

WAPPINGERS
CREW CLUB, INC.

2021 COACHING
STAFF

- Head Coach, &
Varsity Boys
Coach- Matt
Stufano ('12)
- Varsity Girls
Coach- Elizabeth
Schlusser ('13)
- JV Boys Coach-
Jason Miller ('13)
- Novice Girls
Coach- Megan
Smith ('13)
- School Adviser-
Pat Hancock

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The 2020 Senior
Class



Wappingers Waves

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Special Update from Coach Hancock

To the Wappingers Rowing Community:

Many years ago a man told me that how you left an organization was, in some ways, as important as what you did while you were part of it. His point was this; after investing significant amounts of time and energy into an organization the goal should be to see a smooth transition to new leadership so the organization can continue to thrive and continue its mission.

As most of you know, I stepped down as Head Coach and from coaching generally, in the Fall. It was a decision I did not make lightly. But, I am approaching retirement, we have a slate of coaches in place that know our program and that I am very confident will keep the team growing, in spite of COVID. I will continue on as the Club Advisor for at least the remainder of the school year. We continue the search for parents willing to serve as officers. Please consider stepping up.

For all of the athletes and parents and others who have made Wappingers Crew Club a reality, a simple THANK YOU does not cover it. Professionally and personally, watching and helping grow the team has been one of the most rewarding activities I have ever engaged in. The team grew from 20+/- students to 85. Along the way it became a local champion, competitive in NYS and occasionally nationally, all while improving and increasing our equipment. It would not have happened without committed athletes and parents, people willing to go the extra mile, step up to leadership positions, coordinate fundraising events, attend evening meetings, bake cookies, etc.

The job continues. Clearly, some rebuilding after COVID will be needed but if history is any indicator, WCC will rise to the challenge. The current coaches and officers are up to the task.

Thank you and Best Wishes,

Patrick W. Hancock

2021 Season

We are very fortunate to have been given the green light from WCSD to begin our 2021 season. We anticipate the season to start during Spring Break in March.

Many things about 2021 will not be “normal.” Masks will be worn at all times. Winter training will be skipped entirely this year to avoid putting our team indoors for extended periods of time.

The season will almost exclusively take place at the HRRR Boathouse in Poughkeepsie. Away races are ex-

tremely unlikely. Rowers and coxswains will be placed into permanent 5 person bubbles and row in those all spring. If someone in that bubble misses practice, the entire boat has land-training for the day. 8s are currently being debated at various levels of our sport. If they are allowed, bubbles will expand to 9 athletes.

Our goal for 2021 is to get out on the water as much as possible. Even a tiny sense of normalcy for our athletes would be very welcome. Not to mention their parents

would LOVE to get them out of the house for a change.

We hope to still have the yearly “boathouse only” races, but even that is out of our hands and up to the determination of US Rowing.

Overall, we are doing what we can have something that resembles a “normal” season. We will do our best to make it work out both on the water and financially, and get back to our winning ways very soon.

Thank you parents and alumni for all your support.

- 2021 WCC Coaches & Board

“Please consider a tax deductible gift to Wappingers Crew Club, Inc. We would be happy to put your name on any launch, engine, crew shell, ergometer or oar that you may donate.”

- Coach Hancock

New Head Coach — Matt Stufano

Hi everyone! I would like to take a moment to re-introduce myself to the WCC Family. My name is Matt Stufano, many of my former WCC teammates know me, simply, as Stuf!

I joined WCC 14 years ago as a timid 7th grader. I showed up to a tank session with no idea of what our sport was and I was far too intimidated to let anyone know that. When my turn to jump into tanks finally came, my 7th grade brain did quick math and I sat myself in the last seat in line so no one could see me. After my lack of skill was clearly identified, I was quickly outed as a novice by the coxswain, and a tall coach with a white beard came up to me to ask if I had done Learn to Row with them. I sheepishly said “no.”

Coach Hancock helped me survive that first day of practice. Jump ahead 5 months to the banquet when he awarded me with the ‘Courage Award’ for my bravery after I was chosen, for what reason I still

have no idea, to race in the Varsity 8. From that very moment, I was hooked on WCC. The next 14 years featured many great memories and accomplishments, both as a rower and coach; not only for WCC, but also away from the Hudson River during my 5 year pit stop to row and coach in college (shoutout to Oswego State Crew.) But all of that would not have been possible without Pat Hancock.

My goal is to continue the great work he did building this club from the ground up, hopefully bringing it to new heights. I speak on behalf of our entire staff, our board, in thanking Coach Hancock for everything he has done.

I am very excited and honored to be taking over as Head Coach. I want to thank both Coach Hancock, and the also departing Coach Steve for everything they've done for our club. They will be greatly missed!

The last time we were on the water, Coach Steve helped us win an HVRL championship in 2019 (one of a few in recent years that he has been a part of.) COVID-19 has paused that success, but I have no doubt we will return even stronger than before. With your help, the help of our parents, board, and the skill of our great athletes, I see a very bright future for WCC.

Thank you to everyone for everything you've done for me personally over the years, as well as for the club. I look forward to seeing you all at the boathouse soon, whether it be on race day, or maybe for the boat dedication ceremony of one tall, white bearded coach in the not so distant future.

Kind regards,

Matthew Stufano

Head Coach & Varsity Boys Coach, Wappingers Crew Club



The 2020 Senior Class @ Victor C. Waryas Park

2020 Senior Row

We were so fortunate to have worked with such a wonderful, resilient, and tenacious group of rowers. This group was a hard one to say good-bye to for a lot of reasons, mainly because we didn't get to celebrate them in our traditional Wappingers way. The 2020 cohort gave up a lot to take care of their neighbors in light of COVID-19, but we did not let their contributions to the team go unnoticed. After completing all of winter training their senior season was canceled, and we knew we had to honor this group in a special way. The board and the coaches worked closely to organize a Senior Row. We exercised ex-



treme caution when interacting with one another at the boat-house. Rowers and coaches wore masks while operating on land, and all equipment was sanitized before and after use. Once on the water, it was like we had never left. It was the first time we had been on the water in 2020 and that was a very surreal moment for all of us. We had three 4's row up to Quiet Cove. They all admitted they were pretty exhausted by the time we got up there after having not rowed in over a year! We spun around and headed south so that we could wave to the parents down at Waryas Park in Poughkeepsie! The coxswains laughter in between giving directives made us all feel so at home. And it would not have been a true 2020 celebration if we didn't have a drive-by parade where the rest of the team could safely wish our 2020 seniors well- from a distance- once back on

land. The entire morning was a beautiful and sensational sight. While it was not the season we expected, we as a community were so glad to be able to honor the 2020 seniors in a way that was meaningful and reminiscent of all they had accomplished with us. We would like to thank the board for their help in organizing this event. We would also like to thank the senior parents for all they did to support Wappingers Crew Club while their child was apart of the team. Last but not least, we would like to thank the 2020 seniors for rolling with all the punches the spring season brought, for always having the brightest of smiles on their faces even when the world around them seemed so bleak, and most of all for the hard work and dedication over the course of their rowing career. They have been and will continue to be deeply missed by their team.

Coach Elizabeth Schlusser
Varsity Girls Coach



"You are still part of the team. Your help will continue the legacy that you helped build."
-Coach Hancock

Coach Steve

Dear Coaches, Current Rowers, Board and Alumni,

It is with a heavy heart that I must inform you all that I will be departing from the Wappingers Crew Club. On February 9th, 2021 I will be leaving to take my first steps on my journey with the United States Coast Guard. I know that this may come as a surprise, especially off the heels of the departure of our founding coach, Hancock. I want to take a moment to reflect on my time with rowing and with the club.

One thing I always felt I had regretted when finishing my rowing career in high school was not starting sooner as I only had two spring seasons of rowing under my belt (2012-2014). I felt

compelled to still be involved with the sport in some way and I found my opportunity to do that with coaching. By the end of my senior year, WCC was growing and expanding; especially so on the side of the men's varsity team. My coach at the time, Tim Malet, was responsible for watching over 20 rowers so I stepped up and offered him my help. I began assistant coaching with him in February of 2016 and the rest is history. Together we took a divide and conquer approach that we still use to this day; focusing our time and efforts to be able to work more personally with our rowers and to identify their strengths and weaknesses.

I have been lucky enough to be present for so many successes, some of which are still on-going, (*Coughs* Dutchess Cup) but also many losses that I have

always attempted to shape into learning opportunities.

Rowing and coaching has been such a unique and interesting experience and it has challenged me in more ways than I thought was possible. I will carry on the skills that I've gained with the club for the rest of my life. Being a mentor for others has been one of the most intrinsically rewarding roles that I've had and I can't thank WCC enough to allow me to stay involved with the sport that I love. The Wappingers Crew Club has become another family for me and I will always try to help when I can as you all have done for me.

This is the way...

Your future Coastie,

Coach Steve



Wappingers

Crew Club

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“No gift is too small (no gift is too big either!)... If you would consider a holiday gift to the Crew Club or if you want a tax break for next year, (gifts to WCC, Inc. are tax deductible) or if you simply have good memories of your days on the water and want to be sure other kids get the same chance you had, we would be most appreciative.” - Coach Hancock

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THANK YOU COACH HANCOCK & COACH STEVE

Take a look at the first year of WCC Rowing! Our club has come a long way, many thanks go to both Coach Hancock and Coach Steve.

