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FEBRUARY 2017

COACH TARA'S TOP TIPS

For Adaptive Rowing Training, Indoor-Edition

- 1. Understand your body's abilities and challenges and your para-rowing classification. This will help with adaptation and getting you on the right and most direct path for competition.**
- 2. Get the right gear and adaptations in place and take the time to make sure it fits for your needs. Then, determine if you need ongoing assistance to accomplish your training and recruit.**
- 3. Get training! All rowers train on the same basic principles - intervals and long steady state with regular time- or distance-based time trials to gauge progress. Your training schedule is up to you and the club in which you train.**

Specific considerations:

Understanding your body's abilities and challenges. As you know, the ability spectrum in sport and fitness is wide and varied no matter the population. Within the classically-defined disability population, it can range just as wide and become even more individualized - from paralysis to blindness, brain injury to burns. Your primary doc and therapists can help you quantify your unique challenges and identify things to watch out for. One example is pressure sores or friction sores from the rowing machine repetitive motion for folks who have para- or quadriplegia. Another is output monitoring for those who, as a result of their disability, need to keep their heart rate within a certain range. Lastly, if you are new to your disability, your cardiac and strength thresholds may have shifted, sometimes dramatically, from what you may remember.. Approach workouts with a classic Rate of Perceived Exertion scale appropriate to your current health and fitness state. With a concentrated effort you'll start to see gains and the threshold will shift.

Your para-rowing classification falls into one of these categories: AS or Arms/Shoulders, TA or Trunk/Arms, and LTA or Legs/Trunk/Arms. These classifications are recognized as the FISA standards for competition. To participate at the world

rowing level, you will need to be officially classified (see <http://www.worldrowing.com/para-rowing/>), but for keeping it local you can use your own best estimation and train as is most comfortable and efficient, staying injury-free.

Get the right gear and adaptations and make sure it fits!

Some commonly used adaptive products for the ergometer are:

Wintech Fixed Seat

Alden Fixed Seat

ActiveHands Grip Assist

Concept2 Model E Ergometer (on a 20" base for easier transfer)

Do you need assistance?

Equipment storage: As we all know, storage is at a premium in most boathouses and these expensive items can't be damaged or go missing! Make sure you have a storage agreement, including an option to take it home with you and bring as needed.

Getting set up: Your initial set-up will go much better with two brains working, but assess whether you can do future setups without help.

Getting on the ergometer: Assess your ability to get onto the ergometer. For wheelchair users who can transfer, we recommend you practice side-to-side transfers at home or on the gym floor regularly. It will help loads once you're ready to row on the water. Again, check here whether you need to have a buddy to help make your transfers clean and safe.

Get Training!

You're all set, you're well-fitted, you're oriented to the machine and all its bells and whistles. Now let's get to work.

Here's a basic sequence for your workouts:

A Note on Stroke Rate: You should have between at least three rates in your repertoire (these may change as you get more fit/competitive, experience setbacks, etc):

1. Steady State (aka "Go Forever Pace") - not a paddle, but a committed do-able pace
2. Goal Pace (aka GP) for endurance pieces - 100% output
3. Goal Pace (aka GP) for sprint pieces - 100% output

Abbreviations

GP - Goal Pace

SS - Steady State

S/M or SPM - Stroke Rate

Ideal Pause Positions for AS

Hands Away

Finish

Catch

Workouts should have these three components:

- Warm-Up (on or off the erg)
- Technique/Drill Work and SS
- Power Pieces (intervals or long-distance at GP, GP+/-, depending on your current training goal)

Then,

- Cool Down

Mix and match workout sequences or do two or three, culminating in about 30 to 40 minutes total on the erg.

Last Thoughts:

- Be sure to be cleared by your physician, physical therapist, etc. before attempting the rowing machine or any exercise program.
- Be cautious about friction sores and address them immediately (Prevent them by using products like Body Glide or Butt Butter, as needed)

- Use the force curve display (on the Concept2 monitor) should look like a small rounded hill or upside down “u” (if it looks like a mountain or an upside down “v”, you are jerking on the chain at the finish and not being efficient)
- For AS and TA rowers, increase the damper to 6+, otherwise the monitor will skip around and not give clear readings
- Wear a heart rate monitor to track exertion level
- Keep a training log to track progress
- Test regularly - your race distance
- Have water bottle close by and small towel for sweatfest
- Use a mirror to monitor technique
- When in doubt, do steady state and work on technique
- Be an awesome self-advocate - You are responsible for alerting your coach or training partner to any pain or unpleasantness during a workout. You are also responsible for your own self-care and goal-setting.

FOR Arms and Shoulders (AS) ERG TRAINING*

ERG SET-UP (using Wintech fixed seat on a Concept2 erg):

1. If relevant, measure leg length to determine placement of fixed seat. Knees should be out of the way and strapped together using an extra strap to avoid hyperextension and promote control.
2. Wheelchair users can use their own wheelchair pad if that's preferable for comfort and stability. Those needing an alternative cushion can consider a traditional gel pad or a popular option for our athletes is the Roho pad (approx \$150USD). More here: <http://www.sportaid.com/roho-pack-it-cushions.html>
3. Use the waist strap and chest strap for Arms/Shoulders rowers to minimize overuse of mid and lower back as well as sliding forward on the seat.
4. Grip assist, if necessary, should include an Ace bandage or soft gauze wrap, or ActiveHands product (www.activehands.com - sold from the UK)
5. Monitor - Set the monitor to the Force Curve as "display", using /500m splits as "unit". This allows for teaching and reinforcing a FULL stroke within the arms/shoulders movement.
6. Damper - We set the AS rower's dampers to 6+ since the flywheel has a tough time reading the speed/stroke rate with the shorter stroke length. Use caution creating too much resistance if the athlete already has some wear and tear in the upper back/shoulder area or grip issues.

WORKOUT SEQUENCES

A Note on Stroke Rate: You should have between at least three rates in your repertoire (these may change as you get more fit/competitive, experience setbacks, etc).

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GP - Goal Pace

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Ideal Pause Positions for AS

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Catch

Workouts should have these three components:

- Warm-Up (on or off the erg)
- Technique and SS
- Power Pieces (intervals or long-distance, depending on your goal)
- Cool Down

Mix and match workout sequences or do two or three, culminating in about 45' - 60' on the erg.

--Go Row and Row Hard!

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UNIFIED ROWING IN THE PACIFIC NW, USA

Coach Tara Morgan works to create inclusive rowing experiences in the Pacific NW. Based in Seattle, WA, her unified rowing team SEIZE THE OAR features athletes along the ability spectrum, paired to train and race

in double sculls. In addition to coaching Team Seize The Oar, she also coordinates and coaches the Learn To Row program and coaches the “Mid-Day Rowing” group comprised of mostly senior-aged rowers, both at Mount Baker Rowing & Sailing Center. She speaks, writes and consults with boathouses across the region to increase inclusive opportunities for both recreational and competitive endeavors with athletes of all ages and abilities. Visit www.seizetheoar.com, also on Facebook and Instagram @SeizeTheOar. Contact Coach Tara at coachtara@seizetheoar.com.


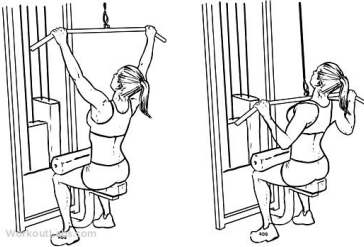

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WORK OUTS:

PART I: Warm Up & Technique/SS

Off The Erg Warm-Up Examples:

Seated Band Row, using resistance band	
Lat Pull Down, using cable machine or resistance band	
Reverse Flys, using small hand weights	
Shoulder Rolls, bodyweight only	Forward and back plus shrugs to release tension

On The Erg Warm-Up Examples:

Steady State Rowing 4' @ SS pace plus 5" 3' @ SS pace plus 3" 2' @ SS pace 1' @ SS pace minus 2"	Pause Drill, PLUS 1' pause every stroke (at hands way, finish, catch - you choose) 2' SS pace @75% pressure 1' pause every stroke (you choose) 2' SS pace @95% pressure
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PART II: Power Pieces/Interval Training

Set up your workout by # strokes, by time or by meters (or all of the above!)

Your stroke rate is mostly determined by what you are training for (an endurance piece or a sprint).

TRAINING INTERVAL EXAMPLES	
1' SS pace @ 50% pressure (easy) 10 strokes ON, 10 strokes OFF @ full pressure REPEAT for 10 minutes	250m 50% pressure @ GP plus 5" 250m 95% pressure @ GP REPEAT x 4 or 1000m
2' - SS 1' ON - full pressure @ GP REPEAT x 10'	Long Piece 4 x 1000m @ SS pace with a "Power 10" at the 250m, 500m, 750m marks
RACING TRAINING NOTES - SPRINT	
Sprint Racing Training features three elements to be executed: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pacing - to establish and challenge goal pace, mental strategy 2. Long piece - for form and to build stamina 3. Testing - training benchmarks 	
PACING	Using data from a baseline test at your race distance, establish your first goal pace and your stretch goal pace. Subsequent workouts would be interval-based, using pieces above and at pace (and even try below pace!). (Examples: 250m @GP + 5", 250m @GP + 3", 250m @GP - REPEAT x 4)
LONG PIECE	Once/week, hammer out a long piece. SS 75-80% of racing stroke rate. Take your goal piece length (e.g.1000m)

and repeat that distance with good breaks in between. Plan to spend an hour making friends with the erg with long smooth strokes.

TESTING

You need to test periodically to measure your progress and to practice pushing for the length of your piece. Make sure you have the goal pacing under your belt and a baseline test will help you start that process. Keep A Log!

LAST THOUGHTS FROM COACH TARA:

- Be sure to be cleared by your physician, physical therapist, etc. before attempting the rowing machine or any exercise program.
- Be cautious about friction sores and address them immediately (Prevent them by using products like Body Glide or Butt Butter, as needed)
- Your force curve display should look like a small rounded hill or upside down “u” (if it looks like a mountain or an upside down “v”, you are jerking on the chain at the finish and not being efficient)
- Wear a heart rate monitor to track exertion level
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- Have water bottle close by and small towel for perspiration
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- When in doubt, do steady state and work on technique
- Be a great self-advocate - You are responsible for alerting your coach or training partner to any pain or unpleasantness during a workout. You are also responsible for your own self-care and goal-setting.

***REMEMBER:** Every athlete is unique, no matter where they are at in their recovery or life stage. This guide is just that - a guide. Keep talking to your athletes about their progress, be consistent in your coaching and don't be afraid to set aggressive goals. Questions? Additions? More ideas to share? Get in touch!

--Good Luck and Row Hard!

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