

SRC SQUAD TRAINING

Theme Sheet - catches on the ergo

Sliding exercises should have ensured that you are sliding properly and delivering yourself to the right position to take the catch. Remember the key objective is to ensure that you can get into the correct position at the catch:

- Shins vertical, no gap between thighs and body;
- Lower back set at catch;
- Body in pre-stretched position;

On the ergo, the aim of the catch is to pick up the wheel in the same way that you would place the blade in the water at the point of maximum reach. As you prepare for each catch think of the following:

- Arms relaxed and stable;
- Shoulders relaxed and low, not around your ears;
- Handle level (do not drop the hands before the catch).

To take the catch the hands need to move up and forward to pick up the wheel (equivalent to dropping the blade into the water). Shoulder muscles will rise slightly.

Remember

- Handle should rise only to the top of the tape mark on the ergo;
- If training in a group, watch other group members to ensure you are in time.

Avoid

- Speeding up the slide immediately before the catch;
- Over-reaching and using the shoulders to initiate the catch;
- Reaching further forward once you have reached front stops (we usually refer to this as "reaching for the extra bit");
- Driving the legs before the catch, resulting in you missing the first part (quarter) of the stroke;
- Hesitating at the catch rather than having a smooth transition from the recovery to catch. This will result in loss of co-ordination of the leg drive;
- Bending the arms at the catch and during the first half of the stroke.

The catch is the most difficult part of the stroke to execute and failure to get it right is probably the greatest cause of loss of ergo score. This is particularly the case during racing when people try to increase pressure and rate. There is a loss of length of stroke, the ratio between stroke and recovery changes and people start to rush.

Ergo Exercises

- Picking up the first six inches of the stroke by raising the hands and beginning to drive the legs. The angle of forward lean of the body should not vary during this exercise. Check to ensure:
- Shins vertical, no gap between thighs and body;
- Lower back set at catch;
- Body in pre-stretched position - check full length.

We often combine a minute of this exercise with one minute of "straight arms no body lean", "straight arms with body lean" and "normal stroke with exaggerated hands away and reach forward within a twenty minute steady state ergo piece. The "straight arms no body lean" is a natural extension of the "first six inches" exercise.

Feet out

- Row with feet out of the straps. This encourages relaxation and stability on the way forward.