

**Season Description:** Our hardy group of rowers, both adult and youth, love to get out in the cold weather to keep in shape, improve rowing skills, and drive the winter blues away. The Cold Weather Season starts when the city docks are removed (generally mid-October) and continues until they go back in in the spring (generally mid-April).

**Criteria:** Winter rowing is fun and exhilarating! However harsh weather and water conditions require that rowers have the ability to perform in quickly changing and difficult situations. Cold weather rowing is limited to rowers who have:

- participated in Power Rows during the summer
- signed an additional waiver
- attended a safety training session held by the winter rowing coordinator (every other year)
- been approved by two coxswains who assess qualifications as discussed below

*Qualities required of a winter rower:*

**You have to be secure on your feet:** The parking lot is covered in ice, the walkway to the ramp is covered in ice, the ramp is frozen, the dock is frozen and icy, and snowy, and it may be rocking constantly from waves. The boat is covered with frozen snow,... and is in the water and being knocked about by little and not so little waves. The crew needs to be able to kneel on the frozen pitching dock, lean over the freezing cold water, release the boat cover, climb into the rolling boat and pull the cover onto the dock. The boat is frozen and slippery and constantly moving underfoot. After the row, the cover needs to be put back onto the boat.

**You need to have complete control over your oar:** There is ice in the water that the oars will hit and sometimes the boat will hit. Your fingers freeze and your face can freeze. Snot will freeze to your cheeks and to the back of your mittens. Catching a crab is dangerous in the winter conditions.

**You need to be a strong and competent rower:** There are no boats in the harbor in the winter time. If we have trouble on the water, a hurt rower, freezing rain, driving snow and wind that picks up quickly and pushes the gig out into the bay, any issues that may come up, like if your coxswain collapses from eating too many coconut covered Christmas rum balls, our best and quickest option is to pull ourselves out of the situation depending on each other for strength as there are usually no active boats in the bay in the winter time. Winter rowers need to be able to row hard for extended period of time.

**You need to have time and experience in the gigs:** Proper boat etiquette and handling is necessary. Having a complete understanding of how the boat reacts to our movements in the boat is of prime importance. Standing up in or making sudden moves in the boat during the winter rowing season is dangerous. Careful attention must be paid to the commands of coxswains.

**You need to be able to stop winter rowing if the coxswains asks you to:** Everything changes in the winter. Some rowers who are fine rowers in the summer time are different rowers in the winter time. If your coxswain decides that you are not quite the rower that you thought you were before, or that they thought you were before, then she/he may ask you to give up your winter rowing privileges and try again next year. Decisions are made for the safety of all participants.

**Scheduling:** Cold weather rows depend greatly on coxswain and boat availability (and of course weather conditions), so there is no published schedule or sign-up book. Opportunities are posted and managed through our on-line rowing calendar. The Winter Rowing Scheduler may arrange rowing opportunities, however any approved winter rower or coxswain can initiate a winter row. There are two categories of winter rows:

- Sign-up Rows- available rows are posted on-line, and any approved coxswain/rower can sign up and participate.
- Arranged Group Rows- can be either a set group of rowers who choose to row together or race training rows. Arranged rows are subject to limitations to avoid conflict with sign-up rows.

For more information on the cold weather season, contact the Winter Rowing Coordinator at [cb.winterrowing@gmail.com](mailto:cb.winterrowing@gmail.com)