



2025/2026
ROWING SEASON
NOVICE GUIDE



Important Dates - 2025/2026 Season

2025

September

7	Rowing Waikato Long Distance Race 5	Horahora Bridge	IP Squad
TBC	Bay Coast Mini Holiday Camps	Returners	
TBC	OTC Mini Camp incl TRC		
20-21	Legion Regatta	Blue Lake	Masters
27-28	IP Regatta	Karapiro	IP Squad

October

11	Wairoa 500	Wairoa River	All
11-12	NZ Masters Champs	Ruataniwha	Masters

November

1	Te Awamutu Regatta	Karapiro	??
8	Rotorua Regatta 1000m	Blue Lake	All incl Masters
15	Karapiro Memorial Day 1	Karapiro	All - Exams
16	Karapiro Memorial Day 2	Karapiro	All - Exams
29-30	Karapiro Club Regatta	Karapiro	All - Exams

December

12-14	Christmas Regatta	Karapiro	All
TBC	Bay Coast Mini Holiday Camps		
TBC	OTC Mini Holiday Camp inc TRC		
21	Last training day for the year		

2026

January

2-7	Camp - Returners	Karapiro	
TBC	Camp - Novices	Karapiro	
17-18	Blue Lake Regatta	Blue Lake	All incl Masters
23-25	North Island Champs	Karapiro	All

February

14-15	Junior regatta	Karapiro	??
TBC	Bay Coast Mini Holiday Camps		
TBC	OTC Mini Holiday Camp incl TRC		
17-21	NZ Club Champs	Karapiro	Selected

March

6-8	North Island Secondary School (NISS)	Karapiro	All
23-29	NZ Secondary School Champs (Maadi)	Ruataniwha	Selected

May

?	Legion of Rowers Regatta	Karapiro	Masters
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Welcome

Bay of Plenty Coast Rowing Club (Bay Coast) is a non-profit club run by a team of dedicated and passionate volunteers. We work together to support athletes of all ages and abilities to reach their rowing potential.

Alongside our school rowers, we have a strong adult rowing community – from young adults ('club rowers') to rowers aged 27 and over ('masters').

If you want to row competitively, Bay Coast offers an excellent programme within a supportive community. We help you set goals, challenge yourself and enjoy the sport while making lasting friendships.

Training

Training in rowing is all about gradually building your fitness, strength and skills so you can perform your best on the water. It includes a mix of on-water sessions, where you practice rowing in different boats and crews, and land-based sessions, like cardio and strength work. The type and intensity of training change throughout the year to match what rowers need at each stage.

Winter vs Summer

The summer, or competitive, season runs from September to March. Training slowly ramps up as we get closer to the major regattas, helping rowers prepare for racing. After the NZ Secondary School Champs ('Maadi') in March, there's usually a 6-week break. Winter training starts in May, with sessions focused on maintaining fitness and building strength for the next season.

Frequency

The typical number of training sessions per week, including both on-water and land-based sessions, is roughly as follows:

May-Sept	3-4 sessions (optional)	Winter training is lighter, with one weekend on-water session and optional fitness work during the week, so students can also focus on winter sports.
Sept-Nov	5-7 sessions	From September, on-water and land-based training will become compulsory, attendance will be noted, and this will contribute toward final selection decisions made by the coaching team.
Dec onwards	7-8+ sessions	After Christmas, training sessions steadily increase to prepare for the major regattas.

NB: Novices tend to train less intensively than the seniors. The specific training schedule is determined by the coach(es) and all information is communicated via Heja.

Training Timing

On-water training

- Regular **weekday** rowing sessions usually take place **after school**
- **Weekend** sessions are usually on a **Saturday morning** or **Sunday afternoon**

Please be aware that all on-water trainings are **3 hours long** and require your **full commitment**. The time is broken down as follows:

- **First 30 minutes:** Warm up and getting on the water.
- **Next 2 hours:** On-water training.
- **Final 30 minutes:** Packing up equipment and debriefing.

Please aim to be on time and prepared so we can make the most of the session on the water.

Land-based training

- Includes erging, strength and conditioning, flexibility and aerobic sessions.
- Takes place **either before** or **after school** and may be held at **school** or the **club**.

Land-based sessions are in addition to our regular on-water practices. The best number of sessions to attend depends on your age and experience and how much other training you are doing – your coach can give you guidance.

- Most schools offer cardio sessions, which you are encouraged to attend. If your school doesn't offer cardio, it's a good idea to join the club cardio sessions on Wednesday afternoons with Chelsey.
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Heja App and Crew Arrangements

Coaches will use the **Heja app** to arrange crews for upcoming training. You must confirm your availability by updating your status in the app **at least two days before** the scheduled training. Please note that we do try and plan crews ahead of time, not using Heja fully has a huge impact on others.

- **Changes:** If your plans change, please remove your name from the training in the Heja app and send a message in the group chat to inform the coaches as soon as possible.
 - **Consequences:** Failure to confirm your attendance on time may result in you being placed in a coach boat or assigned to erging instead of rowing.
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Training Expectations

Attitudes of our rowers towards their training

- Come to training on time, ready to learn & provide good feedback
 - Arrive striving to improve and take steps towards achieving your goals
 - Demand quality from yourself & your teammates
 - Compete with & push your teammates in every session, but never forget we are one team
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Attendance

- Coming to training regularly is the best way to improve and feel part of the team.
 - From September, on-water and land-based training are compulsory and attendance will be noted.
 - Regular attendance helps the coaches understand your progress and can affect crew selection, so please let them know if you can't make a session.
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Warm-up

Every member of the crew, including the Coxswain, is expected to warm up before every training session. You'll need to **bring trainers** (running shoes) for the warm-up, which includes:

1. A run to the cowshed at the first corner from the club and back.*
2. Dynamic stretching.
3. Setting up the boat.

*Please be aware that this is a public road and to ensure that you stay to the **right-hand side** facing the traffic.

Fuel your Body

To be your best on the water and on the erg, it is crucial to focus on three key areas: **nutrition, training and rest**.

Fueling Your Body:

- Before practice, eat a meal with lots of carbohydrates to give you energy for powerful strokes.
- During long sessions, have easy-to-digest carbs and fluids to stay hydrated and keep your energy up.
- After a workout, eat a mix of protein and carbs (between 30 – 45g) to help your muscles recover and get ready for the next day.

Avoiding Over-training:

- Pushing too hard without enough recovery can lead to serious problems like chronic fatigue, injuries and burnout.
 - Make sure you take rest days to let your body heal and get stronger.
 - Ignoring the need for rest can hurt your performance and even force you to take a long break from rowing.
 - Please remember that your coaches have created season programmes, which include rest days. If you train on these days without advice from your coaches, you will be overtraining.
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Exams

Training continues during the exam period, but your exam preparation comes first. If balancing schoolwork and training feels challenging, talk with your coaches – they want to help you succeed in both.

Don't give up

It's normal with rowing to have some days where you will feel like you can't do anything right. Often a row like this is followed by one where everything you've learned seems to fall into place – so don't give up.

If you're feeling discouraged, talk to your coach. A small adjustment or slight change in technique may be all that is required for you to feel the boat singing under you again. And those who row know this is one of the best feelings in the world.



Bay Coast School Holiday Mini Camps

Bay Coast is planning to hold holiday rowing camps for both school and club crews. The purpose of these camps is to allow rowers to train together, try out different combinations and get an opportunity to socialise. Rowing and Cardio trainings will still continue over the holidays.

About the Camps:

- **Location:** The camps will be held at Bay Coast
- **Time:** They will take place during the week and during the day over the holidays.
- **Attendance:** These camps are not mandatory, but highly encouraged

Stay tuned – more information will be given out once plans are finalised.

Bay Coast Club Summer Training Camp

Our annual training camp is a highlight of the season and a great chance for both new and returning rowers to train together, build skills and get to know each other.

Dates and Location

Camp is scheduled for January 2nd–7th. Novices are invited to attend from 2nd–4th January, with pick-up at 3 pm on the 4th.

- We will be staying at the Rob Waddell Lodge, which is located on-site at Lake Karapiro
- We will also use it to make initial crew selections for school crews.

More detailed information regarding the camp will be provided at a later date.



Regattas

Club vs School regattas

The competitive rowing season begins in September and runs until the end of March. For regattas earlier in the season, you will normally compete for your club (Bay Coast); towards the end of the season, you will compete for your school.

Club Season (September to the end of January)

- During the club season, as a member of Bay Coast, you will be representing Bay Coast and will train and compete in boats with students from different schools.
- Events may be determined by age or grade.
- In your first season of racing, you can compete as a **novice-grade rower**, regardless of your age group.
- Once a novice has participated in a Rowing NZ-sanctioned regatta, they can row in that category for the rest of the season (September to March) but lose their novice status the following season.

School Season (February to March)

- During the school season, you will compete with other rowers from your school. School teams may also include students from other clubs.
 - For school regattas, races are divided into four **age groups**: U15, U16, U17, and U18, along with a novice section.
 - Your **age for the season** is determined as of January 1st and sets the youngest age group you can compete in. For example, if you are 14 or younger on January 1st, you can race in the Under 15 category for that season
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Uniform

Club Uniform

The Bay Coast uniform is to be worn, both on and off the water, at club regattas. Uniforms can be purchased through Friendly Manager (login via baycoastrowing.co.nz).

- Required
 - Club rowsuit
 - Club visor/cap (or plain white visor/cap)
- Recommended (can be worn under rowsuit)
 - White thermal (for cold weather)
 - White long-sleeve rash shirt (for sun protection)

School Uniform

- You should wear your school's rowing uniform at school regattas. Uniforms can be obtained through your school.

Regatta Location

The majority of regattas we attend are held at either **Karapiro (near Cambridge)** or **Blue Lake (Rotorua)**. The standard course rowed at Karapiro is 2000 meters. The Blue Lake course is approximately 1000m.

Most regattas are run over the weekend. A couple of regattas are run over 3 days and necessitate taking a day off school.

National rowing events alternate each year between **Lake Ruataniwha** in Twizel and **Lake Karapiro**.

Transport

- Parents/caregivers are responsible for getting rowers to and from regattas.
 - Carpooling with other families is common and easy to arrange, usually coordinated through the Heja app.
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Using Rowit

- Rowit.nz is an online regatta information, entry and results system for Rowing Regattas in NZ.
- You can look up information on regattas, clubs, individual rowers, race times and results.
- Most people find it quite confusing to use at first, so the best plan is to ask someone who has a few regattas under their belt to give you a demo.

Bay Coast Regatta Expectations

Boat Loading and Unloading

- At regattas, everyone is expected to help with loading and unloading boats. This keeps everything running smoothly.
- As a novice, you will be learning how things are done from returning rowers, so watch carefully, ask questions and don't be afraid to get involved

On-site at Regattas

- Remember, when you race, you are representing Bay Coast. We want you to have fun, but it's also important to give your best effort in every race.
- If you're feeling nervous like many do in their first season rowing, know that this is perfectly normal. Watch and learn from others, and don't be afraid to ask for help or support from your teammates.

Uniform

You must wear your uniform correctly. This means your rowsuit should not be rolled down. If you prefer, you can wear a t-shirt over the top, however not while racing.

Bay Coast – Guide to Selection

Crew selection is the process where coaches decide which boats and crews rowers will race in during the season. Early regattas tend to be more relaxed, with opportunities to try different combinations and gain experience. As the season progresses, coaches look more closely at how each rower is developing and start to form the crews best suited for specific events. At National Championships, crews are entered by selection only. The coaching team works together to select crews based on a specific set of criteria described below.

Essential Qualities

At Bay Coast, we try to focus on fostering the experiences that help our athletes learn the best lessons the sport has to offer:

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|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| → Leadership | → Competitiveness | → Perseverance |
| → Sportsmanship | → Compassion | |

These are all essential qualities in rowing, and we look for our rowers to demonstrate these qualities throughout the season. We are looking for rowers/coxswains who not only rise to the challenge but also embrace it with enthusiasm. Athletes will be reviewed at set intervals during the season through testing, video review and coach feedback.

COXSWAIN SELECTION CRITERIA

- Coxswains will be assessed on their leadership, communication, steering skills, race execution, and ability to influence the crew positively.
- Like rowers, they must attend all practices, respond to coaching, and demonstrate continuous improvement.

ROWER SELECTION CRITERIA

Many things make a great rower. We want our athletes to strive for excellence in all aspects of the sport. Selections are based on a combination of performance data, attitude, and coachability, which include the following:

- **Erg score:** Measures fitness, power, and mental toughness
- **Technique:** Ability to row efficiently and respond to coaching
- **Coachability & Attitude:** Willingness to learn and be a team player
- **Attendance:** Consistent practice is essential for progress and team chemistry
- **Boat Flow:** How the boat runs/moves with individual rowers in specific seats.
- **Coach's Judgment:** This is a combination of many things, including boat run, the crew dynamics, etc.

Erg testing:

- The erg test is a 2 km row on the rowing machine.
- It's a way to see how your fitness, strength and focus are improving.
- Feeling a bit nervous before an erg test is completely normal, but just give it your best shot, and remember – it's NOT a competition.
- The main thing your coach is looking for is steady progress over time. Attending erg and cardio sessions will help you improve.

Rowing Technique:

- Coaches are looking for improvement, “coachability,” and for rowers to take individual ownership of their progress.
- All athletes will receive feedback on and off the water; however, when it is felt an athlete is not responding to that feedback, this will be noted and then encouraged to discuss any issues.
- Even when the coach is not speaking directly to a rower, the coach is still evaluating and analysing their stroke (coaching the boat as a whole).

Seat Racing:

- Seat Racing results are part of a larger selection picture determined by the coach(es).
- Not everyone is entitled to a seat in every boat. Coaches will do their best to determine eligible rowers and conduct fair seat races when necessary with transparent outcomes.

Personal Characteristics

Bay Coast looks for athletes who:

- Are team players
- Have a positive, can-do approach
- Develop mental toughness and consistent effort
- Demonstrate grace under pressure and maturity in handling selection outcomes
- Are consistently at practices.

Coaches' Judgment:

We are fortunate to have a highly experienced coaching staff at Bay Coast that works together and shares ideas. They are involved in all aspects of assembling the fastest most suitable crews possible at the appropriate times. In certain circumstances, when two athletes are incredibly close, the coaches may be forced to make a judgment about who is a better fit for a particular crew.

- Athletes are encouraged to seek feedback from coaches throughout the season.
 - While selection decisions are the final responsibility of the coach team we welcome respectful conversations to support athlete growth and understanding.

How to support your rower

Rowing is a demanding sport, both physically and mentally. The athletes in our program may need your support to help navigate the season. Each rower will face different challenges and have other aspirations, and they all need a kind and caring parent to support their efforts. In the event they don't quite realise their goals, they'll need your support to come to terms with it. If you are concerned with how your child is managing, please don't hesitate to get in touch with the Coach.

As well as supporting your child, we also request your support to help our program and the crews be the best they can be. To help the crews give their best, form their own identity, and mature as a team, the coaching staff respectfully asks that you, as a parent:

- Trust the coaching staff to deliver a fair and transparent program. The coaches have a strong desire to see every athlete in our program succeed. They intend to do what they believe is best for your child and every other child in the club.
- Please respect the decisions the coaching staff makes. You may not always agree with them; however, the coaching staff has the skills, expertise, and experience to make these decisions. Please provide feedback in a constructive way that allows the coaching staff and the athletes to maintain an open dialogue.
- Feel free to chat with the coaches, but for any further questions relating to the programme or your child, please directly get in touch with Ted, Stacey or Kylie to help out in the first instance.
- Our athletes need to learn to take responsibility for themselves in both training and racing situations. This will allow them to grow their independence as both athletes and people. Please help to facilitate this by encouraging them to manage themselves independently.

How to be involved

As non-profit club, we rely on the support and involvement of our members. There are many ways parents/caregivers can get involved – by helping at regattas, training camps or fundraisers, supporting rowers on and off the water, helping with coach boats, or pitching in with jobs around the club. As a general rule, if you see something that needs doing and you can help, your efforts will always be valued and appreciated.

Who to talk to

If you ever have questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to us. Your team manager or coach is your first point of contact. They can assist with everything from training logistics to enhancing rowing technique. There are no silly questions in rowing!

For specific inquiries:

- **Registration:** Email Wendy at secretary.bopcoast.rowing@gmail.com
- **Fees or payments:** Email Julie at treasurer.bopcoast.rowing@gmail.com

For more information, visit our website: baycoastrowing.co.nz