



The Whitemarsh Wake

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MAKE YOUR VOTE COUNT!

In March, the WBC Board of Directors officially appointed Steve Kossuth, Gavin Kerr and Steve Whalen, in accordance with the WBC Bylaws Section 6.5, to serve as this year's Nominating Committee.

The officer positions for which nominations are being solicited are as follows:

- o President;
- o Vice President;
- o Treasurer;
- o Financial Secretary;
- o Recording Secretary;
- o Captain (also serves as Chair of the Rowing Committee);
- o Lieutenant of the House (also serves as Chair of the House Committee);
- o Lieutenant of Rowing;
- o Coxswain;

- o Chair of the Events Committee; and
- o Chair of the Membership Committee.

The President, Vice President, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, and Recording Secretary will also serve on the WBC Board of Directors for the same one year term. Descriptions of all of the above positions are included in the revised Bylaws.

Voting for officers by *eligible Standard Members* can be done a) in person at the May 7, 2009 general membership meeting; or b) by proxy in a form to be communicated by the Nominating Committee.

Eligible Standard Members are those who, as of the meeting date, a) have been Standard Members of WBC for at least one year; b) have attended (in person or via teleconference) three or more regularly scheduled General Membership meetings during the immediately preceding year (i.e., at least three of the following six meetings: May 08, July 08, Sept 08, Nov 08, Jan 09, Mar 09); and c) do not have any unpaid fees/dues owed to WBC. **Only eligible Standard Members are entitled to nominate and vote for officers.**

The Coxswain's Call



LaSalle will be holding its 40th annual LaSalle College High School crew day on Saturday April 25, 2009 12:00 – 2:00 so please be advised of increased activity around the boathouse.

There have been a couple of occasions where the gate has been left open. If you are the last person at the boathouse, please remember to close the windows (if you are in the erg room), shut the lights off, close the door and lock the gate. Any early arrival who finds the gate open, please report.

Our first race of the season will be Catch the Cooper on June 6, 2009 (Cooper River, New Jersey), anyone interested in participating please advise – if enough participation, boats will be entered.

There may be interest in participating in the Head of the Charles (Boston, MA). This race would involve expenses to include race fees, transportation, meals, and boat/coxswain fees that are not supported by Whitemarsh boat club. Anyone interested, please contact Linda Hrycko.

Club rows will continue on Tuesday and Thursday at 6:00 PM and Saturday and Sunday at 7:00 AM for the duration of Daylight Saving Time. Please remember

to take the lights for boats; they are in the drawer under the sign-in log.

Reminder to all members ... if you are rowing off times, do not use privately owned boats without the permission of their owner. WBC has several boats marked for club use but there are a number of privately owned boats in the boathouse. Please do not use private boats without permission of the owner. Approved boats are listed by the locker room door. When in doubt, do not take the boat.

Reminder - members may use WBC equipment at any time other than club row. If you use the equipment during off time, PLEASE LOG IN and OUT. Remember to report any damage to equipment immediately to any officer or me.

When replying via email to club row, please do not respond to "all".

Club rowers, please note: with the increased attendance at club rows, it is very important that you respond regarding your availability. Those who respond timely for club row will be boated first. Those who do not respond may or may not get a seat. . Please respond with your availability by Monday so that proper equipment and coxswains can be secured.

We will try to get everyone in a boat. However with increasing participation at club rows, it may not be always possible. Those who are scheduled to attend club row but do not get to row that club row will be the first placed in a boat at the next club row. I appreciate your cooperation, patience and understanding.

From time to time, members may be asked to coxswain (women and men) for an individual club row if we do not have access to a coxswain, please give it a try

Coxswains are needed for all club rows. If anyone knows of a coxswain (young or old) who would like to cox masters, please let me know. Remember full time coxswains do not pay for membership.

If you have signed up for club row but have a change in plans, please call me at 215-287-6101.



Welcome to our newest WBC members:

- ~ Sean Kammann ~
- ~ Matthew Ryan ~
- ~ Susan Anderson ~
- ~ Andrea Kiergesell ~
- ~ Ron Ettinger ~

Upcoming Masters Races



Saturday, June 6, 2009 at the Cooper River, Camden, NJ. Hosted by Cooper Rowing Club. Sponsored by Cooper Rowing Foundation.

<http://www.cooperrowingclub.org/catchhecooper.htm>

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151st Schuylkill Navy Regatta

Saturday, June 13, 2009
Sponsored by the Schuylkill Navy of Philadelphia.

<http://www.boathouserow.org/reg09/snr09.html>

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*Saturday, Sunday and Monday
July 3, 4 and 5, 2009*

Entry Deadline - Friday, June 26

Schuylkill River, Philadelphia, PA

Hosted by the Schuylkill Rowing Club of Philadelphia

The Quaker City Masters Regatta.

Saturday, August 2, 2008
The Schuylkill River Rowing Course,
Kelly Drive,
Philadelphia, PA

<http://www.fairmountrowing.org/regatta.html>

<http://www.boathouserow.org/reg09/idr09.html>



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Howard M Smith Diamond State
Masters Regatta

Sunday, July 26th, 2009. Sponsored by the Wilmington Rowing Center, founded in 1984, Diamond States is held on tranquil Noxontown pond on the campus of St. Andrew's School, Middletown, DE.

<http://www.diamondstatemasters.com/>

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Specialized Strength Training for Rowers (part 1)

Stephen Seiler
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Rowing presents a training dilemma. It is a "Power - Endurance sport". In general, successful rowers are tall, well muscled athletes. They just don't look like the typical ectomorphic marathoner. So, perhaps those of us who are not so hefty look at this and ask, "If I focused on lifting weights much more and gained a lot of muscle mass and strength, would I become a faster rower?"

Does absolute muscular strength matter for the rower? Absolutely. A rower must have OPTIMAL strength in every rowing muscle such that there is no

specific weakness that diminishes technique. So, will the rower with the best squat or seated row strength in the weight room (MAXIMAL STRENGTH) automatically be the best in the boat (or even on the ergometer)? Absolutely NOT. Bigger and stronger is not necessarily better (faster over 1000 meters +)

However, the question of weight training for the rower is more complicated than that.

Most rowing programs around the world incorporate a structured strength program of some type into the overall training program. However, the relative volume of these programs varies considerably, and some of the most successful rowing programs do almost no weight room based strength training. Even within one country's national team, these differences are evident. The very successful Men's sweep team in the US employs a very basic 3 day per week 30 minute program. The very successful Women's team trains on weights for two hour sessions twice per week. The far less successful US men's sculling team has often invested even more time in weight training, up to 40% of training volume. The backgrounds of the different US national team coaches helps to explain the difference. My experience has been that Soviet/Eastern European trained coaches invest a great deal of training volume in weight training. The traditional Eastern European approach seems to be, "when the athlete can perform 200 squats in the weight room with a heavy load, then they will be ready to tackle the 200+ hard strokes of a race." In my opinion, this has proven to be an ineffective training philosophy that is based on a poor understanding of the physiological limitations of

performance. Athletes who perform well in this environment do so in spite of the excessive weight training, not because of it. For many athletes injury and breakdown (along with too little water time) are the result. Perhaps one reason for this approach is that the background of many Eastern European trainers is Olympic weightlifting. We often see the highly ballistic Olympic lifts advocated by these coaches, despite the fact that the force-time sequencing of the rowing stroke is much different in character than an Olympic lift. If a rower rowed like he performs a power clean, the boat would move haltingly and slowly at best, despite tremendous exertion and accelerated fatigue by the rowers.

As best as I can tell, the training and the rowing stroke must conform with known physiology coupled with good biomechanics. My current perspective on the weight training issue is that the very best strength training for rowing happens in the boat or on the erg while rowing!

When you look around and see the popularity of weight training in the fitness industry and its devoted application by almost all professional sports teams, it is easy to assume that lots of weight training will help your rowing. When we consider weight training as a component of our overall program, we have to understand what the goals of the weight training really are. Here are some educated questions to ask. Will weight training improve my VO2 max, lactate threshold, or rowing economy? Will weight room increases in strength automatically transfer to improved force production at the oar? Can weight training detract from rowing performance?

Here is my slant on this issue. I base it on research, observation and personal experience. I am sure there will be some who disagree with my views, and I welcome your comments. **The performance limitations in rowing do not reside at the level of total muscle mass and maximal strength.** By now you guys know that. Laboratory research has demonstrated it. Indirectly we see it is true by the lack of correlation among national team candidates between anaerobic capacity (500m) and 2k or 6k erg score. Second, Strength is HIGHLY movement specific. Therefore, even if being stronger can make you faster, much of the weight training that is done in weight rooms across the rowing world does not transfer to the boat. In effect, these programs do not improve the functional strength of the rower in the boat. In general, it seems that the process of rowing itself is the best **specific** strength training for the rower. So, is it possible to create muscular overload that exceeds the normal rowing stroke during rowing? Yes. The suggestions I will make below are both from my own experience and from some good coaches. I offer them for your own inspection. What you will see with every exercise I recommend is that they are highly specific to rowing, both in terms of muscles used AND in terms of the pattern of force production. They also often directly incorporate elements of good rowing technique.

Besides direct performance enhancement, there are other reasons to employ a basic strength training program that make sense. One reason is to maintain muscular balance and reduce the risk of overuse injuries. Another is aimed at the over 55 crowd in whom muscle mass tends to diminish independent of endurance exercise

training. Strength training can greatly reduce this muscle atrophy that accompanies aging. It is important to recognize that the volume of training necessary to accomplish these goals is not very great. Remember, we should not let our weight training prevent us from that which is most critical to maintaining/improving rowing performance, namely rowing!

General Strength Preparation for the New Rower Weight Room Exercises

If you are a new rower who has come into the sport after a good endurance background in cycling or running, you may be initially frustrated by 1) technical problems, and 2) specific muscular weaknesses that prevent you from really being able to "empty the tanks" while rowing. These two problems are in many ways interrelated. Bad technique leads to premature fatigue of certain muscle parts. For example, if the leg drive is ineffective due to late blade entry and "missing water", the arms will prematurely fatigue as you attempt to accelerate the boat late in the drive. Conversely, if you have insufficient strength in the lower back (spinal extensors), maintaining a strong connection through the catch and mid-drive will be impossible.

Here are four good exercises for the beginning rower that address specific elements of the rowing stroke.

- **1. Close stance, high bar squats**

This is a normal back squat, with attention to two specific technique issues. First, place the feet at less than shoulder width,

preferably the same width as in the boat. Second, place the bar at the base of the neck (muscleheads call this the "high bar" position), not in a "low bar" powerlifting position. This high placement helps to ensure that you maintain an upright body position when you come out of the bottom of the squat.

The depth of the squat should be emphasized. I found that full, narrow stance squats were a good exercise because they allowed me to focus on an important component of the stroke in the weight room, unencumbered by other technical elements. That is the importance of a strong early engagement of the hips and quads at the deepest point of the catch, while maintaining a firm back.

Use a weight you can manage for 10 repetitions. The load need not be so great that you are "stalling" on the way up. We want to gain strength and motor coordination that has some resemblance to activities and force characteristics during the rowing stroke. In other words, squatting a moderate weight with good movement speed is more specific to rowing than doing very heavy squats that have you moving at a snail's pace.

- **2. One legged Squats**

This exercise is both very practical and very effective at curing several ills. Strength with balance is the mantra of the

rower, and these exercises are a reasonable weight room simulation. Find a high bench and stand on it so that one leg dangles over the outside edge. The bench needs to be high enough that your foot doesn't touch when your other leg is in a parallel or lower squat position. At first you probably should have something to secure your balance in front of you, like a wall. Now, lower yourself slowly into the squat position and stand up. At first, you may find that you can't go down under control to a thighs parallel position, but stay with it. Eventually, shoot for 3 sets of 10 to 15 repetitions each leg, with no touching the wall, and your thighs below parallel before coming up. I like this exercise for several reasons. 1) It can help to cure strength imbalances that are either neural or muscular in origin. It is not uncommon to have one leg that is doing more than its share of the work in the boat and not even realize it. 2) It's another way to work on whole body balance and fine coordination with big muscle groups. 3) In this exercise strength without balance and control is useless, just as in the boat.

- **3. Straight legged dead lifts**

This is a good basic preparatory lift for strengthening the back extensor muscles. Use a barbell. With your knees just slightly bent for safety and a very straight spine, grip the bar at shoulder width and pull up to your waist. Lower the weight along your

legs. If you do this lift correctly, your behind will stick out in back, counterbalancing your upper body leaning out in front of your center of gravity. Focus on keeping the spine straight as you raise and lower the weight with your hips. Keep the bar very close to the legs as you execute the lifts, and do the movement slowly. Three sets of 10 repetitions will do.

- **4. Seated row**


The reason this exercise is important is not to build up enough shoulder strength to allow you to arm wrestle your way down the course. Rather, by allowing the back musculature to stretch at the "catch" (start of the lift), you learn how to let the arms relax and the stronger upper back muscles take the load. This is an important element of good rowing technique. In addition you will build up the supporting shoulder girdle musculature that is not well developed by cycling, running etc.

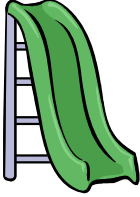
The key focus of this exercise should be to begin the pull with the back, not the arms. If done correctly you will feel stretch in the "lats" and less burning in the biceps and forearms.

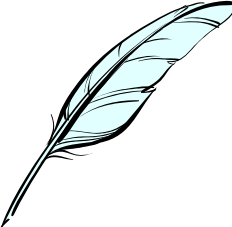
These basic exercises, in conjunction with a few others for non-rowing muscles and the abdominals represent a safe weight program independent of rowing performance goals. However, for the competitive rower, I think other methods of

specific strength training have greater potential benefit.

In the next issue, part 2 of this article will cover strength training on the ergometer and strength training on the water.

Catch a  ?

Jump the  ?

 the blade ?
Sit ready at the

 ?

  ?

 stretcher ?

Row on the  ?

Is it all ΩΦΘΨΣ to you?

Then you need the **WBC Learn-to-Row Program.**

Each WBC Learn-to-Row (sweep) session for men and women will be held for 3 weeks
Monday and Wednesday classes will be from 6 to 7:30 pm.
Saturday classes will be in the a.m. (TBD)

May 27, 30
June 1, 3, 6, 8, 10, 13, 15

Charge for each session (9 classes) is \$300.
Sessions will be held at the Whitmarsh Boat Club, 801 Washington Street, Conshohocken. For directions and more information about WBC, go to www.whitmarshboatclub.org.

Space is limited so advance registration is required.
Wear comfortable clothes and sneakers. Also, bring a non-disposable water bottle.

Please print out this page and the next, fill in the information below and send along with a check (made payable to Whitmarsh Boat Club) for \$300 to
Whitmarsh Boat Club
PO Box 944
Conshohocken, PA 19428

Questions? Contact whitmarshboatclub@gmail.com
Please feel free to forward this information to any friends who might be interested.

**Registration for Whitemarsh Boat
Club 2009
Learn-to-Row Program**

Name _____

I will attend

Phone number

E-mail address

