



## Welcome to the Union Rowing Club!

Below you will find some of the basic river rules all our club members are expected to follow. Please read this carefully and enjoy your rowing with us.

### URC River Etiquette: Kerr's Reach/ Lower Avon.

1. As the Avon is now even narrower than before, it is important to stick to the 'Rules of the River' at all time. **Always stick close to the bank nearest to your bow-side blade.**
2. It is best to go out at high tide, fewer issues with the weeds, more water, more fun. High tide usually occurs at Kerr's Reach 1-2 hours after the Lyttelton High Tide (which you can check online).
3. All recreational rowers should give way to racing crews, especially if these are going at race speed. It is quite hard and dangerous to stop a boat that is going at full tilt.
4. The paddlers give way to us, but not all of them know that, especially children or families out for a Sunday paddle. So watch out especially for such inexperienced kayakers.
5. When going through the bridges, make sure that you follow the give-way rules, as indicated by the signs on the bridges themselves. Usually, the crews coming up the river have right of way. **If in doubt, wait it out.**
6. Always pass through the middle span of the bridges. If in a coxless boat, the bow person has to call any necessary course corrections.
7. **On an outgoing tide, do not turn the boat to close to a bridge,** stay at least 100m clear of it to avoid drifting onto the bridge side-on.
8. Whitebaiters can be a problem in spring/early summer. Their often dangerous contraptions can stick out quite a way into the river, so make sure you remain vigilant at all times during the whitebaiting season.
9. Large waterfowl can represent quite a hazard, especially to single scullers. The Canada Geese usually try and get out of the way, and they are not aggressive. The same cannot be said about Black Swans. If they are accompanied by their young, they will try and attack you to protect their off -spring. Stay clear of them if you can.
10. Once off the water, everyone should help with cleaning and storing the boats and all other equipment. The last person to leave should check that no gear has been left on the pontoons or outside the shed, and that all doors and gates are securely locked.

## **Kaiapoi (Cam) and Waimakariri River**

1. The Cam is extremely narrow and windy. Be on the lookout at all times for crews coming the other way, but also for submerged logs and other debris, as well as overhanging willows. Row along the bow-side bank.
2. The Waimakariri is a much more dangerous river than the Avon. Once on the Waimak, stay close to the bank near your bow-side blade. Do not row too close to the old and new road bridges, as the river is quite shallow there.
3. There are usually many anglers fishing at either the mouth of the Kaiapoi (Cam) River and on both banks of the Waimak. At the mouth of the Cam, fishermen sometimes stand waist high in the water. Please watch out at all times when turning into the Waimak. Watch out of the thick salmon fishing lines the anglers on the bank use.
4. There can be quite a bit of motorboat traffic on the both the Cam and the Waimak, and not all boaties are considerate. If the wake of a motorboat is quite large, place your boat parallel to the waves and ride it out. This is preferable to the waves running over and swamping your boat.
5. On an outgoing tide, stay clear of the Waimak river mouth; do not go any further than the Sailing Club. You do not want to end up in the surf! Again, it is best and safest to row on the Waimak on an incoming tide.
6. If at all possible, do not go out on the Waimak all by yourself, and if several crews are launching at the same time, try and stay within sight of each other. There can be dangerous shallows on that river, especially at low tide, so if you come to grief, it is good to have someone close by to help.
7. The Waimak can also flood after high rainfall in its headwaters, so be aware of river conditions. It also chops up quite badly on windy days, so it's usually best to go out in calmer weather or early in the morning.

### **Key commands:**

Although many of the terms used by rowers are self-explanatory, every club has a slightly different way to call certain moves, so here are some key commands that URC uses:

'Numbering off from the bow (when ready)': Each person calls their seat number to indicate they are ready to row.

'Come forward': move gently to the catch position at the very front of the slide.

'Are you ready- row': turn up the blades in the water and begin to row.

'Easy oar': Stop, sitting at the back of the slide, with your arms and legs straight (hands over the knees).

'Turning on stroke side': From the finish position, back down with the stroke side blade rolling forward, simultaneously moving the opposite blade forward, flat on the water. On the

return, pull through with the bow side blade, leaving stroke side blade flat on the water. Repeat until the cox calls 'easy oar'. Reverse sides apply if tuning on bow side.

'Check (the boat)': stopping the boat gently by pushing the upturned blades into the water, sitting with straight legs and arms, hand at the level of the knees. Only 'check hard' in an emergency.

'Back down': rowing backwards, usually in full strokes, starting at the back of the slide.

'Touching': rowing while seated at the backstops, using arms only. (When at the start of a race, the bow person usually corrects the course by touching in the catch position.)