

Notes from HBRA information gathering meeting 4/22/26 re: masters summer clinic

This meeting was to gather information about summer master clinics. Attendance included 2 “yearling” masters, 2 “newbie” masters, 3 varsity masters, and 2 board members, which seems to be a good cross representation of the program. Others were invited, but couldn’t attend.

Comments:

- There needs to be better and thorough communication about the Masters team and what to expect when the clinics are done. Stress the competition aspect of the Masters Team and emphasize how challenging and different regular Masters practices may feel; feelings of incompetency on the part of new rowers are normal when they are folded into the team. Remind Masters rowers to be welcoming and helpful to new members.
- Those continuing to row with Masters need to commit to attending practice three days per week so they can get up to speed with the rest of the team in a timely manner. This will make them more competent more quickly.
- Some of the greatest frustrations on all sides come from the widely varying skill sets after the clinic has ended and new rowers are then mixed with experienced rowers on the Masters Team.
- We need to find the balance between recreational/fitness rowing vs competitive rowing and occasional participation vs consistent participation. How do we serve both types of rowers? Do we want to serve both?
- Without coaching, particularly on ergs, the risk of injury is concerning.

Recommendations:

- Hold the summer Masters clinic, but separate the advertising for Juniors and Masters. Masters advertising should list qualifications for attending the clinic and rowing after the clinic (must be fit, lift ~35 lbs overhead, get in and out of a boat with ease). **Mary Ann and Lorraine will work on this, along with handouts for Learn to Row day.**
- If rowers are interested but cannot commit to structured times, point them toward sculling. Encourage them to “buddy up” with another rower.
- Do some fact finding. Talk to other clubs close to HBRA’s size to see how they are structured, handle their coaching, are they competitive, etc. **Dayna said she will talk to Shasta Rowing. Anyone else may feel free to reach out to other clubs.**
- Advertise for a Masters coach with possible housing available. **Update: there are two former collegiate rowers who are interested in coaching the masters. Due to this development, this task is on hold for now, but the ad will be basically ready to go if/when needed.**

- Emphasize sculling during the second half of summer clinic to ensure new rowers are grounded in basic differences between sweep rowing and sculling. If needed, a safety launch with volunteer drivers can be added to these practices.
- Have a particular skills day (i.e. boat maintenance, coxing) or incorporate it into practice. Masters have been focusing more on skills lately on the water, but some skills could be taught/discussed on land as well.
- When approaching a regatta, add practices dedicated to those racing. Consider implementing the former racing fee, as this would pay the coach for additional racers-only practices. Racers would have to commit well ahead of time, either by regatta or season, for this to be effective.
- Hold a Return to Rowing Day or short clinic to encourage former rowers to come row with HBRA.

Observation: Many of these issues could be solved if the club was larger and the fees could cover a full-time coach or possibly two half-time coaches. The above recommendations are those that could be implemented without increasing the fees again at this time.