

What is Adaptive Rowing?

Prepared by the RCA National
Adaptive Rowing Committee

Outline

- Adaptive Rowing:
What and Why
- Equipment
- Rower Classification
- Getting Started
- Coaching
- Safety
- Competition
- Information Sources



Rowing is.....

“To me it is the incredibly beautiful sensation of gliding over the water, it is the rhythm of sliding into the catch, the pleasant tiredness when I finally tie up at the dock – it is the air, the birds, the other boats going by, the camaraderie of other rowers...”

George Szasz, 73+ recreational rower, B.C.

Why Rowing? It's Adaptable!

- Seated position
- Don't need your legs
- Can row fast or slow
- Can row for short periods and take a rest
- Rowing is safe – little risk of injury
- Provides significant therapeutic benefits
- Does not require verbal communication
- Provides a great sense of freedom
- And its **FUN!**



Rowing for All

Benefits to Club

- Strengthens community involvement
- Increases membership
- Enhances Club pride and reputation
- Greater opportunity for media exposure
- Creates opportunities for grants and funding
- Adaptive rowing equipment is also suitable for Learn to Row programs and Touring

Basic Equipment

- Ergometer
- Dock-side trainer
- Rowing shells
(recreation equipment is best, e.g. Hudsons, Aldens, etc.)
- Clamps to fix seat
- Duct tape and velcro



Advanced Equipment

- Support Seats
- Stabilizing pontoons
- Transfer boxes
- Lifting equipment



Model B Ergometer Adaptation



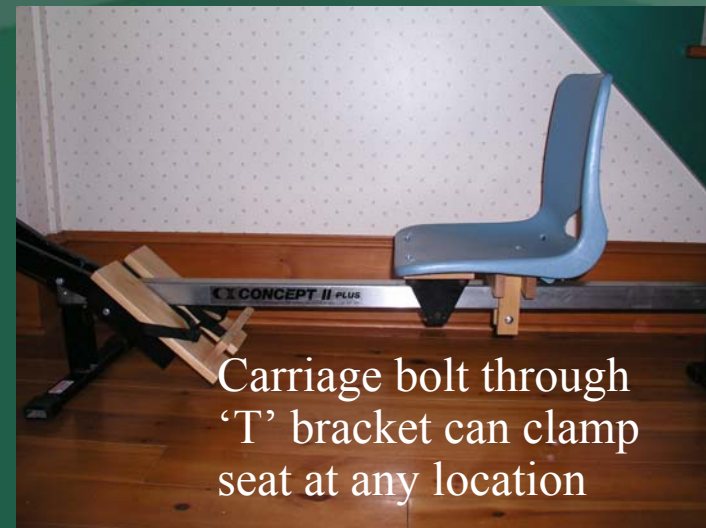
•Replace seat with wood base



Attach 'T' shaped wood bracket to underside of seat



Attach front of seat to wood base



Carriage bolt through 'T' bracket can clamp seat at any location

Disability Classification

- **Leg/Trunk/Arms (LTA)**
 - Row with full rowing stroke
 - People with: MS, visual impairments, CP, intellectual disability
- **Trunk/Arms (TA)**
 - Row with body swing and arms with fixed seat
 - People with MS, leg amputations, paraplegia
- **Arms (A)**
 - Row with arms and fixed seat
 - People with no functional use of their legs and requiring back support



Getting Started

- **Start small and don't overextend**
- **Determine your Club capabilities**
- **Establish program structure**
 - **Similar to Learn to Row, e.g. 8 sessions**
 - **Set time every week, e.g. Saturday mornings**
 - **Designated weekends**
- **Determine budget and funding**
- **Establish dates and prepare brochure**

Getting Started (cont'd)



- **Recruit co-ordinator and volunteers**
- **Contact community or support organizations**
- **Arrange Open House/Orientation Session**
- **Publicize your program in the local media**
- **Be prepared to be flexible**

Interview Potential Participants

- What are their objectives
- Previous recreation/sporting activities
- Type of disability
- Assessment of special needs
- Swimming ability
- Is there a relative or friend who would like to participate with them
- Do they have transportation to and from the boathouse



Coaching Strategies

- Similar to any Learn to Row
- Coach and participant expectations aligned
- Recognize small gains
- Look at the big picture and avoid the details
- Be flexible and creative
- Gauge success in terms of participant satisfaction



Coaching Tips



- Don't stereotype
- Communicate but avoid talking too much
- Provide feedback
- Seek feedback
- Maintain control
- Use humour and keep it light
- Involve volunteers
- Provide individual attention
- Avoid over-protection
- Explain task goals
- Be patient

Safety – Around the Boat House

- Maintain an emergency response plan
- Keep boathouse and dock area clear of trip hazards
- Improve boathouse accessibility
- Provide all new members with safety orientation, e.g. location of wash rooms, drinking water, first aid kit, etc.



Safety – On the Water

- Never take risks with weather or water conditions – if in doubt, cancel the practice
- Talk to participants about what to do in an emergency situation – this is being professional not alarmist
- Always have a safety boat within visual range of crew
- Safety boat should have experienced (and licensed) operator and appropriate safety equipment on board
- Give participants the option of wearing PFD's while rowing
- As coach, always have a plan to deal with any situation

If you don't know the participants' capabilities, keep initial practices short and encourage them to let the cox know if they want to take a break

Rowing for All



Competitive Rowing

- More and more regattas are including adaptive rowing events, such as the Royal Canadian Henley and the World Championships
- Provide opportunities for adaptive participants to advance and to integrate



Rowing for All

Typical Competitive Rowing Events

- 4+ LTA (mixed gender)
 - Coxed four for crew that uses legs, trunk and arms, two male and two female (cox can be male or female)
- 2x TA (mixed gender)
 - Double scull with male and female crew who only use trunk and arms, i.e. fixed seat
- 1xA (male and female)
 - Single scull with rower that uses arms only. Boat equipped with special fixed seat

Bayada Regatta, Philadelphia

- Held in early September
- Specifically for rowers with disabilities
- Well organized
- All boats supplied
- First Canadian crew participated in 2003



Rowing for All

Integration

- Adaptive rowing participants should be encouraged to integrate into all club programs
- They should also be encouraged to become active in the Club administration
- Social events are particularly useful in removing barriers



Further Information sources

- Rowing Canada
 - www.rowingcanada.org/en/sport/adaptive/index.html
- Hudson Recreational/Adaptive Boats
 - www.hudsonboatworks.com/
- Pacific West Rowing
 - www.pwrow.com/adaptive.html
- Alden Rowing Shells
 - www.rowalden.com
- Three Rivers Rowing Association
 - www.threeriversrowing.org/

Contacts

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