

Information on the Rowing Merit Badge



BARC (Bay Area Rowing Club of Houston) is offering scouts the opportunity to earn the Rowing Merit Badge on a sliding seat rowboat. These are the type of boats used in competitive rowing. This is a community outreach program, and one BARC member is a BSA merit badge counselor.



The Basics:

What: Rowing Merit Badge.

Who: Scouts 14 years and older – up to six scouts per session (size and weight restrictions due to boat limitations: at least 5 ft tall and less than 220 lbs).

When: two meetings, one off-the water and one on-the-water, both held at the BARC boathouse in Clear Lake Park. Off-the-water meeting would be in the afternoon or evening (approx. 2 hrs) and the on-the-water on a Saturday or Sunday morning (approx. 3 hrs). Sign-up through the BARC website (<http://www.barchouston.org/learn-to-row/>)

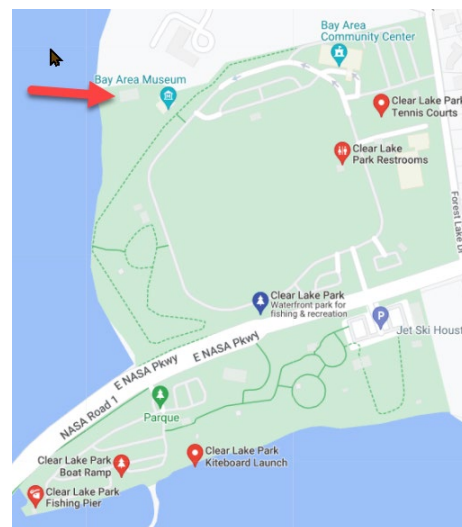
Costs: \$40 per scout.

Safety Requirements for the on-the-water activities:

- At least one adult leader must attend with the scouts. The BARC merit badge counselor can be the second person for 2-deep leadership. Other BARC volunteers working with the scouts are generally not YPT trained (though many have the similar “Safe Sport” training).
- The adult leader should have the BSA medical forms for the scouts (part A and B) with them.
- A US Rowing Waiver needs to be completed for each participant (signed by parents or legal guardian for scouts under 18 years old). This will be collected prior to the on-the-water activities. A copy of the waiver is attached to this flyer.
- Life jackets need to be worn by all scouts during the on-the water activities. This is a BSA requirement. Preferably, bring your own. Please let the merit badge counselor know in advance if you do not have a life jacket for each scout.
- In case of inclement weather (high winds, low water level, fog, lighting), the on the water activities will be rescheduled.

Logistics:

- The BARC boathouse is located at Clear Lake Park, 5001 Nasa Pkwy. Seabrook, TX 77586 (on the north side of Nasa Road 1). Follow the circle and park near the Bay Area Museum (white building). The boathouse is behind the museum.
- What to wear for the on-the-water part: Scouts should wear shorts or leggings (no loose clothing that would get caught in the sliding seat) and be prepared to get wet. Bring a change of clothes and a towel (changing room available at the boathouse). **Socks are required** for rowing and water shoes are advised for the swimmer rescue.
- Getting credit: please bring blue cards to sign.



Prerequisites:

- Scouts must have passed the BSA swim test with “Swimmer” classification (Requirement 2)
- Scouts must have completed Safety Afloat (Requirement 1c)
- Scouts should know the following knots: bowline, clove hitch, round turn with two half-hitches (all these knots are a First Class or below requirement)

Off-the-Water Activities:

- Review Hazards and Injuries / Illnesses (Requirements 1a and 1b)
- Review type of Life Jackets (Requirement 3)
- Teach Wellman's knot and mooring hitch (Requirement 4 a v)
- Review boat design (Requirement 8)
- Discuss other topics listed in the requirements (Requirement 9)
- Preview of logistics and what to expect for the on-the-water activities.

Scouts will need to practice the knots and do some research on the discussion topics prior to the on-the-water activities.

At the boat-house:

- Learn the proper rowing stroke for a sliding seat rowboat on the erg (rowing machine)
- Learn proper oar handling
- Learn about the parts of the boat
- Tour the boathouse and see the different types of sliding seat rowboats
- Demonstrate the knots and review discussion topics

On the water:

Scouts will be working in groups of two scouts with one BARC volunteer and one recreational row-boat single. The boat will be tied to a line that the BARC volunteer will handle. Scouts will take turns rowing away from the floating dock and practicing the required skills while “on a leash”. The BARC volunteer will coach the scouts on the required skills and can pull the boat back as needed. The following skills will be practiced.

- Launch the boat (Requirement 4 a i)
- Row in a straight line, and maneuver – turning and backing (Requirement 4 a ii, iii)
- Come alongside the floating dock and switch rowers (Requirement 5 b)
- Flip test – also called swamped boat drill (Requirement 6)
- Swimmer rescue (Requirement 7)
- Take the boat out of the water, clean it and rack it (Requirement 4 a iv)

Other information:

Parents or Leaders are welcome to participate in the class if there are spots available. If you have four to six scouts in your troop, crew, or ship who want to do this together, ask about setting up a special session for your scouts.

Contact Anne Bertelsmann (281-202-8739 or ABertelsmann@MarathonPetroleum.com) for further information.