

WRRRA Independent Sculler Certification Process

Updated April 22, 2021

The following describes the process wherein individual WRRRA members may be certified to independently row a single sculling shell, such persons hereinafter referred to as “scullers”. The process applies to those scullers who will be using WRRRA equipment, as well as to those scullers who will be using their own equipment.

The purpose of the certification process is to ensure WRRRA scullers are able to operate a single shell in a manner that is safe for them and other water-borne traffic that they might encounter on the Cuyahoga River. This process has been designed to attempt to recognize the varying skill, aptitude and experience levels to be found throughout the WRRRA community.

Requirements By Experience Level:

Prior to becoming an independent sculler, individuals must fulfill the following requirements based on one’s rowing experience level. The number of Mentored Rows required prior to becoming certified as an independent sculler varies based on one’s rowing experience level.

Level 1:

No rowing experience

- Complete either WRRRA Learn to Scull (LTS) or show evidence of attending a minimum 3-day session at a Recognized Sculling Camp;
- Complete a minimum of 30 mentored rows.

Level 2:

Prior sweeps rowing experience, but limited (less than 3 years) or no Cuyahoga River experience.

- Provide report of previous rowing experience and two references (one from a coach) from most recent rowing club (which may include WRRRA);
- Complete either WRRRA LTS or show evidence of attending a minimum 3-day session at an RSC;
- Complete a minimum of 20 mentored rows.

Level 3:

Extensive Cuyahoga River sweeps experience (at least 3 full years, which may include high school, college, or any WRRRA adult program, with WRRRA SRL plus FRL in the same year counting as 1 year).

- Complete either WRRRA LTS or show evidence of attending a minimum 3-day session at a Recognized Sculling Camp, such as Florida Rowing Center, Calm Waters Rowing or Craftsbury Sculling Center.
- Complete a minimum of 12 mentored rows.

Level 4:

Prior extensive sculling experience at other venues, but no Cuyahoga River experience.

- Provide report of previous rowing experience and two references, from most recent rowing club, including one from a coach;
- Complete a minimum of 12 mentored rows.

Becoming Certified as an Independent Sculler

Requirements for All Experience Levels:

Due to the particular attributes of the Cuyahoga River, the following requirements apply to all potential independent scullers, regardless of skill level, sculling aptitude or prior rowing experience:

Requirements may be completed concurrently, but must all be completed prior to the sculler taking the on-water certification test. It is strongly recommended that the sculler complete Requirement 1 as early in the process as possible.

- Must pass SQL test, and maintain SQL status per Cleveland Rowing Foundation (CRF) procedures. Safety documents can be found on the CRF website:
<https://www.clevelandrows.org/safetyforms>
- Complete required Mentored Rows based on experience level (as outlined above);
 - Maintain a log of required Mentored Rows. Log must include the date, the names of the sculler and mentor and any river or weather conditions of note (See Sculling Log below).
 - Sessions where a coach is accompanying a sculler in a launch do not count toward one's mentored rows.
 - At least one Mentored Row must involve the passage of a large commercial ship, which would require the sculler to identify, locate and navigate to the appropriate CRF-designated Passing Zone. If the minimum number of Mentored rows is accomplished without such a passage, then the minimum number will be extended until a passage occurs. Date of the large commercial ship passage should be noted on mentor log when encountered.
- **Equipment:** All mentored rows must take place in the shell type the sculler is to be certified in to count toward their required mentored rows.
 - **Single:**
 - If a sculler wishes to be certified in a single, the sculler must use a single without pontoons for all of the mentored rows. Rows in the WRRRA Wintech flat bottom trainer or Peinert's while using pontoons do not count toward one's required mentored rows.
 - **Bow seat in larger sculling shells:**

Sculling in the *stroke, two or three seat of any sculling shell* does not require any additional training or requirements.

 - **Bow of a Double:**
 - The individual in the bow of a double must be a certified independent sculler.
 - A sculler can choose to **only be certified as the bow of a double**. If one so chooses, the sculler must complete the required mentored rows, based on their experience level, and take the Practical On-Water Certification test in the bow of a double.
 - If a sculler is certified as the bow of the double, and later wishes to become certified in the single, the sculler must go through the entire certification process, including mentored rows, and take the on-water certification in a single.
 - **Bow of a Quad:**

In order to become certified to row in the bow seat of a quad, the sculler must

 - Be a certified independent sculler *for at least two full years*, and
 - *Pass an on-water certification test seated in the bow of a quad*,

Practical On-Water Certification Test:

Upon completion of the required Mentored Rows for their Experience Level (see definitions above), the sculler shall contact the Director in charge of Sculling at Sculling@WesternReserveRowing.com, to request an on-water certification test. The Director will pair the sculler with a coach who is different from the coach/coaches who may have conducted the sculler's Learn to Scull sessions or Mentored Rows.

The on-water competency assessment will consist of the coach using his or her judgment as to whether the sculler can safely operate the shell at a basic level. The sculler must utilize the shell type (single, or seated in the bow of a 2x or 4x), which the sculler wishes to be certified in.

The on-water certification test will include the sculler's ability to complete the following tasks:

- Handling the shell on land, and in & out of racks;
- Launch and landing the shell independently;
- General sculling skills, including stopping and backing;
- Steering skills: Able to use a sculling mirror and maintain the shell on the right side of the river, with particular emphasis around corners.
- Ability to safely and expeditiously turn the shell 180 degrees, using a "river" turn (one oar backing, one oar rowing simultaneously). Acceptable duration of turn to be determined by the Coach administering the test.
- Identify the following:
 - Landmarks on the river
 - All bridges
 - High & low sides of Carter Street and Columbus Road bridges
 - All blind turns per the CRF Safety Manual (SaM)
 - All straight stretches
- Make radio calls and identify when to use Channel 12, 16 vs 68 per the SaM
- If using WRRRA equipment, identify WRRRA boats and blades, understand how to reserve shell and the protocol involved;
- Utilize the CRF/WRRRA sign in/sign out process (iCrew)

The administering Coach will report the outcome of the On-Water Certification Test to the Director in charge of Sculling who will review the test with the Sculling Committee. The Director in charge of Sculling will then notify the sculler whether they have been approved to row independently.

If the sculler has not been approved, the sculler should consult with the Coach who administered the test as to what portions of the On-Water Certification Test should be re-addressed. This remediation may require an additional number of Mentored Rows as determined by the administering Coach.

Definitions:

- **Learn to Scull (LTS)** - LTS is a WRRRA program, which consists of six sessions with a WRRRA Sculling Coach.
- **Mentor** – an experienced, WRRRA independent sculler who has volunteered to assist those who have undertaken the independent sculler certification process.
- **Mentored Row** – an on-water session, of at least one hour's duration, wherein the sculler is accompanied by a Mentor in a sculling shell for the entirety of the session. At least one Mentored Row must involve the passage of a large commercial ship, which would require the sculler to identify, locate and navigate to the appropriate CRF-designated Passing Zone. If the minimum number of Mentored rows is accomplished without such a passage, then the minimum number will be extended until a passage occurs.
- **Recognized Sculling Camp (RSC)** – a nationally recognized organization that provides on-water instruction to scullers in single shells. Examples include
 - Florida Rowing Center in Wellington, FL,
 - Calm Waters Rowing in Lancaster, VA, and
 - Craftsbury Sculling Center in Craftsbury, VT.
- **Safety Qualification Level (SQL)** – a safety certification granted by The Cleveland Rowing Foundation (CRF) to those individuals who has passed the appropriate written test as administered by CRF.
- **Sculling Coach (Coach)** – an experienced, certified WRRRA sculling coach who is qualified to:
 - Conduct Learn to Scull (LTS) program sessions.
 - Assess and determine the sculler's basic competence to begin the on-water portion of the certification process; and,
 - Administer the final on-water Practical Test as described below.
- **Summer Rowing League (SRL)** – WRRRA program that provides a minimum of 15 sweeps rowing opportunities during the summer season.
- **Fall Rowing League (FRL)** - WRRRA program that provides a minimum of seven (7) sweeps rowing opportunities during the fall season.

Sculling Log

Name: _____

Row	Date	Notes Passed Freighter/Barge/Tug: <i>specify name & location</i> Conditions: Windy, debris, etc	Mentor Signature
1			
2			
3			
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