successfully without our many parent volunteers. We have many wonderful crew parents in charge of various roles. There are a number of roles which are currently vacant - the area in which we currently need volunteers the most is for our various fundraisers. Please consider stepping up to take on an ongoing volunteer role, to help make the 2025-2026 WJ Crew season happen! Also, several roles are being filled by parents of seniors, including several Board positions - As early as we can during the Spring Season, we would like to identify people to take over those positions next year, to make for a smooth transition.

- Away Regatta Travel Coordinators – Cassie & Walter Carr
- Chuck Wagon Transporters – Nate & Jodi Herman (**Senior parent**) Team A; Bryant and Amy Trost (Team B)
- Away Regatta Food Tent Coordinators -Nate & Jodi Herman (**Senior parent**)
- Home Regatta Food Tent Coordinators - Bryant and Amy Trost
- Fundraising Coordinator – Mary Walker (**Senior parent**)
- Get on Board! Coordinator –VACANT
- Get on Board! Planning and Organizing Team- VACANT (looking for 2-3 people)
- Erg-a-thon Coordinator -Mary Walker (**Senior Parent**)
- Erg-a-thon Planning and Organizing Team- Patti Poss (chili cookoff); Jocelyn Dyer (marketing), Marion Keehn (A&V announcer)
- Plant Sale Coordinator – Tim Peet
- Plant Sale Planning and Organizing Team- Anna Taylor, Julie Coons, Nicole Hamilton
- Dining Out Fundraising Coordinator - Lisa Townsend
- Pasta Dinner Coordinator – Kasha Hayes
- Recruitment – Laurel Fioravanti / Gwen Wade
- Human Resources - Laurel Fioravanti / Gwen Wade
- Motor Boat Pool/Equipment Maintenance – Marion Keehn; Willem Helms
- Safesport Committee - Alisha Keehn, Mary Roberts, John Henderson, Chris Graves, Emma Fisher, Elias Walendowski, and Cassie Carr
- Safesport training Coordinator - Kasha Hayes

- SSL Coordinator - Lisa Townsend
- Social Media Manager – Lisa Townsend
- Parent Volunteer Tracking - **Vacant**
- Erg Rental Coordinator - **Vacant**
- Website Updating –Jurgen Heymann (**Senior Parent**)
- Uniform Coordinator – Rita Drinkard
- Regatta Photographers – John Henderson; Jurgen Heymann (**Senior Parent**)
- Year End Party – Jennie Kuperstein
- Year End Photo Album – Luis Gonzalez

Registration

Spring fees for all rowers and coxswains are \$1,900. The registration fees cover the costs associated with practice and races. Please note that there may be additional travel-related costs for regattas that require overnight trips, such as the Stotesbury Cup. Registration fees also do not cover the cost of uniforms or WJ Crew apparel. If the registration fee or travel costs pose a difficulty for your family, please reach out to Board Co-Chairs Alisha Keehn and Mary Roberts as soon as possible to discuss scholarship possibilities.

For all returning rowers, Spring registration will be open from February 13 to 28. We need everyone to register within the window so the board and coaches can plan accordingly.

To register use this link: <https://walterjohnsoncrew.sportngin.com/register/form/471529034>.

- Have your health insurance card and child school ID# handy!
- You may pay by credit card, or, to save the cost of the credit card processing fee charged by SportsEngine, by Zelle or check (contact Robin Hart for a code).
- If you pay by credit card, you may choose to pay in 3 installments, rather than in full.
- Submit Page 5 (Medical Eligibility page) of the [MCPS Pre-Participation Physical Evaluation for Athletics](#) through the SportsEngine site
- Rowers who have not completed their registration will not be able to participate in practice.

For NEW Novices who did not row in the Fall who are registering for the free trial (March 12 to 14, please sign up by March 10 at the following link: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1-Nvd0JRJC175mBGVeuWbip6c-rZNk3YSnSHIUbKzVks/edit>

Please contact Robin Hart if you have questions about registration.

SafeSport

Creating an environment in which our rowers can work and learn together free from emotional, physical, and sexual abuse and misconduct is a central mission for the WJ Crew Board, coaches,

athletes, and parents. One of the major components to achieving that mission is our use of SafeSport policies, training, and resources. Kasha Hayes coordinates SafeSport training documentation.

The WJ Crew Board has established a SafeSport Committee to address any issues relating to misconduct: Alisha Keehn and Mary Roberts (Board Co-Chairs), John Henderson (Board Vice Chair), Chris Graves (Women's Head Coach), Emma Fisher (Men's Head Coach), Elias Walendowski (parent volunteer), and Cassie Carr (parent volunteer). If you have any concerns relating to potential abuse or misconduct, please contact any member of the SafeSport Committee.

Fundraising

WJ Crew is a nonprofit organization that does not receive funding from Montgomery County Public Schools or the WJ Booster Club. We are sustained by membership dues and our fundraising efforts. Athletes and their families are expected to participate in fundraising efforts to help ensure we meet our operational expenses. Donations are tax deductible and we have historically achieved great results gaining support from local businesses. Money we raise through fundraising is directed to pay for rower scholarships and boat purchases.

Prior Fundraising Events:

During the Fall, we held a very successful Fall Plant Sale of Pumpkins & Pansies to support the team. And during the Winter, we had our third annual Erg-A-Thon and Chili Cook-off, which raised \$24,000, which is more than \$2,500 over our target!

Get On Board!:

Our "Get On Board!" fundraiser is ongoing, but wrapping up soon - at the end of February. This fundraiser focuses on seeking donations from local businesses (e.g., your dentist or realtor), with recognition of businesses that make a donation. For example having the donor name on the Team T-Shirt or having the name and company link of the donor on the WJ Crew Website. We have had a good response so far, but have not hit our goal yet. Please contact Mary Walker if you have an idea for a business to ask about making a donation.

Spring Plant Sale:

The always popular Spring Plant Sale will be Saturday, April 25, 2026! Orders are due on April 1, 2026. The Spring Plant Sale is one of our biggest fundraisers of the year. Watch for more information about ordering that you can share with others, to help make this a successful fundraiser!

Dining Out

We had successful dining out fundraisers during the Fall season, at California Pizza Kitchen, Chipotle, and Shake Shack, which raised over \$800. Thanks to all who recently supported the dine out at The Big Greek Cafe! We have dining out fundraisers scheduled for February 18 at No Regrets Pizza (5454 Nicholson Ln) and March 20 at Panda Express (Montgomery Mall). And are working on a dining out for the week of April 27!

Coaches

Boys Head Coach; Varsity Boys Coach: Emma Fisher (alum)

Girls Head Coach, Varsity Girls Coach: Chris Graves

Assistant Coaches:

Dylan Dembo (alum)

Ava Edison (alum)

Sydney Gibbons (alum)

Ryan Kavanaugh

Cal Labonski (alum)

Zoe Warren (alum & new this Year!)

Robert Karlen (alum)

Rebecca Paul

Middle School Coach: Emma Fisher

Questions or concerns relating to coaching should be directed to our Parent / Coach Liaison, Larry Basiaga.

A Look Ahead: Passing the Torch

Although the (sure to be exciting!) Spring season is not yet underway, we are also looking ahead to the inevitable transitions that will come. As mentioned in the volunteer positions section, there are several volunteer positions held by parents of senior rowers, including several positions on the Board. We have identified volunteers for next year for some of them, but are looking to fill the remaining positions during this Spring, to make for a smooth transition.

We will also be looking to welcome a new group of novice rowers for the 2026-2027 season! We will have our middle School Learn To Row on May 28, 29, and 30. There is bus service on Thursday, May 28 from NBMS and bus service on Friday, May 29 from Tilden. And then morning practice, with no bus service, on Saturday May 30. Talk to your own rising 9th-graders and others in your circle about this great opportunity to give WJ Crew a try!!

We will also have two summer Learn-To-Row opportunities for any rising 9-12th graders who are interested. They will be June 13 and 14 and August 20, 21, and 22. We need some of the returning rowers to help the coaches - it is a fun experience, a great chance to reconnect with other rowers and the coaches, and they can earn SSL hours for volunteering, as a bonus!

Board

Alisha Keehn	Co-Chair		
Mary Roberts	Co-Chair	Robin Hart	Registration
John Henderson	Vice-Chair		
Jen Aguilera	Treasurer	Laurel Fioravanti & Gwen Wade	Recruiting
Orianna Helms	Secretary	Mary Walker	Fundraising
Larry Basiaga	Parent / Coach liaison	Jurgen Heymann	At large

Internet Resources

<http://walterjohnsoncrew.org/> Team Web Site, with various info on the team and events. You can also check out our Twitter and Instagram feeds (both are @wjcrew)

<http://www.row2k.com> Results, pictures, Regatta links...it's all here.

<http://www.regattacentral.com> Results, entries, participants in each boat included

<http://www.usrowing.org> National organization information