

Hello rowing families!

The South Niagara High School Invitational hosted by the South Niagara Rowing Club (SNRC) will take place in Welland on Saturday May 17<sup>th</sup> and Sunday May 18<sup>th</sup> on the south course of the Welland International Flatwater centre. This event has grown to be one of the largest high school regattas in Canada. The event draws approximately 1500 athletes each year from both Canada and the United States.

### **Heat and Access to Water**

There is little refuge from the sun in Welland so being attentive to hydration and in general keeping out of the direct sun (also wearing hats and sunscreen) is going to be very important in terms of athlete performance, but much more imperative for their safety. Westdale coaches are very alert to not over racing the rowers and yet heat stroke can still be a real concern. There is not an access point for water at this regatta. There are portable restrooms, but no running water. In the past there has been a water truck dispensing water at the launch. However, I would strongly suggest coming with large containers of water to help keep your athlete and family hydrated.

Also included is a pamphlet on heat stroke/heat exhaustion. A bit of knowledge can go a long way in terms of prevention. It's definitely worth reviewing with your child before you head out for this weekend's regatta.

### **Tents**

There will be a, 10'x10' brown tent that will be set up at the course finish line. This is usually where the parents watch the races. As a point of reference, this will be right beside a small grandstand just next to the control tower. (south of Forks Road) There will be a barbeque at this location as well. This is definitely not something that is a "food organized event", but we just wanted to let people know that if they want to cook something small, they may. Please feel free to bring your own shelter as well as it is nice to share time with all the families.

There will be a 10'X10' Westdale athlete shelter at the trailer. Athletes will be reminded to rest and keep cool under the shade of this tent.

If you have a similar shelter that you would like to bring, that may be helpful.

As the athletes will be intermittently at the launch and at the finish (either preparing for their own race, or watching their teammates races), packing a separate lunch for them and keeping it in their own small cooler bag at the launch is usually a good approach. (they usually find their parents' cooler for more food fairly easily ☺)

## **Getting from Point A to Point B**

Just a note that vehicle traffic is not allowed between the Forks Road and the launch. There will be a free shuttle driving the athletes from Forks Road down to the trailer. Parking is available on both sides of Forks Road for a cash only payment. The fee is different depending on which side you choose.

Welland is a great place to bring your bicycle. The course is set up very differently than the Henley course, in that athletes will launch their boats, row about 1 km south to the finish line, then 2 km along the course to the start and finally row their heat to the finish and continue back to the launch. (For every 2 km heat, the athletes will be rowing 6 km). Along this distance is a bike/pedestrian pathway. It is a very neat experience to bike along that long, lonely, quiet course from the start with the athletes.

There is a small shuttle service that travels between the launch and the finish, however this is operated by volunteers and is not under a strict schedule and at times, it is used by a large volume of people. Given that it is a very long walk, bicycles are again ideal.

## **Directions**

### *Option 1:*

- QEW to 406
- take 406 right to the end (traffic circle)
- go right (west) on Main Street
- just before the bridge turn left (south) onto King street
- turn right (west) on Lincoln Road
- turn left (south) on Prince Charles Street (hwy 58)
- take the Forks Road exit
- turn right (east) on Forks Road and follow to just before the bridge. That's Colbert Street

### *Option 2:*

Victoria Avenue runs parallel to the 406, so for those who wish to bypass Welland, this is another option:

Head south from the QEW on Victoria Ave. all the way to Forks Rd., taking that east all the way to the race course. Just as you're about to approach the old bridge over the canal, you'll be at Colborne St. About 1 km north (left) is the trailer/docks/registration/etc, but Colborne St. will be closed to traffic after about 8 in the morning. To the right is the finish line.

Allowing for at least an hour from Hamilton is reasonable.

## **ID**

*ID IS REQUIRED* for this regatta. The best thing for your athlete to bring is their student card but a health card with a photo or a passport is also accepted. The coaches will have more information for the athletes as to when and to whom the id needs to be shown.

There will be plenty more information for athletes from the coaches. This communication is intended more for families/parents especially those who are new to the sport this year. Hopefully this information helps in a small way. Have safe travels and best wishes for a positive, rich experience. 😊