

Sagamore Rowing Association  
**2018 Adult Learn to Row – Day 4**

**Coaches:** Mike Wagner, [mwsculls@gmail.com](mailto:mwsculls@gmail.com)

**Overview:**

- Day 1: Safety, Carrying Equipment, Getting Into/Out of the Shell, Holding the Handles, Comfort in the Boat, Basic Technique
- Day 2: Release, Steering and Stopping
- Day 3: Recovery, Relaxing the Hands, and Backing
- **Day 4: Recovery, Relaxing the Hands, Entry, and Backing**
- Day 5: Letting the Blade Float, Drive, Level Hands, and Spinning the Shell (backing and rowing)
- Day 6: Rhythm, Swing from the Hips, the Two Ways to Steer and When to Look Ahead

**Curriculum:**

**Day 4**

Recovery, Relaxing the Hands, Entry, and Backing

- **Recovery**
  - Review of the release sequence from Day 2.
  - It's important to stagger your hands one behind the other (right knuckles touching left palm), instead of stacking the hands one on top of the other.
  - As the hands come apart, keep both hands at the same level. Level hands equal a level boat.
- **Relaxing the hands**
  - For relaxing the hands on the recovery, allow the handle to roll more out into the fingers with little or no wrist bend.
  - A helpful drill is to scull with open palms on the recovery. Another drill is to laying the piano/wiggling your fingers to the recovery to loosen your hands.
  - A relaxed hold with little or no wrist bending is key!
- **Entry**
  - For the entry, we emphasize two part movement and a small hooking motion with the hands.
  - The entry is often taught as a three part movement of square, catch, and then pull. We teach a two part movement of drop and then pull. The blade squares as it enters the water, a sculler's entry.
  - We also emphasize how the hands make a very small movement to hook the blade into the water. Keep the blade close to the water. The less vertical motion the better.
- **Backing**

- We teach backing by keeping the blade in the regular squared position.
- It's good to start backing with arms and body only by:  
'pushing the hands away'; 'then roll your knuckles away from you (to feather the blade)'; and 'then bring the hands back'. Then square the blade and repeat.
- The trick is to only feather the blade slightly, say 30 degrees, and skim the blade on the water.

### **Agenda**

- 6:30 - Assign groups and Meet with Your Coach
- 6:40 - Oars down
- 6:50 - Launch shells
- 7:00 - On the water
- 7:40 - Land
- 7:40-7:45 - Shells/oars up
- 7:45-7:55 - Wash and rack
- 7:55 - Meet and Stretch
- 8:00 - Done

# **Notes on the Sculling Stroke**

**As Performed by Professional Scullers on the River Thames, England**

*By George Y. Pocock*

The art of sculling is like any other art. It is perfected only with constant practice so that each movement is graceful and is done correctly without thinking about it. It takes a lot of thinking about before this can be accomplished however.

At the beginning and ending of a sculling stroke the body and arms are forward, ready for the catch. The arms must be stretched out fully with the body leaning forward about thirty degrees from the perpendicular, thumbs over the end of the scull handles and the knees under each arm or inside the arms. Never allow the knees to go outside of the arms. Seventy-five percent of the power exerted in the stroke comes from the legs and the more direct the leg drive the more efficient the power.

The hands should be on the handles of the sculls so that the pull is in a direct line with the arms. The wrist should be straight. This position is the pulling position with the blades square in the water.

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With the arms straight and the body angle kept the same, drive the legs steadily (extend the legs smoothly) as this is the maximum power drive. The arms are used only as connecting rods to the body.

When the slide has gone half way along the tracks, start bringing the body upright, and at the same time, start using the arms, slowly bending the elbows until the end of the slide has been reached. Finish the pull with a squeeze, the body laying back about thirty degrees, the hands coming in as far as the middle of the body above the hips. As this last squeeze is being exerted, and while the squeeze is on, start turning the wrists and shoot the hands and arms away as quickly as you like, the quicker the better.

**Read More**

<https://tinyurl.com/george-pocock>