



BUILD UP TO RACE PACE

Looking for the right training recipe to boost your results this year? Race pace workouts are a key ingredient for boat speed. Your conditioning is going to improve through the season.

In the early weeks develop a solid base of fitness and technique where you stick to lower intensity workouts until you feel your technique will tolerate nudging up the rates.

For practical purposes, let's define race effort as the best pace you can row while maintaining your technique, efficiency, and boat feel.

The key to rowing race simulation workouts is to focus on the race effort versus the pace (rate). Trying to push the rate too high too quickly at the beginning of the season can cause overtraining, fatigue, and be deadly to your technique efficiency. Plus, early in the season, it may be difficult to know exactly what your race pace will be for your peak regatta. So row according to how your body and boat feels. Keep it "comfortably hard" with good rhythm, bladework, and run. If your slide catches on fire and your stroke gets ragged you need to gather your technique back together and pay attention to moving the boat well before trying those higher rates again a few days later.

How to learn race rate

Begin by adding "speed play" sessions into your weekly programme. Speed play includes short bursts of 10 to 20 strokes at race intensity interspersed within a lower stroke rate row.

For example, row three 20-minute pieces at a base stroke rate of 18; every four to five minutes include an acceleration

of 10 to 20 strokes at the best pace you can row while maintaining good technique.

Next, you can include a session with more structured high-rate strokes such as three 20-minute pieces with the first 10 minutes rowed at a base stroke rate of 20-22 and the second 10 minutes rowed alternating 10 strokes at race effort then 10 strokes at your base rate. Pay attention to keeping a sharp rhythm and bladework when you make the rate transitions.

The next stage is to include longer segments so build up to three 20-minute pieces that alternate four minutes at a base stroke rate 18 to 22 with one minute at your best rating. When you feel you are ready for longer intervals start to progress the length and rates of your race pace sessions. Your body will naturally adapt over time as will your rating and boat speed.

Find out more on Build Up To Race Pace on our website www.fastermastersrowing.com/build-up-to-race-pace

Tell us what solutions you're finding that work for clubs and masters and share on our Facebook page www.facebook.com/rowingfaster

Marlene Royle



Marlene Royle and Rebecca Caroe coach at Faster Masters Rowing Programmes, Webinars and Technique for masters.

www.fastermastersrowing.com