Findochty Water Sports Club

Skiff Manual

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1.0 A Brief History of St Ayles Skiff (from SCRA Website)

The St Ayles Skiff story started in early 2009 when the Scottish Fisheries Museum approached skiff kit manufacturer Alec Jordan to run a skiff build in the museum's skiffyard with students from Adam Smith College. During the conversations regarding the project over the eventual use of the skiff to be built, Jordan raised the possibility of trying to revive the coastal rowing regattas that had taken place in the mining villages in the East Fife coalfields until the early 1950s. The miners built their skiffs themselves from timbers "liberated" from the collieries, then raced them on their Gala days.

With kit-built skiffs, the cost of a community building and racing their own skiff was much reduced. It was within a communities reach to raise the £3500 (in 2009) or so that would be needed to buy a kit and complete a skiff. With this in mind, the Museum commissioned the internationally regarded skiff designer Iain Oughtred to design a replica of the Fair Isle Skiff to be built from a plywood kit that Jordan was to draw up from Oughtred's plans. Immediately when the plans were available, the first kit was designed and cut, and Jordan, assisted by Chris Perkins and various other volunteers, built the prototype in the space of seven weeks.

The prototype took to the water on Halloween 2009, in brilliant sunshine, with a large number of onlookers from Fife and various locations along the south side of the Forth, largely thanks to Robbie Wightman's efforts in publicising the project there. Over the next few months, Alec Jordan took the prototype to various places around Scotland for clubs and other groups to have a try – nearly all of them decided to build. Within a few weeks, Jordan Skiffs had received orders for several skiffs, and the race was on to see who could get their skiffs launched first.

The skiffs were built in a surprising array of locations, from cowsheds, to a leaky fishermen's' hut to the relative warmth and space of a very large disused Hydroponicum (a glorified polytunnel). Six skiffs made it to the first regatta at Anstruther in May 2010, and since then, there has been a constant stream of new skiffs being ordered and built at various rates.

More regattas followed over the summer, and by the end of the first season, 33 skiff kits had been sold in Scotland and one in England. The design was also picked up in the USA, with WoodenSkiff magazine sponsoring the 'Building And Rowing Challenge' which was designed to encourage schools to build and race the skiffs. Others in the USA followed, with the first all-women build taking place in Portland Oregon. The scene switched to Australia (also cutting kits), where another women's build took place at Franklin Tasmania. Kits were also cut in the Netherlands; Kits have also been sent to New Zealand and Spain, with an increasing number being built in England. In July 2013, Ullapool in the North West Highlands hosted the first Skiffie Worlds, with crews attending from the USA, Australia, New Zealand, Netherlands, and England, a fantastic event, with the proceedings opened by HRH the Princess Royal. It is hard to say what anyone's real expectations of the St Ayles Skiff were in 2009 when the prototype was launched. It is certain though that what has been achieved in such a short space of time was well into the "Wild Dreams" end of the spectrum.

1.1 St Ayles Skiff “MORAG”

There was a meeting held at the village hall in Findochty on Thursday 5th December 2013 where attendees were given an insight into what coastal rowing was all about. With its fairly low and attainable capital outlay, many small communities around our coastline have built and row their own St Ayles Skiffs. After this meeting FWSC members Mairi Innes, Trevor Wilson and John Smith got together and discussed the feasibility in sourcing funding that would allow the purchase, build and ownership by the club of one St Ayles Skiff.

Thanks to principal funding by Glenfiddich Distillery and The Abbeyfield Society the club were able to purchase one St Ayles Skiff from Jordan skiffs with delivery accepted in February 2014. By March 2014 a suitable workshop had been sourced and permission obtained to use the space for the build of our skiff and the construction of work frame commenced. On the 1st May 2014 an intrepid gang congregated to commence the build project. An initial optimistic time frame was not achieved but after more than 16 months of dedication our skiff “Morag” unofficially took to the water. Flushed with success an official launch ceremony was organised and on the 18th October 2015 “Morag”, accompanied by the skirl o’ the bagpipes, was officially named by Morag Reid, the wife of our lead builder Bert Reid. Morag with her distinctive white hull and blue shear strake and gunnel, Figure 1, is number 110 on the SCRA skiff register, i.e. the 110th skiff completed in Scotland!

Figure 1: Skiff "Morag".

1.2 St Ayles Skiff “MORVEN”

After the success in building and rowing our skiff “MORAG”, FWSC flourished with membership increasing, many keen on rowing in a St Ayles skiff. With “MORAG” in high demand the thought of building a second skiff was discussed. This was the springtime of 2018.

Information was passed to the club committee of a partially built St Ayles skiff at the Black Isle Brewery north of Inverness. After much discussion and inspection, the part built was purchased and transported to Cullen Community and Recreation centre who agreed, to the use of sheds to the rear, for the completion of the skiff. This was 1st September 2018. Work on the new skiff did not commence until October with pace picking up into 2019 to endeavour to have the skiff launched in time for planned outings in May. “MORVEN” was completed in time and a proud day for Findochty Water Sports Club and the build team when she was launched on the 21st April 2019. Morven with her distinctive blue hull and white shear strake, Figure 2, is craft number 181.

Figure 2: Skiff "Morven".

The naming was undertaken by Ian Palmer of William Grants who were one of our principal sponsors. Also, thanks go to the National Lottery, Brent Alpha, Mary Salmond Trust and Tesco Just Giving.

2.0 Skiff Roles and Responsibilities

To ensure that it is safe to row and that Morag and Morven are well managed and maintained there are designated roles held by club members.

2.1 Skiff Captain

Responsible to the club and club committee for the management and to oversee the club use of skiffs “Morag” and “Morven”. The skiff captain will regular inspect and ensure that the skiffs and ancillary equipment are maintained and fit for use. When required they will call for club member support to help with the general maintenance of the skiffs.

2.2 Responsible Person - Officer of the Day (OOD)

Any usage of either skiff must have a declared responsible person present or in contact with the Cox. In common with sailing practice, this person is called the Officer of the Day (OOD). As OOD they will be responsible for ensuring overall safe practice is followed, with specific duties as follows.

- Prior to organising a date/time for a row will check the tide and weather conditions will be favourable for a row.
- Will call and organise the crew for a row through SPOND and the FWSC What's App group.
- On the day of the row will assess the tide and weather conditions prior to and for the duration of a row will remain favourable. In the event the conditions have or will be likely to deteriorate will call off the row.
- Ensure that either or both skiffs are safely launched, recovered and stored. It is important to notify the FWSC Skiff Captain of any damages, losses or issues for repair, replacement or maintenance. Those who own skiffs deal with these issues on a daily personal basis are aware of importance. However, “Morag” and “Morven” belong to all club members and there must be a shared consideration for “Morag” and “Morven” and all of us as club members and users of our shared resource.
- Ensure for each outing/trip on the water there is a competent Cox or an experienced Cox as part of the rowing crew. Note the Cox may also be the OOD.

The club has a number of members who are designated OODs. A list of the current OODs can be found in the Howff.

2.3 Coxswain (COX)

The Cox is the Skiff’s Captain for the period the skiff is on a trip. This starts immediately prior to boarding the skiff. The Cox responsibilities include;

- Crew allocation (where there is more than one skiff) and seating positions to ensure skiff is balanced in terms of experience and how it sits in the water.

- Planning and updating the route as sea and weather conditions dictate.
- Steering and controlling the skiff through the tiller and the direction of the crew (see Section 3.0).

Most importantly the Cox is responsible for the crew's safety and welfare and should ensure;

- All crew members are wearing life jackets and know how to operate them.
- Everyone knows how to get in and out of the skiff safely.
- Keep an eye and check on the crew's welfare throughout the trip.
- A charged VHF is onboard with the second station on shore (if only one skiff is out). Those operating the radio should be competent to do so. Should no shore cover be available then the Cox and OOD will assess the risks involved as part of planned area of practice on the day.

Note during any cox training the experienced cox onboard will remain responsible for the general welfare and safety of the crew and the skiff.

2.4 Crew Personal Safety

Every person going on the water in a skiff should understand the following;

- You are responsible for your own safety.
- You must not do anything to compromise your safety, or the safety of any other crew members onboard the skiff.
- You must always wear a lifejacket and know how to operate it.
- Always dress suitably, wearing several layers to keep warm. Have some waterproof clothing ready.
- Wellingtons are helpful during colder times to keep feet dry.
- Never fasten any weight to yourself, or yourself to the skiff.
- In the case of an emergency have an understanding of what might be required;
    - How to operate a VHF radio and call for help, remember it could be your Cox that is in distress, See Appendix A.
    - Be aware of the hazards involved should there be a man overboard situation.
- Listen to your Cox.

- Most importantly if you are struggling, need to stop or just not sure let your Cox know.

2.5 Event Co-ordinator

In general, OODs are responsible for organising the day-to-day trips out in the skiffs however for special events, e.g. the six harbours row, regattas (including the club regatta), skiff mini adventures and club social events a specific event co-ordinator may be appointed by the committee. An events coordinator will be responsible to the skiff captain and committee for the organisation of the specific special event and may require support from the wider club membership to help with planning, transport and towing, marshalling/guiding, catering and training arrangements.

3.0 Guidance for Cox & Crew

The Cox onboard is responsible for the welfare and safety of the crew. The Cox should know;

- How to operate the VHF radio.
- Be confident the skiff is in a safe condition, including the insertion of the bung (drain plug).
- How to steer a skiff.
- How to instruct the crew to move a skiff forwards, backwards and around.
- How to instruct the crew to stop a skiff quickly and safely.
- How to instruct the crew, when required to, to move around the skiff.
- The waters to be rowed are in a safe condition regarding tides, weather, other traffic, swimmers, surrounding hazards.
- Not to do anything which they are unsure about on the water.

Novice Coxes should be accompanied by an experienced Cox in the crew for support.

3.1 Steering

The Cox, apart from all the other responsibilities, steers the skiff.

This is done by using a tiller, see Figure 4 below.

Tiller steering is where a wooden tiller or wooden arm is attached to the top of the rudder. Steering is by swinging the tiller left or right opposite to the direction the Cox wishes the course change to be. If the Cox wants to steer right then the Cox must move the tiller to the left, see Figure 3.

Over steering will create drag, slowing the skiff down, putting load onto the rowers' oars and reaping the wrath of the rowers, or maybe a scowl, upon the Cox. The recommendations are for no more than 30° of helm to be used unless the Cox is actively attempting to slow the skiff down. When too much helm is used, the turbulence caused will be heard and should be a signal of the additional drag being created.

Sometimes the Cox will be in a position where the skiff cannot turn quickly enough, e.g. departing a harbour with a sharp turn between basins. In this case the Cox can get the rowers on the outside of the corner to pull harder and/or by getting the near or inner side of the bend to pull less. More dramatic will be for the inside of the turn rowers to stop rowing altogether, or to dig in their oar creating a braking action or even more dramatic for the inner side to back paddle. The more drastic the action the more braking effect it will have, slowing or stopping the skiff and putting additional strain upon the outside rowers. All of these actions will make the skiff turn quicker, see Figure 3.

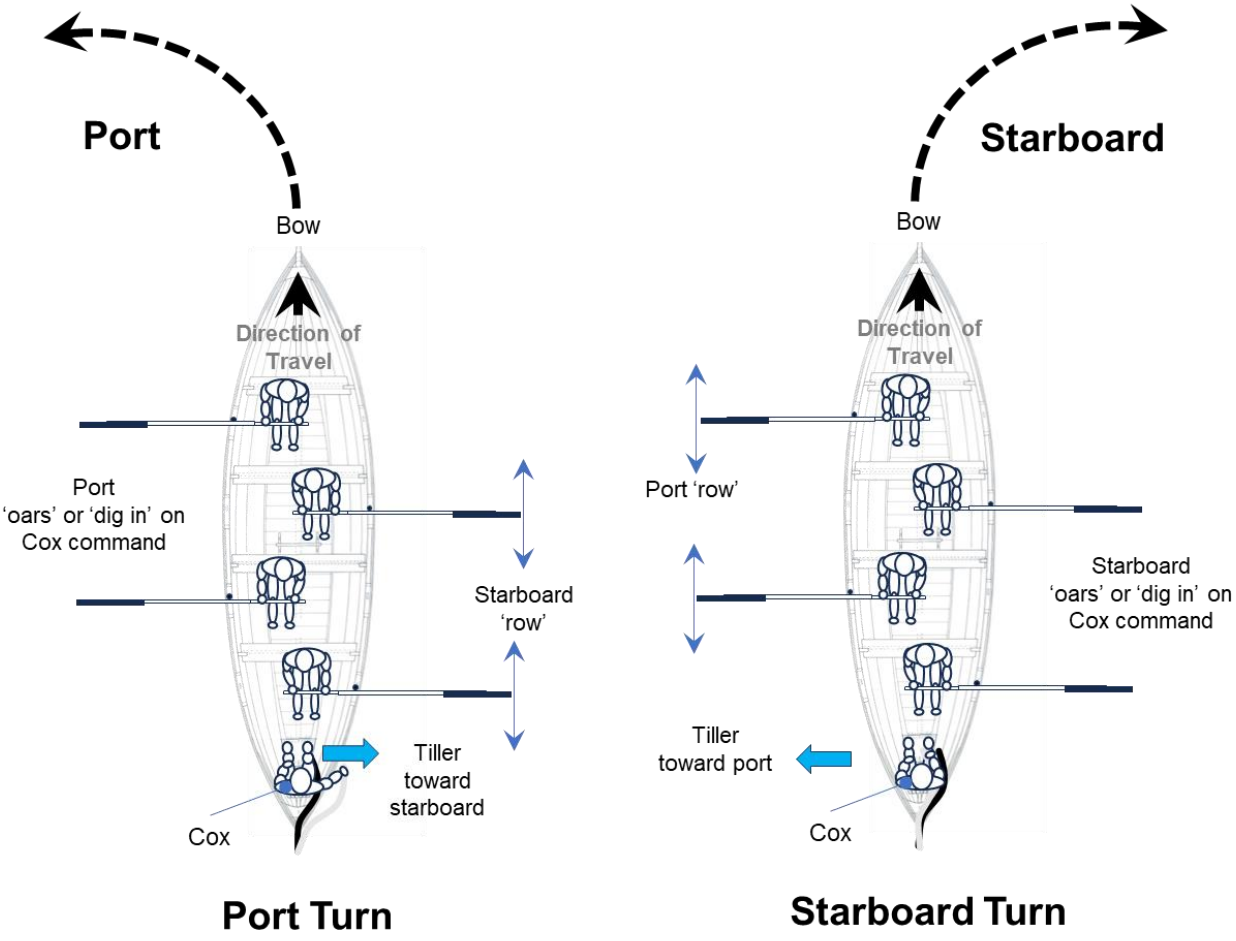

Figure 3: Skiff Turns

Remember to go back to normal rowing as soon as possible and therefore lessening the load on the hard working outside bend rowers.

When it is very windy, the Cox should steer to angle the skiff into the wind slightly, in sailing terms allowing for leeway being the angle that the skiff is being off course due to the wind. It is as important for a new Cox to be able to steer properly as it is for the Cox to try and coach or encourage the crew. An inexperienced Cox will have experience onboard to keep them right.

3.2 Cox Instructions (Rowing Terms)

These can vary from club to club and if any doubt exists the Cox should ensure that all rowers understand what is required of them. If the rowers are in doubt, they should be vocal in requesting clarification from the Cox, i.e. shout out they may not hear if you are in the bow.

'Oars'

Each rower should stop whatever action they are doing and hold their oar horizontal and stationary, clear of the water.

'All together Ahead and Row'

This is the instruction to start rowing. Traditionally the request was to give way together but in these modern times with varied experienced crews, a more obvious instruction is better. All together indicates all rowers. Ahead indicates the direction of travel required and the call “And Row” should be the first pull.

'Follow Stroke'

The stroke rower is the rower nearest to the Cox and all other rowers should follow the same rhythm and timing unless on a different instruction from the Cox.

'All together Hold Water'

All rowers should dip oar blades into the water and hold steady which will have the action of braking and stopping the skiff.

In an emergency situation the Cox may shout 'Stop', on this direction all rowers should immediately dip their oars into the water.

'All together Back Water'

All rowers should row in the opposite direction to when the skiff is going forwards.

(Cautionary Note) When directed to 'Stop', 'Hold Water' or 'Backwater' when the skiff is still moving forward the rowers should be conscious of the oar pressure wanting to knock them off their seat and they should brace for impact!! The faster the skiff the greater the pressure and the rowers’ safety should be considered.

Oars/ Ahead/ Hold Water/ Back Water may all be applied to one side or the other individually as in the following examples of signals from the Cox:

"Port Side Oars"

"Starboard Side Ahead and Row"

"Port Side Hold Water"

"Starboard Side Back Water"

It is a good guide for the Cox to indicate via arm indication as to which side is required to react as the rowers are facing aft and not all rowers are familiar with seafaring terms.

Other directions include:

'Out Oars'

Fit Oars on to pins.

'Ship Oars'

Remove oars from pins and then recover back and lay down inside the skiff.

(Helpful Tip) When directed to 'Out Oars' or 'Ship Oars' if possible, it is better to let the blade dip into the water to take some of the weight of the oar before lifting onto or off the pins.

'Toss Oars'

All rowers should lift the blades upwards in a rotating upwards motion until the oar stands vertical with the loom held between feet on the bottom of the skiff. The blades of the oar facing toward the Cox. This may be also specific to port or starboard. This direction is typically used to mark a salute or commemoration.

'Mind Your Oars'

May be specific to port or starboard when say coming alongside a quay or pontoon. Rowers need to be aware of what the obstruction is and to keep oars clear of the obstruction.

3.3 Position Of Rowers On Board

There is a tradition in the numbering system for seating starting from the bow or forward. For a St Ayles Skiff with 4 rowers it would be 1 to 4 numbered from forward (bow), Figure 4. Number 1 is often called the BOW seat with the next being 2 and the next 3 with number 4 being called STROKE. Everybody endeavours or should endeavour to keep time and unison with the STROKE rower. The sense of this is that everybody can see the STROKE but the STROKE can only see the Cox.

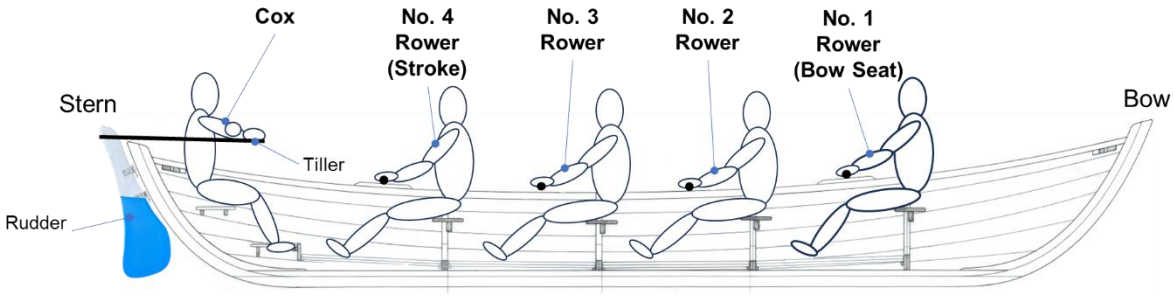

Figure 4: Cox and Rower Positions.

St Ayles Skiff rowers row with one oar. The positioning is an alternating pattern with 2 oars out to Starboard and 2 out to Port. The tradition is for the Stroke oar to out on Starboard along with number 2. Number 3 and the Bow oar are both out to Port. We do not have a reason for this, and it does not necessarily have to be this way although the only other option is the exact opposite

starting Bow to Starboard and Stroke on Port. If we stick with tradition the skiff will turn more readily to starboard as the Bow oar is on the Port side forward and the mechanics show that this configuration will turn faster to starboard than to Port. Should a course be rowed whereby the predominance is for Port turning then serious consideration should be given to configure the rowers with Bow rower's oar out on Starboard.

With this in mind the Cox should also consider, when they have an option on which way to turn, then the Cox should choose to turn to the opposite side to which their Bow rower is positioned.

3.4 Fixed Seat Rowing Technique

Nothing is new in this world, and let's face it (regardless of what we tell our admiring friends) rowing is not that hard to get a hang of, although no doubt all of us could improve our technique to make rowing faster, easier, less injurious etc. The following illustration, Figure 5, from the 1937 Edition of the Admiralty manual of Seamanship, Ref. [3], gives as good an illustration as any you will find today.

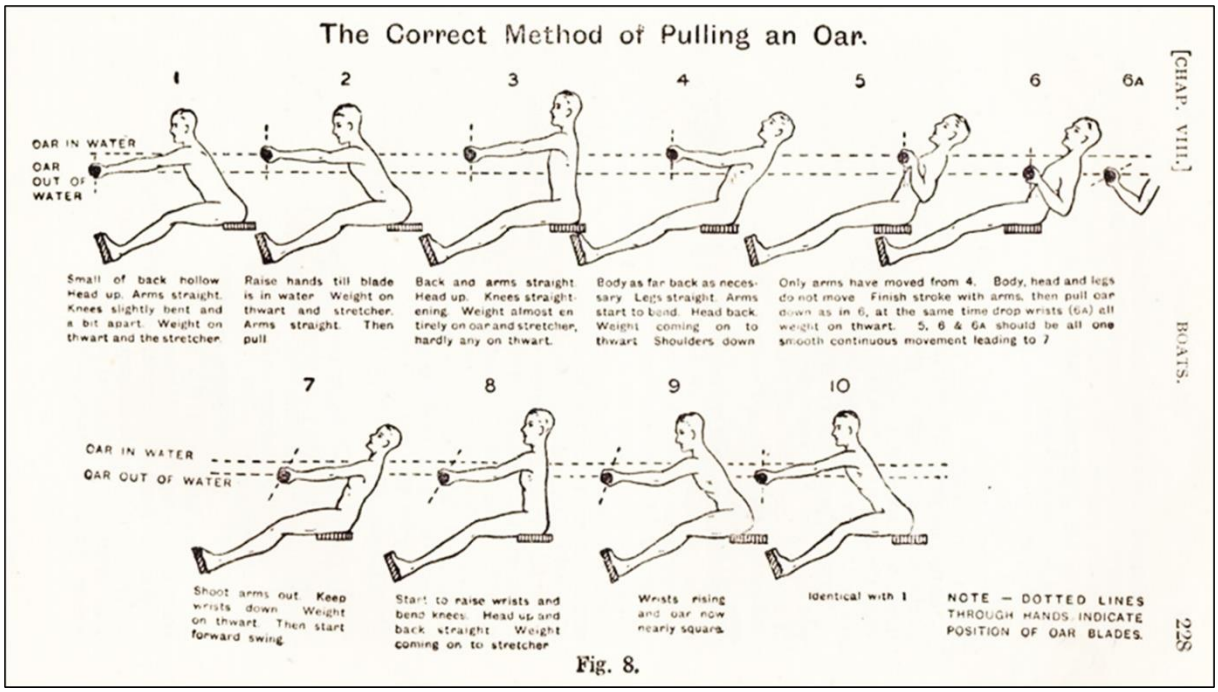

Figure 5: Fixed Seat Rowing Technique.

We row pretty much the same way, although now we generally do so fully clothed. We hope.

The notes on style in the reinforce what is shown in the illustration. Highlights include:

- Straight Back:

  Erect but not stiff, swinging from the loins only at the hips and not from any point in the middle of his back as a secondary pivot. [this] eases the respiratory organs by opening the chest cage.

- Swing:

The time occupied coming forward should be the body's rest; an erect head and open chest will enable the heart and lungs to work freely and easily. Any tendency to rush the swing must be checked! As the body swings the hands should be at the same time stretching and reaching out as if constantly striving to touch something which is as constantly evading them.

- Use of the Arms:

The arms must be straight when swinging back. They must be considered as merely connecting rods between the body and oar. The use of the biceps in rowing should be discouraged, as the [rower] who finishes [their] stroke by the aid of the biceps infallibly dog ears [their] elbows and sticks them out at right angles to [their] ribs, giving a weak as well as a cramped and ugly finish….. It is important that the oar should be pulled into the chest and not the chest up to the oar. This latter will certainly shorten the stroke prematurely and spoil the rhythm of the swing.

- Hanging at the Chest:

The oar must not hang at the chest. The hands must come away quickly, otherwise it will be necessary to rush forward in the swing to make up lost ground. This spoils the swing and taxes the endurance of the [rower].

4.0 Skiff Parts and Terms

The following figures, Figure 6 to Figure 8, and Table 1 identify the common parts to a skiff and the terms used to describe them. However, if you are out in the skiff and there is a term you haven't heard please feel free to ask your Cox who are often a fountain of knowledge.

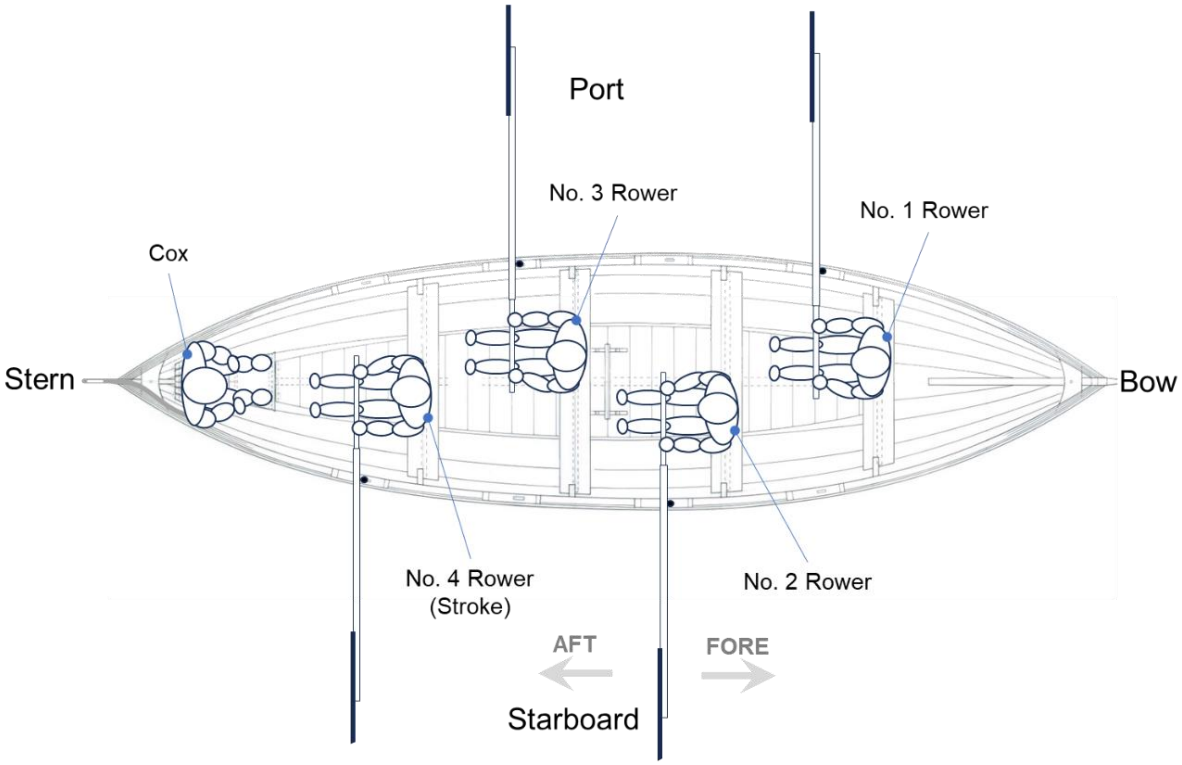

Figure 6: Plan Overview of Skiff and Rowers Positions.

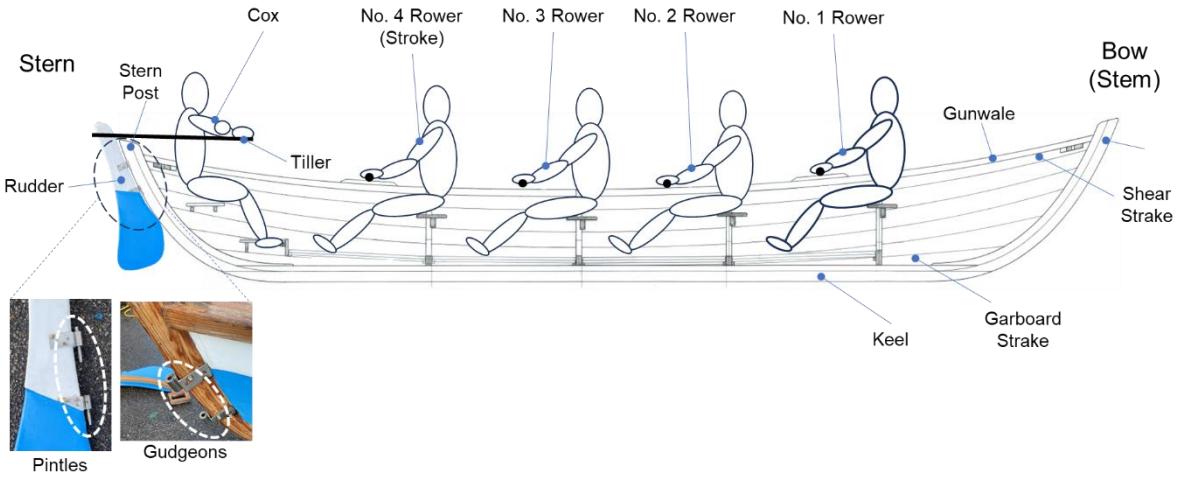

Figure 7: Side Elevation Skiff Parts and Rowers Position.

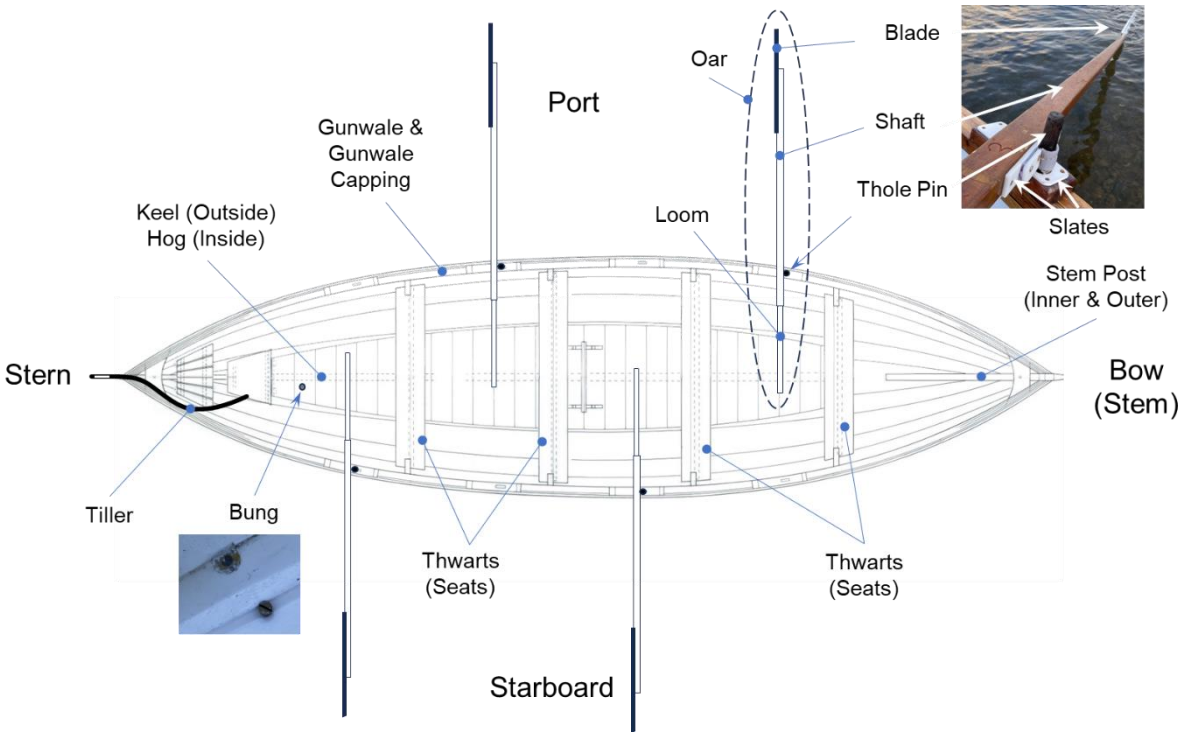

Figure 8: Plan Overview of Skiff Parts.

Table 1: Skiff Parts and Description.

Part / Term	Description
Loom of an Oar	Is the part grasped by the hands when rowing
Blade of an Oar	Is the flattened area which grips the water
Shaft of an Oar	Is the part of the oar between the blade and the loom
Slates	Flat wear plates fitted to shaft in way of rowlocks/thole pins
Port	Is the side of the skiff on the left when looking forward
Starboard	Is the side of the skiff on the right when looking forward
Bow or Stem	Is the front of the skiff
Stern	Is the back end of the skiff
Stem Post	Is the post of wood on the centre line at the front of the skiff. (There are the outer and inner stem posts fixed together and seen whether looking at outside or inside of skiff)
Stern Post	Is the post of wood on the centre line at the back of the skiff. (There are the outer and inner stern posts fixed together and seen whether looking at outside or inside of skiff)
Keel	Is the main piece of timber on the centre line running between stem post and stern post on the bottom of the skiff
Hog	Is the piece of timber seen on the centre line, along the middle bottom inside of skiff. It is fixed to the keel.
Bilge	Is the rounded part of the hull adjacent to the keel
Garboard Strake	The plank fitted next to the keel on either side

Shear Strake	The upper most plank fitted below the Gunwale
Gunwale	Is the top rail of the side of the skiff
Cap rail, or Gunwale Capping	Is the top piece of wood running all around the side of the skiff, on top of the gunwale
Thwarts	Are the seats for the oarsmen to sit on and run from port to starboard
Pintles	Are the pins projecting downwards from the fore side of the rudder which fit into the sockets fitted on the aft side of the stern post.
Gudgeons	Are the rings or sockets which the pintles fit into and are fitted on the aft side of the stern post.
Thole Pin	Are entered into holes drilled in the gunwhales allowing the oars to be placed over them using the webbing straps that are fitted to the oars.
Catch a crab	When a blade gets stuck in the water and the handle knocks the rower flat

5.0 References

Scottish Coastal Rowing Association (SCRA)

[1] Rules of Racing (2020 Edition) - Information and guidance for holding race events.

SCRA website - Rules of Racing

Scottish Coastal Rowing Association (SCRA)

[2] Building and Measurement Rules for the St Ayles Skiff - Information and guidance on building and maintaining a skiff.

SCRA website - Skiff Build

[3] Manual of Seamanship 1937. By Authority of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty.

Appendix A Skiff VHF Marine Radio Use

Appendix A Skiff VHF Marine Radio Use

Findochty Water Sports Club owns handheld VHF Marine Radios which are carried on board our 2 rowing skiffs to enhance safety at sea. These radios do not have the extra complexity of Digital Selective Calling (DSC) and so are relatively simple so use. It is no longer possible to obtain a licence for this restricted use and the certification for DSC use is prohibitively complex and expensive. Those in the club who went through the old certification are still licensed to use our simpler radios and to supervise someone else on board to use them. **Anyone** is allowed to broadcast on VHF Marine radio in the event of an emergency.

Whilst we encourage as many rowing crew as possible to share the Coxing of the skiffs. The experienced Cox on board usually keeps hold of the VHF Radio and should know how to use it. However, instructions for use in an emergency are printed and laminated so that they can be kept at the Cox's seat in the skiffs, Figure A1.

When both skiffs are out on the water together, safety and enjoyment are enhanced by communication between the two crews by radio. For this purpose, we use a radio channel that will not interfere with others at sea. This is Channel 37 which is used by Marinas and most rowing clubs. Communication on this channel can be less formal, but rowers should still know how to communicate effectively including how to initiate and conduct a call between skiffs.

When only 1 skiff is at sea and no one is manning a radio on shore, the VHF is only for communication with Coastguard, Harbour Authorities and other shipping. Initial communication with these radio stations is always via Channel 16 for Coastguard and shipping or a designated channel such as Channel 12 for Buckie Harbour. Therefore, the radio should be set on Channel 16. Channel 16 is monitored by the Coastguard and almost all other vessels at sea for the purpose of initiating a call and listening out for any distress calls that might be made by other vessels. Channel 16 would be used by a skiff to make a distress call for outside assistance. The instruction sheet indicates how such a call should be made. All emergency calls are co-ordinated by the coastguard but would be heard by other vessels who may be close by and able to assist.

Calls are often made to the Coastguard to communicate non-emergency information. Such a call should be made on Channel 16 and then, at the request of the Coastguard operator, changing to a working channel, most usually channel 67.

It is envisaged that rowing Officers of the Day (OODs) will be proficient in the use of these radios and able to guide Coxes under their supervision.

MAYDAY

Ensure that the radio is on Channel 16

set to High Power and transmit:-

MAYDAY MAYDAY MAYDAY

This is Rowing Skiff Morag, Morag, Morag

(Followed immediately by)

MAYDAY (once)

This is Rowing Skiff Morag

My position is (give your position relative

to distance and direction from a named spot

such as “half a mile north of Portknockie”)

State **Nature of Distress** such as

“Swamped by a wave and crew in water”

Assistance Required usually

“We require immediate assistance”

State **Number of Persons on Board**

Any other information such as

“All wearing successfully inflated lifejackets”

Or “No other vessels in sight”

Then say **Over** and wait for a response.

Repeat procedure if no response in 1 minute.

Usually the Coastguard will reply and control

further communication.

Figure A.1 – VHF Radio Skiff Printed Guide

Appendix B Skiff Racing

Appendix B Regattas and Skiff Racing

B.1 Introduction

In addition to national and international events, e.g. St Ayles Skiff World Championships, during the summer months coastal rowing clubs across Scotland will hold local Skiff Racing Regattas where nearby clubs are invited to participate in Skiff races. Whilst these can be fiercely competitive, they are also held to foster a sense of community, social interaction and sharing of experiences across diverse age groups and skill levels.

Depending on the regatta location the races may vary in format from straight sprint, set course for field, individual courses to buoy and return. Races will have a number of categories to ensure a good mix across age and skill, e.g. all female, all male, mixed, junior, senior and more senior.

B.2 Common Race Practice

Coxes for each race will be briefed prior to the start of each race as to the course and rules.

All races need a start and finish line this is typically between two buoys/vessels or fixed points, an individual starting buoy and handle or a line created by a transit of two easily distinguishable marks. The start and finish lines are typically the same transit but can be different. At the start of the race the umpire will guide skiffs on how they are to line up. It is on the Cox to guide the race crew to maintain the start line position established by the race Umpire.

Note: a transit is a line of sight between two fixed identifiable objects which can be used to view a line from beyond one of the marks.

For all races there should be an umpire on the water to observe the start and finish. There should also be an umpire at turn locations to observe turns and warn of any impedance of other skiff at the turns. Note there are strict rules when it comes to turns around buoys that need to be observed, particular when multiple skiffs are turning at the same buoy, and if not adhered to are likely to incur a penalty. There should be a chief umpire of the day onshore to make any final race calls/decisions.

The finish line is when the bow crosses the designated finish line/transit. Once over the finish line the Cox may call to wind down, however, rowers should not stop rowing until Cox calls ensuring skiff is clear of the finish line area and safe manoeuvring is maintain to clear other skiffs or navigation dangers.

Club attendance of a local regatta requires organisation and transit of a club skiff to the event. This should be organised through the designated event coordinator/Captain who will organise the crews

and the logistics required to attend and participate. Additional notes, background information, are provide in Appendix C,for the preparation required for attendance of a regatta.

B.3 Cox Responsibilities

In addition to the normal Cox duties and directing (driving) the crew during the race the Cox is responsible for;

- Approach the start line.
- Control drift of skiff in the wind when breezy on the start line.
- Ensuring Cox, not bow, on line for start. 2 fails to approach the start line correctly can result in a 360° penalty turn.
- Ensuring oars on the start line allow space for the next skiff in the line out.
- Cox hand up for not ready (may but not definitely stop the start of a race).

B.4 Points To be Aware Of

B.4.1 Bouy Turns

Angled or tight buoy turns may be required depending on the course, skiff position relative to others and environmental conditions.

Touching or leaning on a buoy is OK.

There is no convention as the direction the rounding of a buoy should take. Therefore, for rounding/turning around a buoy the preference is to make a Starboard turn with the Bow oar, as lead, and the 3rd oar position (note both on Port) providing the power to make the turn. This direction is more effective than a Port turn.

Alternatively for a Port rounding of a buoy then Starboard rowers, positions 2 and 4, will take the lead and provide the power to round the buoy.

For single buoy turns the right of way is determined at the 3 skiff length mark.

B.4.2 Skiff Lengths from Mark

Imagine a circle at distance of 3 skiff lengths with the mark(buoy) at its centre

When entering this zone if inside skiff is the lead skiff, it has right of way

If the outside skiff is lead but the bow of inside skiff overlaps with the cox then inside has right of way

If the outside skiff is lead and bow of inside skiff is astern of cox, ie there is ‘clear water’ between the skiffs, then outside has right of way

If there is overlap at 3 skiff lengths the inside skiff has the right of way whatever

Until skiffs clear 3 skiff lengths circle the right of way exists

The 2nd skiff may turn inside lead skiff but in so doing must not impede in anyway the lead skiff or any other skiff.

The umpire will call for a 360° turn should the skiff that is giving way touch or impede other skiffs’ oars. When doing a 360° you must not impede any other racers and is generally done by coming out of the racing line. Hull to hull clashes will invoke a disqualification.

Appendix C Regatta Preparation

Appendix C Regattas Preparation

C.1 Introduction

On a regatta day each club should have a Captain or responsible person for the day.

The Captain or responsible person should have any pertinent medical details of club personal on the day. This responsible person or OOD will have the responsibility for all Forward planning for the day or for that matter the responsibility to delegate any duties.

C.2 Regatta Equipment Checklist

- Responsible person on the day - named
- Personal details of team, including next-of-kin
- Check list of equipment to take to regattas
- Printed regatta instructions
- Spare wheel for trailer
- Keys for trailer
- Wheel clamp & keys (if necessary)
- Check the light bar for the trailer in advance of the event.
- Spare oars
- Life jackets
- Skiff plug
- Anchor, Warp & Chain
- Fenders
- Mooring and towing ropes
- 1st VHF for skiff, 2nd VHF on shore

C.3 Regatta Briefings

There follows a checklist for briefing crews and clubs attending a race day or a regatta. This is a guide only with some points being site specific.

- 1st Aiders location and contact details
- Start times
- Tides
- Weather forecasts
- Actual weather
- Surf reports
- Radio channel
- Radio protocol
- Start number
- Start procedure
- Safety skiff
- Umpire skiff
- Penalties. Start line
- Finish line
- Individual course or open course
- Hazards above water. Hazards below water
- Creels , marker buoys and ropes
- Race rules for right of way
- Starboard or port rounding if applicable
- Launch site
- Associated 3rd party or public interaction. Beach masters
- Heats and number in heats or single race