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More than most sports, CREW relies on TEAMWORK

By [John Armhein](#) | Published 02/1/2006 | January/February 2006 (Issue 11) , Other | Rating:

Tempe Junior Crew



This article was written by John Armhein, a member of the Tempe Junior Crew, to give others an appreciation for a sport that requires

hard work and dedication, but gets little recognition.

SportZine welcomes submissions from students and uses those that are appropriate for our readers.

Here in Arizona, an old sport has taken new roots. Crew, also known as the sport of rowing, has grown at Tempe Town Lake since the lake was first built. Rowing is

practiced in racing shells, also known as boats, which come in a variety of sizes and configurations. The size of boats may range from nine people, eight rowers and one coxswain, to a single rower. The boats can be made so that each individual rower uses one or two oars. A coxswain is what most people actually think of when they hear about crew. They are often depicted screaming, "Stroke."

The coxswain usually sits in the rear of the boat, facing the rower, steering and motivating the rowers.

They act as on-the-water coaches. No matter how many rowers or how many oars, they all work as one to win the race.

On Tempe Junior Crew you will find an extremely hard working and dedicated group of rowers.

We practice hard five days a week, but we all love to do it. The very definition of the sports name, Crew, means team. We are only as good as our weakest link, and, therefore, we strive for the team's, and all of its members' success.

Additionally, we are always looking for new members, even if they don't know how to row. Although the goal of Crew is the team's success, there is always room for an individual to improve. In addition to the brute strength required to propel a boat through the water, rowing is a sport of finesse. Rowers have to remain vigilant, even through fatigue, because even the slightest variations in each individual stroke causes the boat to tilt. Having the will to succeed is essential on Crew; the rest inevitably comes.

On Tempe Junior Crew we travel around the region and the continent to race. As in all serious sports, while you may work hard in practice, it's all for nothing if you don't go out there and compete. The majority of regattas, the name of rowing competitions, for us take place in Southern California. With two regattas in Mission Bay, San Diego and other locations, stretching all the way up to Los Angeles. For the regional championships we make a trip up to Sacramento, home to one of the best rowing venues in the United States. Last year we even made our inaugural trip to the Heart of Texas Regatta in Austin. Here TJC was pitted against major universities in most of its races, yet still came home with plenty of medals. Each year a select group of athletes even travels to a boarding school in Canada to compete in a huge junior regatta.

While most races occur during the spring, our two most prestigious races are in the fall season. Both of these are head races, which mean that contrary to races in the spring, you have to navigate windy rivers for several miles in your pursuit of victory. This year a men's four, coxswain, alternate and coach represented us at the Head of the Schuylkill regatta in Philadelphia. They even managed to pass many of our East Coast rivals. Perhaps the biggest head race in the country, The Head of the Charles Regatta in Boston attracts rowers from all over the world for competition. TJC is proud to have had representation every year since its inception at this event.

And finally, our hometown races, known as the Hot Head Regatta, Desert Sprints and Arizona State Rowing Championships, take place on Tempe Town Lake. Here we fight for hometown bragging rights. Our men's team took state last year. While some teams claim to not be about winning, we at TJC strive to win every day.

Rowing is a sport of teamwork. Not just the "teamwork" you see on some sports where an individual does great and the rest of the team is out there looking pretty but the teamwork where you have to trust in your teammates to do their best and earn their trust that you will do yours. The beauty of rowing is that it requires constant work to maintain strength and skill to form a true team.

If you think you have what it takes to be a winner, we suggest you come down and be a part of our team. Please contact Anne Hughes annegh@cox.net for more information on upcoming "Learn To Row" classes and TAKE THE CHALLENGE!!

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