

TEMPORARY

MINI BOOKLET OF INFORMATION

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EXERCISE & TRAINING GUIDE

Training Principles

There are four objectives of the Abreast Of Life training programme.

- Commitment to Exercise**
- Improved Flexibility**
- Improved Strength**
- Improved Aerobic Fitness**

1 **Commitment to Exercise**

Involvement with this training programme throughout the entire year will encourage the adoption of exercise into your lifestyle. This is very important to you; there are measurable benefits to improved levels of fitness and these include an improved immune system.

2 **Flexibility**

To maintain or increase flexibility, stretching exercises are recommended. Choose at least one stretch for each major body part.

3 **Strength**

It is important to increase upper body strength and endurance in preparation for the paddling. Weight training is advised and specific exercises are listed below. Begin with a light weight at first. Frequency = two/three workouts per week.

Specific Exercises

1. Seated row
2. Bench press
3. Lat. pull

4. One arm bent-over rowing
5. Tricep extensions
6. Bicep curls
7. Back extensions
8. Abdominal exercises i.e. sit-ups with bent knees, V-Sits

It is important to do these exercises safely and correctly. Proper instruction and supervision is important. If you are not familiar with these exercises ask a fitness consultant at the gym. Try to work out with a teammate; it is more fun and more motivating

A sample resistance training session is as follows:

Warm-up: light aerobic activities for 5 minutes. This could be a brisk walk or jog, stationary cycling with little resistance. Virtually any activity that involves a large muscle mass will work and will get you puffing slightly.

Stretching Exercises: 5 minutes of stretching

Resistance Training: Strength training is a very important ingredient in the recipe for success in dragon boat paddling. Do 2 sets of 10 repetitions for each exercise the first month and thereafter do 2 sets of 15 repetitions. Do the exercises slowly in a controlled fashion. Increase the resistance only when you are comfortable with the weight that you are using.

Cool-Down: You may wish to do a few minutes of stretching exercises to remove some of the tension in those muscles affected by the resistance.

4 **Aerobic Fitness**

It is important to have good aerobic fitness: your ability to maintain vigorous physical exercise over an extended period. Frequency = two/three workouts per week.

A sample aerobic training session is as follows:

Warm-up: light aerobic activities for 5 minutes. This could be a brisk walk or jog, stationary cycling with little resistance. Any activity that involves a large muscle mass will work and will get you puffing.

Stretching exercises: 5 minutes of stretching

Aerobic training: Power walk, cycle, jog, swim, aqua-aerobics or running activities are necessary to improve aerobic fitness for 30-40 minutes. Initially work rate should be 5 minutes hard followed by 5 minutes easier. Build up to 10 - 10 minutes and increase gradually.

Cool-Down: Stretching exercises to remove some of the tension in those muscles affected by the resistance.

Muscular Injury

There are risks associated with unaccustomed physical activity. Inadequate strength and flexibility can lead to overuse injuries once the paddling practices commence. It is therefore necessary to build up and maintain fitness levels during off-season.

Post surgery, there may be a restricted range of motion in the shoulder and lack of use of the chest wall and shoulder muscles can result in a loss of strength. Thus, the physical preparation for training takes on an especially important role for our teams. The coach will monitor the rate of progression of training, once paddling begins, to minimise injury to both new and more experienced members. The more experienced members should be aware of possible limitations of new members and encourage awareness of possible overuse of muscles.

Each team member adapts to training exercises and paddling differently due to outside commitments and fitness. Your original state of fitness and your goal fitness are integral elements to your participation and enjoyment. Clearly, members who exercise regularly will be less inclined to develop a physical injury.

Other factors include age, medical status, the stage of breast cancer and its treatment, occupation, motivation and how well you follow the fitness and training programme.

Dragon boating is a physical sport, and like others, the possibility of dehydration can occur. Take a water bottle on board while paddling.

Possible minor injuries to thumbs or hands may occur during paddling due to hitting the side of the boat, see the coach for First Aid.

Lymphodemia

Lymphodemia is an obvious concern. For this reason compression sleeves are strongly recommended for concerned paddlers. Specific resistance exercises to develop strength in the upper arm, shoulder, back and lower back areas follow the warm up within each training session. These activities prepare the arm for the paddling activities.

There is likely a higher risk of developing lymphodemia during this initial phase of increased activity, relative to the paddling phase. We cannot emphasise enough the need to progress in a slow, gradual fashion. Too rapid an increase in any activity is the main factor in the development of muscular injury or a change in your lymphodemia status. By introducing paddling in a low intensity but progressive fashion, we gradually improve the ability of the upper extremity to do more intense exercise. The graduated nature of the programme develops strength and technique to this activity.

Emergency Procedures

Every paddler must be able to swim 50 m (lifejacket optional).

In the event of the boat capsizing, each member of the team will be aware of the following safety procedures on the water.

1. Do not panic - go with the motion of the boat.
2. Let go of your paddle.
3. Re-surface and move away from the boat - tread water.
(If you are underneath the boat, use the air pocket under the boat to breathe then re-surface away from the boat).
4. Check your paddling partner is O.K.
5. Each person will have a number, according to where you are seated in the boat, call out in order, including caller & sweep.
6. Rejoin the boat but **DO NOT** rotate it till the Sweep tells you to. Do not re-enter.
7. You will either swim the boat in or Lifeguards will pick you up.

GLOSSARY OF DRAGON BOAT TERMS

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| <i>Caller:</i> | The person who sets the crew's timing by calling the stroke rates. The caller sits in the bow. Often called the drummer overseas. |
| <i>Sweep:</i> | The person located at the stern of the boat who is responsible for steering and giving the crew commands. Sometimes called the steerperson. |
| <i>Engine Room:</i> | Refers to the larger, stronger paddlers in the middle of the boat. |
| <i>Stroke:</i> | Refers to one cycle of the paddling motion. |
| <i>Stroke rate:</i> | The paddling pace, the number of times the paddle goes through the water in a minute. |
| <i>Reach:</i> | The phase of the stroke in which the paddler maximizes the length of their stroke before hitting the catch. |
| <i>Catch:</i> | The point where the paddle first comes into contact with the water. |
| <i>Pull:</i> | The phase of the stroke in which the paddle is fully buried in the water and the paddler pulls the paddle back directly parallel with the boat. |
| <i>Exit:</i> | The point in a dragon boat stroke at which the paddle leaves the water cleanly and quickly, midway between the paddler's hip and knee. |
| <i>Recovery:</i> | The final phase of the stroke in which the paddle, following the exit, is snapped forward to catch position. |
| <i>“Back Paddle”</i> | Paddling backward to bring the boat backward into or away from a jetty or a race start. |
| <i>“Draw”</i> | Stroke used most often by front or back paddlers to line a boat up straight at the start of the race or to turn the boat around. The paddle is placed perpendicular to the side of the boat and ‘drawn’ towards the boat. |
| <i>“Push away”</i> | The reverse of the draw, when paddlers, often just the front or back rows, will push the water away from the boat. <i>Note:</i> The sweep or caller will call which side of the boat, and which rows of seats, will execute the draw, push away or the back paddle. |
| <i>“Check the boat”</i> | For stopping the boat's momentum whether in a forward or backward position. Describes the boat braking system whereby bodies are upright and paddles held vertically in the water at the side of the boat. If moving forward a ‘check’ would be accomplished by back paddling. |

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| <i>“Paddles Up”</i> | Paddler holds the paddle handle in front, with blade in air above head. This is so the sweep can see how stable the boat is. |
| <i>“Stable”</i> | Paddles are extended out from the side of the boat, with blade flat on top of the water. This enables the boat to be balanced and kept steady and stable. Also allows people to safely move around the boat. Also known as Paddles on the Water and very important to know. |
| <i>“Set it Up”</i> | Command from caller/sweep to ensure everyone begins to paddle in unison. Paddlers are leaning forward with paddle almost parallel to gunwale awaiting command to lock it in. |
| <i>“Lock it in”</i> | Paddles buried fully in the water ready to execute the first hard pull. |
| <i>“Paddle away” or “Go”</i> | A training session command to start paddling. |
| <i>“Are you ready?”</i> | The first command given by race starter once they are lined up on the start line (rope or pontoon). The “Attention” follows in approximately 3-5 seconds. |
| <i>“Attention!”</i> | Command given by race starter to prepare crews for departure, the start gun (or hooter) follows in approximately 3-5 seconds. |
| <i>“Power Up”</i> | The point during a race when a team’s caller/sweep calls for an increase in power. |
| <i>“Take it away”</i> | A training session command given by drummer/steersperson to begin paddling. |
| <i>“Let it run”</i> | Stop paddling and let the boat coast with blades out of the water. A training session expression, meaning that you should be sitting upright and attempting to feel relaxed to get air rushing into your lungs. |

GENERAL INFORMATION

Equipment

Items you will need for race days include (but are not limited to):

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| your paddle | food - snack and lunch |
| own chair | plenty to drink – hot & cold |
| hat | sunscreen etc |
| clothing – race uniform | towels |
| lifejacket | gloves (optional) |
| boat shoes | non slip seat cover |
| polyprops, warm clothing to put on between races | |
| dress uniform for function afterwards | |

As for you, the paddler, you need a big heart, a big smile and an appetite for activity.

The peripherals include a life jacket, which is provided by the team and is designed specifically for paddling. Please look after it well.

Surf shoes or boat shoes are to protect your feet as you wade through shallow waters to get in and out of the boat.

Other than that, you may like gloves, a hat, sunglasses or whatever makes you more comfortable and thus makes the boat go faster.

Uniforms (see above)

Racing shirts, track suits and dress shirts are supplied along with a lifejacket and these should be clean and well maintained as they remain the property of the team.

It is the responsibility of team members to provide their own polyprops for warmth, boat shoes or sandals and bike type shorts to wear in the boat to minimize slipping on boat seat .

Events: Festivals, Regatta and Race Days

At events one must remember you are there firstly for Dragon Boating and therefore must give priority to the day or weekend of the Event before socialising.

Regatta are held at a variety of paddling venues, including:

- Kerr's Reach on the Avon River, in Dallington
- Lake Rua, Harewood
- Pegasus Lake, just north of Woodend
- Akaroa Harbour
- Lake Hood, just east of Tinwald, Ashburton

Races and events include the:

- “Ice Breaker” in the first week of December
- Akaroa Harbour in January
- “Aoraki Open” in February
- “South Island Championships” in early March.
- “NZDBA Nationals” which alternate between the North Island (typically Blue Lake near Rotorua or Lake Pupuke, Auckland) and South Island (typically Lake Hood, Ashburton).

Race days start early, approximately 9.00 am and you will be given clear instructions beforehand as to what time you need to be at the venue to ensure you are ready and organised. There are usually four to five races on the day and times in between races vary, depending on the race schedule.

The coaches select the crew based on what they consider the best team for a race. The team is assembled 20 – 30 minutes prior to the race. We then walk in boat formation to the area where the team captain takes us through the warm up sequence. You will need to make sure you have with you your paddle and life jacket. Ten minutes before the race we proceed in boat formation to the crew assembly point and await directions to load.

The back of the boat will load first and paddles are placed flat on the water to help keep the boat stable. The caller is the last to load and will have a number on their arm to indicate which lane we are in. Once loaded the sweep is in command and eyes and ears are in our boat only. We paddle out to the race start line and line up in our lane. The starter commands are “Are You Ready?”, “Attention” and then the hooter or gun to go!!!.

Social Functions

In addition to training and race days, the Abreast of Life Dragon Boat Team has a fantastic team culture of friendship, support and camaraderie.

There will often be open invitations from other team members to celebrate personal special events where all are welcome and encouraged to participate.

In addition, the team also organises weekends away (for example to Hanmer), midwinter dinners and breakfasts to further develop team bonding and again all members are welcomed.

HAVE A GREAT TIME.....