

## GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND SUPPORTERS OF THE NATIONAL TEAM

### Introduction

The members of the National Rowing Team are grateful for all the support that they receive both during training and at regattas. When competing abroad it is inspiring to have the encouragement of Canadian supporters. At the same time, during competition and the training leading up to competition, the members of the team must maintain their focus on their main objective, winning gold medals. The purpose of this guideline, therefore is:

- to outline what RCA can do for supporters of the team; and
- to inform supporters how you can best support the team.

### What RCA can do for you

Parents and supporters are often keen to know what the selection process is to the National Team. This is published at the beginning of each season and can be found on the RCA web site under National Team/Team Notices. The process can result in the final team selection not being made until a week or two before the date of the regatta. This can be frustrating for supporters and we ask for your understanding in awaiting the outcome of the process. Supporters are encouraged not to ask their athlete whether or not they will make the team; this only adds pressure to the athlete in an already stressful time. Nor should parents contact the coach hoping for a “hint” re selection. In reality, the need to make travel plans early, before the team is selected, can mean that attendance at an event cannot be dependent on whether or not a particular athlete is selected.

A supporters’ page on the RCA web site, under national team, will provide:

- a listing of the team members and the scheduled days and time of their events;
- a link to the regatta web site where changes resulting from weather and other factors can be found;
- a general itinerary for the team (individual athlete itineraries can vary and should be confirmed with the athlete);
- a RCA telephone number to call in the event of an emergency.

This website can also be used by parents and supporters to exchange information – material can be sent to the RCA Director of Communications for posting to the page. Supporters are encouraged to share the results of their research with each other as they learn much more about the “tourist” features of a regatta location.

In order to assist parents and supporters in obtaining and sharing information RCA will look for an experienced parent or supporter each year willing to play the role of a “point person” who could answer questions, provide advice on national team “etiquette” and act as a conduit to RCA.



Those who are unable to attend the regatta can ask to be added to the e-mail news release list to obtain highlights of the day's Canadian results.

RCA staff make all the travel and accommodation arrangements for the National Team and usually have accumulated useful knowledge about the regatta venue and travel and accommodation alternatives. While RCA cannot afford the time to make travel or accommodation bookings for parents or supporters or to provide individual advice, we will make generally available the information that we have derived from our own arrangements. Accordingly, the office will put out a bulletin for supporters giving the sources of information about travel, accommodation, venue tickets and events surrounding the regatta. RCA will co-ordinate the process for obtaining seats in the FISA family grandstand for those eligible, if possible with the help of a designated parent or supporter.

### **How best to support the team**

First of all, simply knowing that you are there and witnessing the performance of the athletes is inspiring to the Team.

Secondly your vocal encouragement during the racing can be heard on the water and Canadian supporters have proved adept at raising their voices above others. The best time is as the crews approach the grandstand during the racing rather than on their way down to the start when they are focusing on their warm-up routine.

In the time leading up to competition and between races the athletes need to stay focused and avoid distractions. For that reason the team members travel together, stay in the same accommodation and eat together. The coaches and team staff are there to address the athletes' needs and to help maintain their focus for their events. Supporters are asked to be discreet and to maintain a certain distance from the Team, mindful of the team's need not to be distracted from its mission. Contact (eg. phone calls, post-race visits) with athletes should occur only when initiated by the athlete. We also ask supporters to help by travelling separately from the Team and staying in different accommodation to the Team. It is a team rule that the members of the team eat their meals together and do not have non-team members visiting them in their rooms

We are proud of our athletes, how hard they train and how well they represent their country. They deserve all the support that RCA, their parents and supporters can give them.

