Role of Seat 6-Steersperson

The steersman is the captain of the canoe and holds a crucial role in the canoe.

The primary responsibility of the steersman in seat 6 is crew safety, followed by canoe safety and then steering and navigation. The steersman keeps the crew in sync, focused, and motivated. They provide positivity, direction, and feedback to the crew. If requested by the coach, they should communicate practice plans to the crew and may be required to time intervals or pieces.

A skilled steersman can read the water and navigate the best course, making a significant difference in the team's performance. Steering requires an intuitive feel for the canoe and a high level of skill, especially in ocean conditions. The steersman must balance steering and paddling, contributing to the power of the canoe while carrying a larger paddle.

A good steersman needs strong intuition to predict the canoe's movements and make small, light corrections proactively. They must be confident, effective communicators who trust their crew just as much as the crew trusts them.

Safety is the steersperson’s primary responsibility. For this reason, steerspeople should communicate with other canoes to ensure that they stay together if desired by the coach. This may require a canoe to turn early to meet with slower canoes, or to anticipate a change in canoe speed due to wind direction. Steerspeople should maintain awareness of other boats such as ferries, recreational boats, and tour vessels.