

TECHNICAL DRILLS

LEGS ONLY ROWING

Execution - Start this drill from a standstill and from frontstops, in 4s or 6s or 8s with more advanced crews

How to call - " Legs only rowing, bow 4, from frontstops, ready....GO

Why we do drill -

- 1) This drill focuses on the power from the leg drive, ensuring that the power is isolated to the legs only without the interference of backs and arms.
- 2) Helps to ensure all legs are going together and therefore the power is being applied together
- 3) If power is lacking in a crew this is often a good way to increase power as it is easy from the coxing seat to feel when little/no power is going down during the leg drive.

Examples of drill - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s-HvFFN35CQ>

PAUSE DRILLS

Execution - Bring this drill in typically when rowing as a complete crew as it is primarily a balance drill. It can be used with individuals setting the boat for less experienced crews or if you want to emphasise hand heights whilst rowing with a set platform

How to call - "Pausing at arms away body over (for example) next stroke, ready....GO! Then as the crew pauses decide on a length of time to pause for, usually 2-3 seconds then give it a GO to move onto the next stroke. For less powerful crews then it is usually best to pause every other stroke or even every third stroke as you need run on the boat to do this drill effectively, think of the wobbly bike syndrome, (you need to be pedalling to keep the bike stable)

Why we do this drill - The pause can be used at any part of the stroke and is ideal to ensure;

- 1) Arms, backs, bodies are in the same place throughout all rowers
- 2) Everyone is arriving at the position at the same time together

Different pauses;

- 1) Arms away pause - This drill focuses at the point straight after the finish and is usually a very stable position. It is good to use this stage to focus on the hands going away at the same time.
- 2) Arms away body over is the most commonly used drill as after arms away, body over hand heights should be set so we need to ensure those hand heights are set at the right height at this point.
- 3) Quarter and half slide is used to ensure that hand heights haven't moved since arms away body over and also ensures that everyone is arriving at this stage of the stroke together

4) Three Quarter slide is the least stable position and is very hard to set with all rowers, if achievable this is a very good drill, also ensures that everyone is squared and ready to go in at this stage which they should be.

Examples of drill - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1MCEiRP-nHw> (example of a number of pauses being used in sequence)

Arms away, body over - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pK3DvvMsgbQ>

CANADIAN ROWING (BACK SWING)

Execution - This drill can be incorporated all 8 but is more effective with a pair/4 sitting the boat.

How to call - Canadian backswing, next stroke.....GO

Why we do this drill - The backswing is important for two main reasons;

- 1) It adds an element of power to the finish and stroke
- 2) It helps to develop/strengthen a rhythm by getting everyone moving the backs together. If the backs are moving in time then it is much more likely that hands will go away together and timing on the rest of the stroke will be significantly better.

The backswing drill exaggerates the backswing giving a larger movement to allow timing to be improved then when returning to "normal" backswing the timing and movement should be improved

Examples of the drill - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=06Rq1qJEOi4CUTTING>

CUTTING THE CAKE

Execution - This drill can be executed all 8 or in 6s/4s with less experienced crews

How to call - Cutting the cake, next stroke...GO

Why we do this drill - This drill is used primarily to get the hands moving away from the finish together, it entails the oarsman to move the hands away as usual at the finish before returning them into the finish position then away and onto the next stroke.

HALF SLIDE RATE BUILD

Execution - This drill will be used only when rowing all 8/ all 4

How to call - Dropping down to half slide all 8, ready....GO.....Rate up 2....GO, up 2, up 2 up2....keep going up to rate 45-55

Why we do this drill - When attempting to raise the rate for racing pieces the hands moving

away quicker is often the key to achieving the desired high rate. When performing the half slide rate build the hands will have to move quickly away to get onto the next stroke so when moving back to normal length rowing the hands should be quicker therefore achieving higher rates.

Examples of the drill - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vV-6HdWEq7s>

PAUSING WITH BLADES ON THE WATER AT THE FINISH

Execution - Usually performed all 8/4

How to call - Pausing at the finish, before the tap down, with the blades running along the water

Why we do this drill - This drill will mark the position that the handle/hands should be every stroke at the finish, this pause should be used when individuals/the crew isn't drawing up at the finish so will give a reference point that everyone should draw up to EVERY stroke.

For Your Listening and Viewing Pleasure:

The voice of a cox calling the Henley Race course:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iO56DsnXtUM>

View from the stern showing pretty perfect bladework -

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x3oZnTpXa68>

ADVANCED COXING CALLS:

When you feel the rhythm/ratio is getting lost:

1) Not Cutting the Stroke Short at the FRONT END

these are all getting at the same thing:

"Keep the LENGTH at the catch"

"let your arms glide out past your rigger"

"take your time at the catch"

"Don't shorten the stroke"

"LONG and STRONG"

2) Not Cutting the Stroke Short at the BACK END:

"HOLD the finishes" - so the boat is set off the back, so we all finish together, so we get the boat running underneath us

"Draw up high" / "Drawing in all the way to your chest" - not just to balance the boat by calling out one side (as yes this is also a balance call), but also to **"Keep the length at the finish"** so we're not cutting it short

and generally calling out the finishes **"Finish THERE"** or **"Finish NOW"** (as you are already doing) really helps and makes a difference in higher rates. I can usually feel the crew come together better everytime you call that.

in lower rates / paddling / warm up, you can call for **"Clunky finishes"** (not a technical call per se but it seems to work for us and we know what it means :) and then sometimes get the crew to **"Listen for the finishes - next 5 strokes"** and then coxing silence for those strokes so the crew can hear their oars making the clunky finish sound together.

When you feel a lot of movement in the boat / or when it seems we are getting a bit frantic:

3) Balance Calls:

"**get it sat!**" (general call just to remind us to focus on setting the boat)

"**steady bodies on the slide**" (especially when you can see us throwing our weight around out of the center line of the boat on the recovery)

"**Switch on your core**"

"**handle heights!**" (if you see blades madly waving in the air /changing heights from finish to catch during the recovery)

or just "**steady handle heights**" as a more gentle reminder

To help us get the rate up:

4) Winding Calls:

- calling out the "**winding it up over five strokes**" exactly as you have been - really helpful

- then also incorporating "**2 on the legs and 2 with fast hands**" to get us to focus on increasing the rate first with power on the legs, then with fast hands at the finish

(the crew knows the call "2 on the legs 2 with the hands" so no need to explain overmuch)

so calling the "**on the legs**" and "**now fast hands**" in between the winding counts if/when possible

and in general while winding: (or if you want a faster rate still after the initial wind)

"**winding TOGETHER**"

"**backing up stern pair**" / "**all together**" - if the rate isn't coming up

"**fast hands at the finish**"

and "**keep the rythm**"

5) Miscellaneous Coxing Notes:

Tap turning: you can count down the last two or three taps in time with the tapping : "**IN 3, 2, 1, DROP**" and on the DROP everyone slaps their blade on the water (it's very satisfying as a cox I always found) also, "easy" tends to sometimes be a bit confusing with tap turning as

easying with blades off the water gets a bit messy and makes us look less polished as a crew. (and we're all about intimidating the opposition on the Isis right?... yeah right)

'Flying' on the Easying: as both W1 and W2 are getting the boat more and more set, leave lots of room (when possible) at the spinning points to 'fly' on the easy call by easying a bit earlier. "**easying at arms away, in 2, ... in 1... EASY there**" and then holding blades off the water seeing if the crew can set the boat perfectly. This is a really good balance exercise each time we spin or have to stop. Then as the blades are off the water you can call "**set it**" if it's not quite there yet.... and then "**drop blades**" as usual.

These few extra seconds of flying on the "easy" also trains your crew that easy does not mean resting yet - staying focussed and balancing the boat until the cox calls drop blades. It turns into a mini pause drill every easy, so even if the crew is working on something else (now mostly higher rate pieces) we still maintain discipline on the balance. Plus as a cox, I personally find 'flying' one of the most satisfying rowing moments when the crew can get the boat perfectly sat!

1st roll up: when we move off from a stand still ("**Come to backstops, ready, ROW**"), IF the first roll up and/or stroke is complete crap, and we flop down to one side massively or timing is completely off at the catch, AND if there is room behind you / no queue to clear the spinning area, there is nothing stopping you from calling "**easy there**" and "**lets do that again**", "**Come back to backstops**" and have us do it again. Again, this just gets at having discipline as a crew from the first stroke. And we are at a point now, especially W1, where we should be nailing those roll ups from backstops consistently. Obviously if you need to move off quickly or there are boats waiting behind us this doesn't apply - just when you can.