



# **Rowing BC Competition Review Taskforce**

## **Taskforce Report: Short Term Recommendations**

**March 2019**



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## **INTRODUCTION**

Following the Competition Review Sessions hosted by Rowing BC at the 2018 Rowing BC Conference, Rowing BC's Board of Directors approved the Rowing BC Competition Review Taskforce (CRT) [Terms of Reference \(TOR\)](#) in January of 2019.

Steps related to the BC competition review have been in progress since the 2015 formation of the Rowing BC Regatta Review Working Group. In January of 2019 Rowing BC produced a brief report shared with the Membership to highlight the progress that had been made through the end of 2018, and to frame the establishment of the CRT. This report can be reviewed [here](#).

Progress in 2019, and this first set of recommendations, is thanks to the significant contributions from the CRT members:

- Representing the Junior Stream: Drew Edwards, Delta Deas Rowing Club
- Representing the High School Stream: Laryssa Biesenthal, Brentwood College Rowing
- Representing the Senior Stream: Brenda Taylor, Victoria City Rowing Club
- Representing the University Stream: Mike Pearce, University of British Columbia Rowing
- Representing the Masters Stream: Connor Elsdon, Gorge Narrows Rowing Club
- Rowing BC Board Members: Kris Davis, York Langerfeld (CRT Chair), Susan Wilkinson
- Rowing BC Staff Support: David Calder, Martin George, Sonja Lonne

The recommendations provided in this report were developed through a series of CRT meetings and consultations with additional stakeholders in each of the competition streams. Desired directions for each stream were created with input from the CRT members, and used to guide stakeholder consultations. In this report, the desired directions are included in consistent language with what stakeholders experienced.

The recommendations created from input received have been divided into short term recommendations and topics identified for future exploration. Recommendations are written in no particular order within each category. Short term recommendations are those that Rowing BC can take action on before the end of the 2019-2020 Fiscal Year (March 31, 2020). Those using the word "*EXPLORE*" intend that consultations and discussions will take place during the given timeframe allowing a more concrete action step to be provided in the next iteration of recommendations. Those using the word "*DEVELOP*" intend that a concrete action step is being taken in this time frame, and that recommendation will be completed by the time of the next iteration of recommendations. The CRT will provide a progress update on the short term recommendations to the Rowing BC Board and wider rowing community in August 2019, and again in November 2019. By August 2019, the CRT will also translate the topics from this report listed for further exploration into realistic, actionable steps that can be included as concrete long term recommendations.



## **TERMINOLOGY**

For the purpose of this report, the competition streams have been defined as follows:

Junior Competition Stream - applying to athletes who have not yet graduated from high school, training and racing in a club-based program structure.

High School Competition Stream - applying to athletes who have not yet graduated from high school, training and racing for their school, either short term through a club-based program structure or long term in a year-long school-specific program.

Senior Competition Stream - applying to athletes who have graduated from high school but are not training or racing for a university team and do not yet consider themselves Masters.

University Competition Stream - applying to athletes who are training and racing for a recognized university rowing team.

Masters Competition Stream - applying to athletes training and racing age 21+ who do not consider themselves in the Senior or University categories.

Coastal Competition Stream - applying to athletes training and racing in coastal or touring equipment.



## **JUNIOR COMPETITION STREAM**

### *Desired Directions:*

To create a competition structure that provides similar race experiences for Island, Mainland and Interior athletes, with consistent and measurable technical and physiological markers built into the calendar, consistent with LTAD stage development. An emphasis on reducing barriers for regionally based athletes to participate is critical to ensure growth outside of the South Island and the Lower Mainland. Adjustments to the competition structure will work to harmonize high school and club based programs, identifying separate and combined pinnacle competitions throughout the year, with an emphasis on keeping athletes appropriately engaged in the summer. This process will also highlight BC-based post secondary rowing opportunities with the objective of keeping more BC rowers transitioning into BC post secondary rowing programs.

### *Short Term Recommendations:*

- Develop a framework that supports rowing organizations and local organizing committees to develop boat pools as part of their events.
- Develop more novice events with fewer category restrictions in consultation with specific regatta local organizing committees with the distinct intention of reducing barriers to participation.
- Explore strategies to support the inclusion of Interior athletes in more regatta opportunities.

### *Topics Identified for further exploration:*

- Explore strategies with local organizing committees to ensure alignment in racing distances from regatta to regatta throughout the racing season and increase opportunities to race Island, Mainland and Interior athletes against one another.
- Develop a “Rowing BC Junior Yearly Training Plan” to support more meaningful alignment between training and racing periods after regatta adjustments have been made.
- Explore the development of a Provincial Championships that includes Junior events, happens annually after Challenge West and before the Royal Canadian Henley and that has a clear regatta progression into the event.
- Explore ways to integrate Junior athletes into the Brown Cup experience in a meaningful way that expands the profile of university rowing.
- Explore potential interest in a BC-hosted Western Canada Junior regatta.



## **HIGH SCHOOL COMPETITION STREAM**

### *Desired Directions:*

To create a competition structure that focuses on athlete recruitment and athlete development across the entire province. Identifying high school recruitment opportunities through the development of harmonized, low-barrier introductory rowing programs across the province similar to the Greater Victoria Youth Rowing Society, and link developmentally appropriate indoor and water-based competitions across the province. Athlete development considerations will examine a realignment with individual program YTP needs and self identified regional, national and international pinnacle competitions. Adjustments to competitions that allow for consistent and measurable technical and physiological markers built in the calendar, consistent with LTAD stage development, is important.

### *Short Term Recommendations:*

- Develop a framework that supports rowing organizations and local organizing committees to develop boat pools as part of their events.
- Explore ways for all regions of the province with high school rowing to work together for the purpose of harmonizing opportunities offered.
- Explore with the Independent School rowing programs the idea of an Independent Schools Championships.

### *Topics Identified for further exploration:*

- Explore strategies to increase the reach of indoor rowing in high schools with the potential to include an indoor rowing and racing circuit.
- Explore opportunities for a high school rowing provincial championships to service high school Fall programs.



## **SENIOR COMPETITION STREAM**

### *Desired Directions:*

To create a competition structure that engages graduating and graduated high school and junior athletes not transitioning or transitioned into post-secondary based rowing programs. Leveraging club infrastructure and existing competitions to tailor targeted programming to retain athletes through this complex and turbulent period of life.

### *Short Term Recommendations:*

- Develop a framework that supports rowing organizations and local organizing committees to develop boat pools as part of their events.
- Develop additional high performance racing opportunities for Senior athletes at existing regattas including more flexible race categories.
- Develop additional Recreational Senior events throughout the province that incorporate social aspects.
- Develop an ideal “Rowing BC Senior Yearly Training Plan” to support more meaningful alignment between training and racing periods.

### *Topics Identified for further exploration:*

- Explore the development of a Provincial Championships that includes Seniors events, happens annually after Challenge West and Cascadia, and before the Royal Canadian Henley.
- Explore ways to support local organizing committees in creating and sanctioning less traditional event styles.
- Develop a points system with prizes, similar to Row Ontario’s “Trillium Cup”, that uses regattas from February to November each year to declare a points winner.



## **UNIVERSITY COMPETITION STREAM**

### *Desired Directions:*

To create a competition structure that enhances the profile of BC university rowing programs and ensures that BC university athletes experience the high-quality racing that is on par with the American collegiate rowing experience and provides a solid footing for athletes with National Team aspirations. Adjustments to the competition structure will work to harmonize conflicts that negatively impact university program periodization due to differences in athlete pathway priorities (i.e. US colleges and the National Team program).

### *Short Term Recommendations:*

- Explore the viability of including university 1x and 2- in future Rowing BC-hosted performance regattas.
- Explore options for a small boat university regatta at Burnaby Lake that would attract a diverse field.
- Explore ways to integrate Junior athletes into the Brown Cup experience in a meaningful way that expands the profile of university rowing.

### *Topics Identified for further exploration:*

- Explore ways to enhance competitive opportunities for novice university rowers.
- Explore the development of a Provincial Championships that includes University events, happens annually after Challenge West and before the Royal Canadian Henley.
- Explore ways to celebrate University level accomplishments outside of the National Team stream.



## **MASTERS COMPETITION STREAM**

### *Desired Directions:*

To create a competition structure that engages and excites the Masters community consistently throughout the year, taking into consideration current barriers, including a lack of race/competitor diversity, and restrictive time and cost commitments (i.e travel and integrated race scheduling). New opportunities to engage Masters through BC-based pinnacle events, incentivization of participation in multiple events and a centralized results framework all need to be considered in this process.

### *Short Term Recommendations:*

- Develop a framework that supports rowing organizations and local organizing committees to develop boat pools as part of their events.
- Develop a plan for the inclusion of additional Novice Masters events within regattas in 2020 and beyond, including a more flexible definition of Novice.
- Develop additional Recreational Masters events throughout the province that incorporate social aspects.

### *Topics Identified for further exploration:*

- Explore the development of a Provincial Championships that includes Masters events, happens annually after Challenge West and Cascadia, and before the Royal Canadian Henley.
- Explore ways to consolidate Masters events into a single day at existing regattas, or as an additional day added to regattas, to facilitate easier travel and more competitors.
- Develop a points system with prizes, similar to Row Ontario's "Trillium Cup", that uses regattas from February to November each year to declare a points winner.
- Develop a Masters networking and communication tool for athletes and coaches.
- Explore ways to support local organizing committees in creating and sanctioning less traditional event styles.



## **COASTAL COMPETITION STREAM**

### *Desired Directions:*

To create a meaningful competition structure that encourages participation in coastal rowing, and showcases the utilization of coastal and touring equipment to grow the overall sport of rowing in BC.

### *Short Term Recommendations:*

- Develop a BC Coastal Regatta series in partnership with existing coastal rowing organizations.
- Develop education opportunities for Umpires, Coaches and Athletes in coastal rowing.
- Develop and promote a calendar of pre-existing BC coastal events.

### *Topics identified for further exploration:*

- Develop standardized pathways for NCCP-recognized coach and umpire training related to coastal rowing.
- Explore a connection between competitions available on the West Coast of Canada and the US.



## SUMMARY OF SHORT TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

The table below represents all of the short term recommendations suggested through this report. Each recommendation has been labelled to indicate which streams of competition its completion will support (J = Junior, H = High School, S = Senior, U = University, M = Masters, C = Coastal) to help with the planning and implementation of each recommendation.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>C</b>
Develop a framework that supports rowing organizations and local organizing committees to develop boat pools as part of their events.	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Develop more novice events with fewer category restrictions in consultation with specific regatta local organizing committees with the distinct intention of reducing barriers to participation.	✓					
Explore strategies to support the inclusion of Interior athletes in more regatta opportunities.	✓		✓		✓	
Explore ways for all regions of the province with high school rowing to work together for the purpose of harmonizing opportunities offered.		✓				
Explore with the Independent School rowing programs the idea of an Independent Schools Championships.		✓				
Develop additional high performance racing opportunities for Senior athletes at existing regattas including more flexible race categories.			✓			
Develop additional Recreational Senior/Masters events throughout the province that incorporate social aspects.			✓		✓	
Develop an ideal "Rowing BC Senior Yearly Training Plan" to support more meaningful alignment between training and racing periods.			✓			
Explore the viability of including university 1x and 2- in future Rowing BC-hosted performance regattas.				✓		
Explore options for a small boat university regatta at Burnaby Lake that would attract a diverse field.				✓		
Explore ways to integrate Junior and/or high school athletes into the Brown Cup experience in a meaningful way that expands the profile of university rowing.	✓	✓		✓		
Develop a plan for the inclusion of additional Novice Masters events within regattas in 2020 and beyond, including a more flexible definition of Novice.					✓	
Develop a BC Coastal Regatta series in partnership with existing coastal rowing organizations.						✓
Develop education opportunities for Umpires, Coaches and Athletes in coastal rowing.						✓
Develop and promote a calendar of pre-existing BC coastal events.						✓



## **NEXT STEPS**

1. CRT members representing each competition stream will be provided an opportunity to review this report and suggest adjustments to recommendations for their stream in a direct conversation with Rowing BC's Executive Director, David Calder, and the CRT Chair, York Langerfeld.
2. The entire CRT will meet on April 9, 2019 to review the amended version of this report and make any final adjustments before this report is considered complete and final.
3. This report will be shared with the Rowing BC Board and membership.
4. Rowing BC staff will create action plans to implement the short term recommendations (with the help of CRT members as appropriate).
5. The CRT will be updated on progress towards the short term recommendations in order to be able to create a secondary report by August 2019 in which the Rowing BC Board and membership are provided an update and next iteration of recommendations.
6. The CRT will review all topics from this report identified for future consideration in order to propose the step by step components that will enable them to become realistic, actionable long term recommendations and include these in the August 2019 report to the Rowing BC Board and membership.
7. Progress towards the short term recommendations will continue, with another report from the CRT being prepared to share with the Rowing BC Board and membership by November 2019.
8. Short term recommendations from this report are to be completed by March 31, 2020.