

## **LLRC Boat Naming Policy, Procedure, and Tradition**

### **Introduction**

Long Lake Rowing observes the tradition of celebrating the naming and dedication of boats. Naming rituals give a nod to avoiding misfortune by paying proper respect to the power of winds and waters, and provide several enriching experiences: the privilege of choosing a boat's name, the luck or affection that may be imbued in a boat by a good name, the gratitude and high regard expressed when our community names a boat after an individual, and the practical realities of helping to finance the purchase of equipment. Our community is enhanced and strengthened by gathering to carry on this honorable tradition.

### **Boat Naming Policy**

- I) **Naming Rights**- Each boat added to our fleet will be named and dedicated by LLRC via one of the following paths:
  - A. **Members or associates** may secure naming rights by donation to the club
    - 1) The Board will establish minimum donation required for naming rights for each boat, based on factors including quality, condition, and history of the boat.
    - 2) The name will be retained as long as the club has the boat. If a boat leaves our fleet, the Board will consider rolling over the name to another similar boat.
  - B. **Board Dedication/Naming by the Board**
    - 1) Club dedication of a boat name is used to honor the following:
      - (a) a member with a history of substantial voluntary contribution/service to the club
      - (b) a member with extraordinary rowing achievement in skill, competition, sportsmanship, coaching, or other accomplishment
      - (c) recognition of an event, person, or entity of special significance to LLRC
    - 2) Consideration may be initiated by the board or members, and should have broad endorsement of the membership
    - 3) The board will raise the naming fee by soliciting member donations, or in extraordinary circumstances could waive the naming fee.
    - 4) The name will be retained as long as the club has the boat. If the boat leaves our fleet, the Board will consider rolling over the name to another similar boat, based on the significance of the name, with consideration to include the value of maintaining continuity of Club history.
- II) **Choosing Names**
  - A. Examples of customary rowing shell name themes include memorializing someone dear; evoking speed or dominance in competition, inspiring qualities, or aspirations; clever, witty, or humorous names; historical, literary, musical, or philosophic references; mythological or poetic names; or anything else you find appealing. There is also a strong tradition of using double entendre and wordplay.
  - B. Names must be suitable for a community club with a broad age range
  - C. Names intended as political commentary have the potential to cause dissonance among teammates and violation of our non-profit status rules, and so are not acceptable.
  - D. Naming, as the permanent identity of the boat, is *not* to be used for marketing. Opportunities for marketing will be made available through display of logos, etc. with specified placement and duration, and covered by policies considering the club role as becoming a de facto endorser.
  - E. The new name decal will be designed to be readable, in a font that is compatible with the name.
  - F. If acceptability of a name is questioned, the final decision rests with the Board.
- III) **The club will host a boat naming ceremony**

## Boat Naming Procedure

- I) **New /never named boats:** Whether or not you believe that it is very bad luck to row a unnamed boat, each unnamed boat will be given a temporary identifying name (e.g. “the new Vespoli double”) until it is ready for LLRC naming and dedication.
- II) **Previously-named boats:** The boat will retain the name it had when purchased, as an identifying title, only until it is ready for LLRC naming and dedication. Whether or not you adhere to traditional belief that changing the name of a boat will lead to calamity, bad consequences can be avoided by proper un-naming procedures.<sup>1</sup> This can be accomplished by removing all traces of the old name, while writing the old name on a piece of metal and casting it into the lake. The new LLRC name will be concealed until the ceremonial reveal. The naming ceremony is the same as for a newly launched boat.
- III) **Documentation:** The board shall keep a record of:
  - A. Boat identifying information (e.g. 2014 Vespoli 2x/-)
  - B. The LLRC boat name
  - C. The basis on which the boat was named, by whom, and the date named
  - D. History of prior names and naming dates or rollovers
- IV) **Dispute Resolution:** If conflict arises over name rollover or other issues—either not adequately covered by or due to disputed application of this policy—the Board shall discuss the matter and include the balance of membership opinions in their determination of resolution.

## Naming Ceremony Traditions<sup>2</sup>

Naming of a rowing shell is a grand and serious undertaking. As a young club, LLRC’s customs are evolving. The name, namers, and namesakes will be honored at a ceremony for all members, family, and friends. Hearing the stories behind each boat’s name has been moving and inspiring. Pouring a bit of champagne across the bow, followed by a toast, brings in tradition. Our ceremonies have been warm and embracing, and have served to increase bonds among us—ever more important as we grow. The ceremony could also help build ties with community around us, as it is not unusual to invite local dignitaries and the public.

We might just consider nods to the origins through smaller gestures such as a branch of green leaves on the deck to represent safe return to shore. We might follow pouring champagne over the bow by casting some in the four compass directions: if not as libations to Aeolus and the winds Boreus, Zephyrus, Eurus, and Notus, then to acknowledge competition in regattas reached by travel in all directions. And perhaps pouring a bit into the lake, to appease the ever-lurking oar-and-ego-devouring crabs.

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<sup>1</sup> To avoid angering Poseidon/Neptune by ignoring the Ledger of the Deep in which every properly named boat is recorded and is known personally to the god of the sea, the name must be removed from the record and Poseidon’s memory. From a more contemporary perspective, we wish to avoid the possibility of unpleasantness for a previous sponsor finding their namesake being rowed by a competitor.

<sup>2</sup> Some ceremonies still reference the Greek traditions and incantations to Poseidon and various gods of wind and sea, giving wine or champagne as libations to the Gods. The Greek origins are a bit fraught: consider Aeschylus version of the story of Agamemnon sacrificing his daughter Iphigenia to the goddess Artemis in order to gain wind to sail to conquer Troy, only to return home to be slain in retribution by his wife Clytemnestra, thus perpetuating the curse upon all generations of his family.

Customs around the Mediterranean eventually evolved to the more familiar versions of ship christening and launching. Our club ceremonies have tended to maintain an ecumenical approach.

Moreover, despite the ancestry of many in this region, we have avoided reference to Viking rituals of the ship’s keel being bathed in virgin blood, achieved by lashing virgin slaves to keel blocks such that the lads and maids were crushed as the ship was launched, as that would necessitate the Club’s retaining of criminal defense counsel.