

LEARN TO ROW

jOURNEY

3

SKILLS PROGRAM



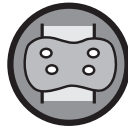
ROWING  
CANADA  
AVIRON

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# Welcome to Journey 3

## INTRODUCTION

Okay...this is it...an opportunity to begin racing. The skills identified in the Passport and the information in the Journey 3 Participant Handbook focus on getting you ready to race. The emphasis remains on rowing skills such as good technique but you are now ready to participate in some races. This can be loads of fun.

We hope you have enjoyed the Journey. It doesn't have to end here. As Kingston Rowing Club Masters rower Janice Armitage says, " I do it for me. I love being on the water. It's amazing. I can now find the time and I hope I never have to quit."

Well you don't have to quit. Rowing is one of those sports you can do for a lifetime.

Remember safety! Stay fit! Enjoy rowing!

# Safety

Following safety rules and being conscientious about good safety practice will allow you and others to continue enjoying the sport. Accidents can happen and it is usually because an aspect of safety has been overlooked.

As a participant in Journey 3, you are a competent rower. Depending on your club rules, you may be able to row by yourself or with a buddy. By advancing to this level, there are some responsibilities:

- It is now up to you to know the safety rules and follow them;
- If an emergency situation comes up, you must know what to do.

At this stage, these rules and practices should be habit:

- 1) Always have an approved PFD in your shell or in the accompanying motor boat;
- 2) If you are rowing by yourself or with a buddy, you should have a sound signaling device like a Fox 40 whistle;
- 3) Never row alone or in the dark;
- 4) Always follow the traffic flow patterns at your club;
- 5) Stay with the boat if it overturns.

## **CANADIAN COAST GUARD REGULATIONS**

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In 1999, the Canadian Coast Guard published the “1999 Safe Boating Guide”. In this guide, there are specific references to rowing. Here is a summary of the recommendations as they apply to rowers.

A rowing shell is not required to carry personal protection equipment, boat safety equipment and/or distress equipment if:

- 1) it is attended by a safety craft carrying an approved PFD or lifejacket of appropriate size for each member of the crew of the largest vessel being attended; or;
- 2) the rowing shell carries an approved PFD or life jacket of appropriate size for each member of the crew, a sound signaling device, and if out after sunset and before sunrise, a watertight flashlight;
- 3) if it is competing or training during a provincially, nationally or internationally sanctioned regatta or competition.

The regulations as summarized above reflect the amendments proposed by the Canadian Coast Guard in “1999 Safe Boating Guide”.



## PERSONAL FLOATION DEVICE (PFD)

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So what is an appropriate PFD for rowing?

It is clear that the standard approved PFD would be too bulky and awkward to fit in the average rowing shell. If you have to carry a PFD with you, the ones most commonly used are:



INFLATABLE PFD

### 1) MUSTANG AIR FORCE MANUAL/INFLATABLE

This PFD is worn around the neck and lies flat against the chest. There is a buckle around the waist to hold it in place. The PFD inflates by activating a CO2 cartridge or by blowing it up.

### 2) MUSTANG AIR FORCE INFLATABLE POUCH

This PFD can be clipped around the waist and is contained in a pouch that sits on the rower's lower back. It can also sit in the cockpit area of the shell or under the seat. It is very compact. This PFD inflates by activating a CO2 cartridge.

## BUDDY RESCUE

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You are out in a single rowing along side of another single sculler. All of a sudden you look over and your partner is in the water. What do you do?

### 1) IS THE WATER COLD?

Yes. It is appropriate to do a buddy rescue. Gently row your single toward the person in the water. Have your buddy put on his/her PFD. The rower should gently grab onto the stern of your boat and lift his/her body onto the stern decking. The person should get as much of his/her body out of the water as possible. Your partner should not move around because you might flip too. Row to the nearest shore where you can get assistance - ie. warm blanket, phone the rowing club for help.

Remember if the water is below 15° Celsius, you should be in sight of a motor boat at all times.

### 2) IS THE WATER WARM?

Yes. The rower in the water should put on his or her PFD and use the rowing shell as additional flotation. While hanging onto the shell, the rower can swim it to shore and get back in, or wait for assistance from a motor boat.

Some rowers can get back into their shell after flipping. On a warm day, in clean water, this could be a "refreshing" activity.



BUDDY RESCUE

# Equipment

## PROPER PLACEMENT OF THE FOOTSTRETCHERS

The placement of the foot stretchers is important because it controls the position of the oar at the entry and the release. This position is determined by the rower's position in relation to the oarlock. The correct placement of the foot stretchers will ensure a uniform and correct release position. It will also allow the rower to have the correct "oar in hand" at the release.

By setting the footstretchers in the correct place will help determine the arc that the oar will follow during the drive. Changing the footstretcher position will change the position of the arc.

1) By moving the footboards into the stern, the rower will have a long entry angle but a shorter release position. At the release - if the outside hand on the oar handle (sweep) is toward the center of the body, the foot stretchers should be moved toward the bow. In sculling, if the hands are too close together at the release, the foot stretchers should be moved closer to the bow.

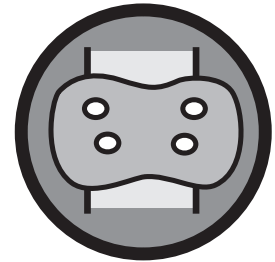
2) By moving the footstretchers toward the bow, the rower will have a shorter entry angle and a long release angle. In sweep, at the release position, the oar handle will extend beyond the body and the footstretchers should be moved toward the stern. In sculling, at the release position, the hands will be past the body and the elbows will be pointed toward port and starboard side. In this case, the footstretchers should be moved toward the stern.

Here is what it should look like with the foot stretchers in the proper place.

SWEEP



SCULLING



Move footboards towards the bow



Move footboards towards the stern

## RIGGER ON, RIGGER OFF

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When going to a regatta, you will need to know how to take the rigger off and put it back on. It might be time to get a small tool kit to have at your disposal for rigging and any minor adjustments.

Tool Kit: Adjustable wrench  
7/16 wrench  
10mm wrench  
screwdriver  
tape measure  
electrical tape



### RIGGER OFF

Using a 7/16 or 10mm wrench, remove nuts and washers on the backstay, frontstay and mainstay. Place nuts and washers in heel cup. Slide the rigger off so that all three points of contact come off at the same time.

It shouldn't require force to get the rigger off.

By forcing the rigger off, there is a chance that the bolts will strip and will need to be replaced.

Replace all of the nuts and washers for transport. Tighten nuts using a wrench so that the nuts are snug and won't loosen during transport to the regatta.

### RIGGER ON

Remove the nuts and washers using appropriate wrench. Place riggers next to appropriate seat throughout the boat. Double check to make sure that you have enough riggers and the riggers for the correct boat.

Slide the three points onto the appropriate bolt. Make sure that the bolts go through the same height holes on all of the riggers.

Place the washers in the correct place. The washers do not go between boat and the rigger.

Screw the nuts, and using the appropriate wrench, tighten the rigger in place.



## BASIC RIGGING ERRORS AND ADJUSTMENTS

### HEIGHT

The height of the oarlock is extremely important. The proper height will determine whether you can keep the blade buried during the drive. It will also allow you to get the blade out of the water comfortably at the release.

The height can be adjusted by using the height spacers on the pin or by changing the height of the rigger. These adjustments will change the height of the oarlock.

Here are some signs that you need to adjust your rigging:

#### Too high

- you might see white water before the release;
- you'll feel light or no pressure during the drive because the blade is not fully buried;
- your hands will draw in very high and you may still not be able to keep the blade in the water.

#### Too low

- your hands will be very close to your thighs at the release position but you won't be able to get the blade out of the water easily;
- the blade may drag on the water because you don't have enough room to push the oar handle down.

### PITCH

In Journey 3, we will discuss only the forward pitch of the oar. The forward pitch of the blade determines how the spoon is positioned during the middle part of the drive. It is the angle of the blade during the drive. (see illustration)

The forward pitch can be adjusted your blade should stay just under the surface of the water from the entry to the release. However, if your oar has too much or too little pitch, this will be difficult. If you have too much pitch, your blade will wash out of the water. If you have too little pitch, your blade will knife into the water and you will see water coming up the shaft of the oar. If the oar isn't pitched properly, check to make sure that you have squared your blade before entered the water. If the blade is over or under-squared, you will have the same effect as an over or under-pitched blade.



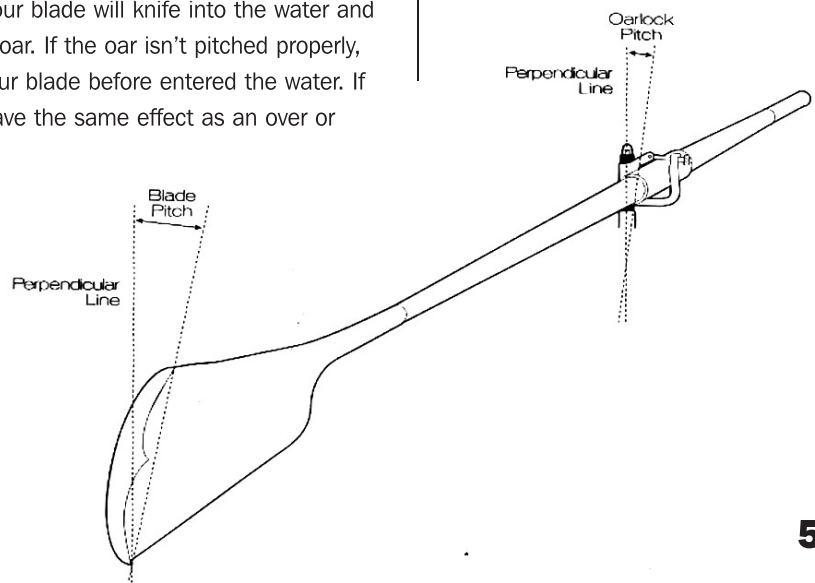
TOO HIGH



TOO LOW



JUST RIGHT







# Technique

Grip is still an important thing to work on. This is what coaches from across the country would like to remind you about your grip:

“Your grip is the only connection you have with your oars. Grip too tight and the effectiveness of that connection is lost.”

WILL DODDS, Victoria City Rowing Club

“Always keep contact with the oar handle but no death grips or white knuckles”

JANEY CHARLTON, Head Coach, Victoria City Rowing Club

“The index finger should be just where the oar handle starts to round down. Otherwise you can’t use your thumb effectively to feather. This could also create a change in the inboard”

CHUCK MCDIARMID, Head Coach Winnipeg Rowing Club

## REMINDERS ABOUT BLADEWORK

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### 1. BLADEWORK AT THE RELEASE

Concentrate on:

- a clean powerful release of the blade from the water;
- the release as the finish of the drive and the beginning of the recovery;
- the oar handle finishing the drive on a line level with the bottom of the sternum;
- exiting from the water with the blade squared;
- feathering after full extraction from the water;
- pulling the blade in and releasing the blade from the water at the same tempo.

### 2. BLADE WORK ON THE RECOVERY

Concentrate on:

- the blade traveling toward the bow at one speed;
- carrying the blade one full blade width off of the water;
- the top edge of the spoon remaining at the same height from the release to approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  slide;
- keeping the blade traveling on the same plane throughout;
- squaring the blade as you go over your toes.

### 3. BLADE WORK AT THE ENTRY

Concentrate on:

- the bottom edge of the blade coming down to the water as you reach your maximum length;
- fully burying the blade when your legs start the drive;
- letting the blade drop into the water by taking the weight off of the hands as they travel in a small circular path.



RECOVERY



ENTRY

#### 4. BLADEWORK DURING THE DRIVE

Concentrate on:

- the oar handle traveling in a level path parallel to the water for the entire drive;
- keeping the blade just deep enough to completely cover the top edge of the spoon;
- locking on with the lower back so that the blade moves as the legs drive.

# Fitness

## GETTING READY FOR A WORKOUT - STRETCHING

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Before going on the water, stretching is a good way to get the muscles warmed up. Static stretching is considered the most effective and safest way to stretch. Static stretching is a sustained stretch where one gently in a slow controlled motion, reaches and then holds the position for a designated time. Static stretching is recommended for all stretching programs as it provides for a slow, gentle stretch aiding in tension reduction of the muscles. Muscles should be in a relaxed state while stretching. Ballistic or bounce-type stretching produces a contraction or tension within the muscles.

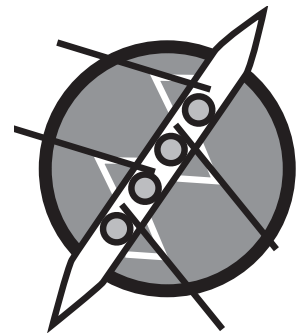
When using the static stretch, the exercise should be done slowly and gently until a tightness is felt within the muscle. At no time should there be pain involved. This “tightness” position is then held for at least 30 seconds. The exercise is repeated three times.

The correct body positions are important. If you find the stretch very easy, it is likely that the body may be compensating by using another body part (setting it up for injury). It is just as important, or more important, to do the exercises after rowing.

When using the static stretch, the exercise should be done slowly and gently until a tightness is felt within the muscle. At no time should there be pain involved. This “tightness” position is then held for at least 30 seconds. The exercise is repeated three times.



DRIVE



**ROWING PERFORMANCE ENHANCERS - HINTS BY KAREN ORLANDO**

“When doing these stretches, the body position is important. The body will naturally want to take the path of least resistance which in most cases will not be stretching the correct group of muscles. It will compromise another body part. Do not try to stretch beyond the ‘pulling feeling’. Hold the position for at least 30 seconds. Rowers need guidance to ensure the correct body position is being held.”

KAREN ORLANDO,

BScPT Dip in Sport Physiotherapy,

Physiotherapist for  
Canada’s National Rowing Team.



**LYING ON YOUR BACK WITH ONE LEG BENT**

Bring your knee over the other leg and push your knee against the floor with the opposite hand. Then reach with the other arm to the opposite side looking in the same direction. You will feel the stretch in your lower back and bottom. Hold approx. 30 seconds

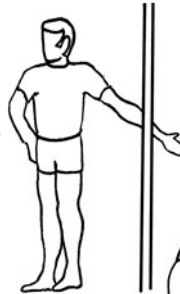


**CRAWLING POSITION**

Let your arms slide along the floor as far as possible. Push your bottom back and down and the chest towards the floor. Breathe out while doing the exercise. Hold for 30 seconds.

**PECS**

Stand sideways against a wall with arm closest to the wall straight out with palm facing the wall. Feet should be turned slightly in the opposite direction. Arm should start out at about a 30° from the floor. Move the arm up only as tolerated. Now turn the entire body in the direction of the feet with sternum leading so the body is turning away from the wall.

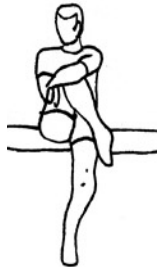
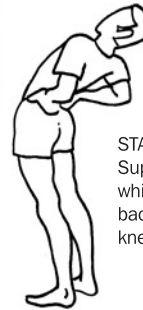


**HIP FLEXORS**

Get into a half-kneeling position and tighten your stomach muscles so your back doesn’t arch. Push your hips forward.

**STAND STRAIGHT WITH FEET APART**

Support your back with your hands while bending your back as far backwards as possible. Keep your knees straight during the exercise



**PIRIFORMIS**

Sit with one leg bent towards your chest and crossed over the other leg. Pull your bent knee with your arms towards your chest. The stretch should be felt behind the thigh and in your buttock

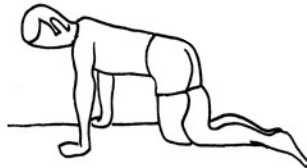


**HAMSTRING**

Sit on a table with one leg straight in front of you and your other leg on the floor. Bend your body forward keeping your back straight

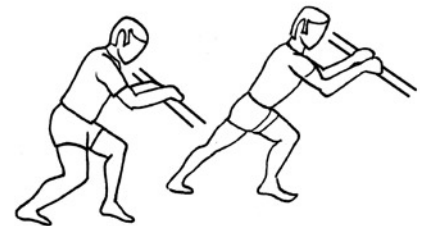


Lying on your back, bend one knee into your chest and wrap a towel around the ball of your foot and try to straighten your leg



**BUTTOCK**

On all 4’s, cross your right leg over your left. Keep abdominals tight so the pelvis stays level - don’t twist your spine. Extend your right leg back and keep your weight on the left leg. Stretch should be felt along outer edge of your right leg.



**CALF**

Stand in a walking position supported with your leg to be stretched directly behind you with the knee straight and then repeat with the knee bent. Lean forward until you feel the calf being stretched.

## TRAINING FOR A RACE

The training that is done in preparation for a race depends, to an extent, on the type of race that is entered. Category VI training should be the bulk of the training time regardless of the type of race. Assuming that you will be training 4-5 times per week category VI should be done 3-4 of those times. Category VI helps prepare you to do the harder work in the lower categories by training your body to remove lactic acid (the stuff that causes the fatigue and pain during hard pieces). Without category VI, the other training is less effective.

Head races, which normally last about 20 minutes are done at or very close to anaerobic threshold for the whole race. Cat IV training should be done 1-2 times per week when preparing for this type of race. Cat IV helps to extend the period of time that you can work at anaerobic threshold. Intervals of work at SR 26-28 for 10 minutes alternated with rest periods at SR 22-24 for a total of 40 minutes are a good starting point.

2000m races take between 6 and 12 minutes to complete depending on weather, skill, age, and equipment. Because this race is shorter than a head race it can be done at a slightly higher intensity.

Category III should be done once per week during the final month of preparation. Category III training involves a 3 minute period of work at SR 28-30 followed by a rest period at SR 18-20. This will help prepare you for the final 500m kick.

Category I will help prepare you for the racing start. Category I training involves very short, all out sprints. From a complete stop (simulating a starting position) bring your power and rate as high as possible within 10 strokes, let the boat run or paddle lightly for 1-2 minutes and repeat 8-12 times. Category I training doesn't have to be done very often since the body adapts to this type of training very quickly. Category I training should be done 2-3 times in the final month of preparation with one of those times occurring at the beginning of the week before the race.

1000m races are even done in 3-6 minutes again depending on age, weather, equipment, skill, etc. The strategy becomes even more important for the 1000m race. Category I training as described above should be done once a week for the final 4-6 weeks before the race. Cat III should also be done once a week during this time period.

An important tip: Cooling down for 20 minutes in CAT VI following the cat I training session can help ensure that you are getting enough cat VI work in your training.

## CATEGORIES OF INTENSITY

| Intensity category | Approximate Heart Rate Change | Duration One Piece (min) | RATIO Work:Recovery | GOALS of the Training Intensity   | Practical Examples(SR=Stroke Rate)  |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|---|---|
| I                  | MAX 1 HR<br>ei 180 - 200      | 0.5 - 1.5                | 1:4<br>1:5          | Anaerobic Capacity<br>Transportation = Development of Cardio-pulmonary System<br>Ability + Feeling of Start/Spurt<br>Aggression | 1 - 6 x 500M (with start)<br>Interval Training (Short Pieces) Series of 30 - 60 Strokes<br>Or: Series of 1 -2 min.<br>SR: > Race - SR |
| III                | MAX HR<br>ei 180 - 200        | 2 - 7                    | 1:2<br>1:3          | Race Endurance<br>Transportation = Development of Cardio-pulmonary System<br>Race Speed Feeling<br>Race Attitude/Plan           | Race over 1500 - 2000M<br>6 x 2 min.<br>3 x 1000M<br>5 x 750M<br>SR: Race - SR  |

\*\* CATEGORIES IV AND VI CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 20.

“You know that I like long distance, aerobic work. Therefore, my workout would be:

1.) One hour non stop long and consistent work on low level.

But for more excitement:

2.) Warm up for 10-15min. Then row consistently for 20-40min with 2min consistent/2min a little bit more intensive and faster than before...

Example: On the erg -

2 min @ 2:10/ 2min @ 2:07 / 2min @2:10 / 2min @ 2:04/

2 min @2:10 / 2min @2:10 etc.

or on the water: 2min stroke rate (SR) 20/ 2min SR 21/ 2min SR 20/ 2min SR

22/2min SR 20/ 2min SR23 etc.

The intensity can be changed in a way that the workout suits every level.”

VOLKER NOLTE, Ph.D  
Canadian National Team Coach  
Masters Rower

“Use shorter strokes to propel the boat faster. This is more effective than full strokes. But too many ½ strokes will allow the rate to go too high and good blade work may deteriorate. It is important to do the race start at a pace where you can maintain good and clean blade work”

VOLKER NOLTE

## PEAKING FOR A RACE

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As you begin to think about racing, you have probably done a considerable amount of endurance training to get yourself ready. It is important in the last week or so before the race to select the right kinds of workouts. Here are a few things to consider prior to Race day:

- 1) Reduce the length of your workouts - duration of the training;
- 2) Low intensity work should be done to recover from a Category 1 or 3 workout;
- 3) Increase the intensity!
- 4) Do “race pace” work but don’t do too much - shorter duration such as a 3 x 250m or 2 x 500metre or 1 x 1000m.
- 5) Make these pieces a way to practice race strategy or focal points during the race;
- 6) Make sure there is lots of recovery time between pieces.
- 7) Know how long it takes you to get warmed up for a race. Have a warm up that works for you.

Before going into a race, you should be well rested and well nourished. You should feel confident that your equipment is well rigged.

## RACING STARTS

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For a racing start, the goal is to bring the boat from a dead stop to racing speed. Normally, it takes between 5 - 10 strokes to do this. The strokes at the beginning of a race are shorter but there is more pressure on the blades. The trick is to use short fast strokes to propel the boat faster. However, if the strokes are too fast there is a good chance that the blade work will not be clean.

Part of the strategy is to get to full length strokes as soon as possible, but not until the boat is moving at maximum racing speed.

The National Lightweight Men’s Four uses a  $\frac{3}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $\frac{3}{4}$  , full racing start.

Consider using a relatively upright body position and concentrate on pushing the legs on. Be clean and quick. Shorter strokes help get the boat moving more quickly.

## TYPES OF STARTS

### FLOATING STARTS

At some regattas, crews line up at the starting line without a fixed position. The starter will attempt to get all of the crews even by asking the crew to “touch it up” (bring it slowly forward).

The entire crew should sit in a position ready to start to row. All strokes should be short using arms only so that your crew is ready for the start.

Sometimes it takes a little bit of time to get all of the crews aligned. Once you have been aligned, it is important to maintain your position. This may mean that the coxswain or the bow person may constantly watching and responding by getting part of the crew to “touch it”.

Remember - remain at the entry position and touch it up using the arms only. You don't want to be at the release position, when the official says, “Go!”

### FIXED STARTS

For this type of start, the shell must be back into the starting gates or anchored by a or to a motor boat. This is normally done with one or two rowers backing slowly into the fixed start. A boat holder will hold the stern of the shell while the crew gets the straight course and until the starter starts the race.

Caution: When approaching the starting gates, take into consideration the direction of the wind. If it is a strong tail wind, try to get your shell relatively close to the starting gates. Otherwise, you will be blown down the course and have a long way to back it up. If it is a strong head wind, don't get too close to the starting gate.

### HEAD STYLE RACE STARTS

In this type of start, you will generally row into the race. This means that you will follow approximately 10 - 20 seconds behind another crew. Your time begins when you go across the starting line.

In order to assist the starters, stay relatively close to the starting line where you can hear the instructions. Ideally you want to be at full speed when you cross the line. Therefore, leave enough space between your boat and the crew ahead of you in order to do some hard strokes before you hit the starting line.

“Relax! Don't Panic -do what you have done in practice!”

JANEY CHARLTON  
BC Provincial Coach



“The first couple of strokes need to be squeezed out, not hammered...like you are trying to remove the tooth-paste from the tube as fast as you can without blowing off the end”

WILL DODDS  
Junior National Team Coordinator

“Keep your eyes in your boat, especially for the first 20-30 strokes, because every time you look away, something can go wrong.”

CARL MACCULLOCH  
Masters Sculler & Coach



FIXED START

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR RACE STRATEGY

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Racing is about testing your training and technique over a distance - be it 1000m, 2000m or any other. The goal is to row the way you do in practice (or better) and to have your personal best performance, regardless of the level of competition. Since each race gives you more experience, it is good to do it often and to learn as much as possible from each race. Most people are distracted by the opposition, panicked by the idea of doing poorly or unaware of what they are doing - so it is important to relax, focus on your boat and do what you know well. ROW!

Some basic reminders when preparing to race would include having a very basic plan for pacing over the distance.

- In training, practice the race, with shorter pieces or full or over length ones, in order to find a pace you can handle. The “fly and die” method of sprinting until you fade can not only be exhausting but also mentally demoralizing, so find a pace you can handle (without losing your good technique) for your race distance. Coxed or crew boats need to have an agreed upon plan, which has been practiced - or all crew members will attempt their idea of an ideal race.
- Practical skills such as backing up (you may need that at the regatta site) and practice doing starts in training will help to ease the tension and fear of racing.
- A “pre-race warm-up” should include some drills, increasing pressure work (1/2, 3/4 and full pressure), 10 stroke pieces and practice starts (at controlled rates).
- Know the regatta flow pattern for warm-up and racing, the regatta schedule and the start commands.
- Ask locals or the regatta committee about the warm-up and cool down areas, or if there are any places or danger zones, etc.
- Time permitting, go over the course and know reference points for the half-way point and last 250m - and of course be aware of current, course markings.

## GETTING READY TO RACE

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- Before the start always make sure that your course is straight and your blades are square (before the first stroke).
- Check all boat parts to avoid sloppy foot stretchers, loose nuts or an open oarlock (especially if your boat was transported). The first 5 strokes are quite important and should be done under control - in order to stay straight, get the boat moving well, and get confidence in yourself.
- Try to break the race down into segments, with a focus point in each section. Do as you’ve done in practice to find your rhythm and boat feel within the first minute. Often the power elements are used in the first half and more technical points are brought in as the rowers fatigue and lose their style.

- Make minor corrections to steering or technique before it is too late and major changes are needed. Use hard “ten’s” to bring up the power, but keep the pacing and focus within the boat. At the end of the race (last 10-50 strokes) do a finish, which you have practiced often.

After each race try to go over what happened (with a coach or yourself) to determine what went well and what needs to be done to make it better. Think of your boat and what you did, and incorporate any changes into your future training and racing.

Beyond all remember that it is all for fun! Enjoy the camaraderie of your crew. Everyone who races is a winner, if they get the most of out each stroke they take and try to do them well. The excitement, the pressure, and the intensity can bring out the best in many people!

## **NUTRITION - EATING PRIOR TO AND ON RACE DAY**

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Diet is an important consideration for race day. The pre-competition diet functions in two ways - to store the energy that will be consumed during a competition and to replace the water and electrolytes that are lost during the competition. Consideration must be given to how many races in a day and how much time between each race.

Here are your goals to achieve through a good pre-competition diet:

- 1) Stay well hydrated;
- 2) Avoid being hungry and drop in blood glucose levels;
- 3) Store enough glycogen that will be used in competition;
- 4) Eat foods that are easily digested.

Therefore, the rower should:

- 1) Eat foods that are rich in complex carbohydrates like pasta, rice cereals, breads. These are all foods that are easily digestible and the absorption is gradual.
- 2) Drink normal quantities of water but stay well hydrated throughout the competition day. This is especially important if it is a hot and humid day.
- 3) Avoid food that is rich in fat or protein (meat, cheese, bacon). These take much longer to digest.
- 4) Avoid sugar rich foods like honey, syrup, chocolate and sugars. These types of food interfere with good use of energy reserves by causing a peak in the glucose level of the blood which is usually followed by a low level of glycemia.

“Forget about the destination (the race), but enjoy the Journey (rowing and training).”

NANCY STORRS

Ridley Graduate Boat Club Coach

Coach and Masters Rower





“At your first race, you will be excited to race. It is important for you to listen to the official. The officials understand the wind and race conditions. Our goal is to have fair and safe races. This becomes difficult if the rowers don’t listen.

If you arrive to the start line early, say more than 4 minutes, you should keep moving. Don’t sit too long”

MIKE BAGSHAWE  
RCA Official

## WHAT TO EXPECT ON RACE DAY & RULES OF THE RACING

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Rowers spend a lot of time training to be able to race well. So, race day should be taken seriously. Race day should be fun too. The Rules of Racing are meant to make the event safe and fair so that everyone can have an enjoyable regatta experience. The following provides a very condensed version of Rowing Canada Aviron’s Rules of Racing. This emphasizes the main points that rowers need to know before participating in a rowing race. Visit RCA’s website for more details ([www.rowingcanada.org](http://www.rowingcanada.org)).

- Your crew should wear club uniforms with club colors and similar singlets.
- Before you put your boat on the water, your shell will be inspected by an official. They will be looking to make sure that the shell has heel strings on the shoes (see pg. 4 of Journey 2). Also they will be looking for a bow ball.

### WARM UP

- A course map with traffic flow patterns will be posted or distributed. It will indicate warm-up and cool-down locations. Look at this, memorize it and if you have questions, you should ask your instructor or an official.

### THE START

- At the start area, you will be allowed into your lane to warm-up when the Starting Referee calls you in (usually 5-10 min.) before your race. You must be in your start positions, ready to race two minutes before the posted start time.
- The Starting Referee will poll across the lanes to make sure everyone is in their proper lane. The Referee will then say “Attention!”, slowly raise the red flag, and after a pause (length of pause varies) will say “Go!” at the same time the red flag will drop.
- If a crew jumps the start, is late to the start or breaks some other rule, that crew will be issued a warning. A second warning means exclusion of the crew from that race.
- If something in your boat breaks within the first 100 metres or 20 seconds (this depends on the regatta), you may stop the race by stopping rowing and having a crew member raise a hand to attract the attention of the Referee. You will be given the time to fix the problem and another chance to race.

### DURING THE RACE

- You are expected to stay in your lane. You may leave your lane provided that you don’t interfere with another crew. If a crew is interfering with another boat, the Referee will direct the offending boat by calling out the crew’s name and pointing a white flag in the direction it should go. If the offending crew doesn’t comply, it may mean exclusion from the race for that crew.

#### AFTER THE RACE

- After the completion of the race and all boats have crossed the finish line, the referee will look at each of the crews to make sure everybody is healthy and to make sure there are no protests. If there are no issues, the referee will hold up a white flag.

#### PROTESTS

- If you feel that your crew was interfered with, you must lodge your protest at the finish line. Simply, raise your hand to get the Referee's attention and then, calmly explain the problem to the Referee.
- A red flag will be raised to indicate that a protest has been made. If you win the protest, rectification will be made by having a re-row or the exclusion of the crew.
- If the protest is denied, the Referee will tell you why. When the Referee is satisfied the race has been finished fairly a white flag will be raised. This informs the Finish Line Referee that the race is officially over. If, after this, you still feel that your protest is valid, you may have your coach submit a written protest within one hour of the race ending, along with a fee (usually \$25.00). A Regatta Jury will decide on the protest and make a final decision. If you win the protest, your fee will be returned.

HAPPY RACING & HAVE FUN!

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## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

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Rowing Canada Aviron has developed the Journey 123 Skills Program to introduce more Canadians to the sport of rowing. In doing so, RCA would like to acknowledge the contributions of many people who have provided ideas, insights, technical feedback and encouragement.

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# LEARN TO ROW

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