Prince William Rowing Club

Issue 10
February 28, 2006

WAY 'NUFF – PWRC'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Upcoming Events

Learn-to-Row Days

	Sun	**4/30**
	Sun	**6/4**
(National LTR Day)	**Sat**	**6/10**

From the President.....

..... Mike David

Fellow Members -

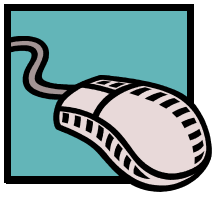
Good news ----- the high school rowers are officially "on the water" so our season is just a few months away. My thanks to all those members who donated their time to help with the dock construction -- it looks great.

Your board will spend the next few months preparing for the season by organizing a coaching staff and by looking at ways to incorporate feedback we've received from the general membership. Please feel free to forward your good ideas and suggestions to any of the board members (you can hit us all with the address pwrcBoard@pwrc.org).

Our first planned Learn-to-Row day will be in late April ..... updated information on the coming season will be on the website in the coming weeks.

I'll see many of you at the High School Erg Sprints this weekend.

Mike



This link will lead you to an interesting article, jointly prepared by Masters Rowing Association and the Rower's Almanac, featuring rowing clubs around the United States. It includes information on clubs which allow guest rowing, plus "rowing friendly" restaurants and sightseeing points of interest as well. Sadly, northern Virigina doesn't feature in this, although the main Washington DC rowing clubs are listed. This is a great resource for those who travel outside of our rowing area.

http://www.rowersalmanac.com/articles_1.html

Demystifying the Drag Factor

by Mayrene EarleI *posted on www.concept2.com*

Now that rowers in northern parts of the country are well into erg season, I've been hearing a lot of questions from masters about the so-called drag factor. What is it? How do I set it? What do I set it at? Why did Concept2 develop the drag factor anyway?

Let's start at the beginning. What is this mysterious thing called drag factor? On its Web site, Concept2 explains that drag factor ***"is a numerical value for the rate at which the flywheel is decelerating. The number changes with the volume of air that passes through the flywheel housing. Since higher damper settings allow more air into the flywheel housing, the flywheel decelerates more quickly, resulting in a higher drag factor value."***

Here's another way to understand it. On any erg, various factors affect the speed of the flywheel, including the temperature and density of the air, wind and a dirty flywheel, to name a few. Drag factor allows each erg to compensate for these variables to create level conditions on different ergs.

Wow. For us fossils who have been around rowing forever, this is pretty fancy stuff. Certainly we've come a long way since the Gamut ergs, with their distinctive zhinnggggg dinnnggggg dinnnggggg dinnnggggg, zhinnnnggggg dinnnggggg dinnggg dinnggg sound.

Of course, the real question rowers want answered is what is the magic number for drag? The answer is there is no magic number. It's different for everyone. Where you set your drag factor will depend on your own size, weight and conditioning level, as well as the size boat you row.

That said, you should set the drag so the feeling of your drive on the rowing machine is as close to possible as your experience on the water. In general, scullers will need a higher drag due to the slower leg speed on the drive in a single. Those who row in an eight will have a lower drag, reflecting the faster drive speed.

To give masters specific rowers parameters for setting the drag factor, I asked various masters and coaches to share their experiences. Here's what I learned. A 45+ male lightweight rower told me he rows with a drag of 115-120. He used to row around 130, but as he ages, he's discovered that he has to watch the stress he puts on his back. A 35+ lightweight male told me he likes to row with low resistance of 100 because it feels more like being on the water and is easier on his back. A 60+ lightweight woman rows between 100 and 110, and a 50+ heavyweight woman rows at 120.

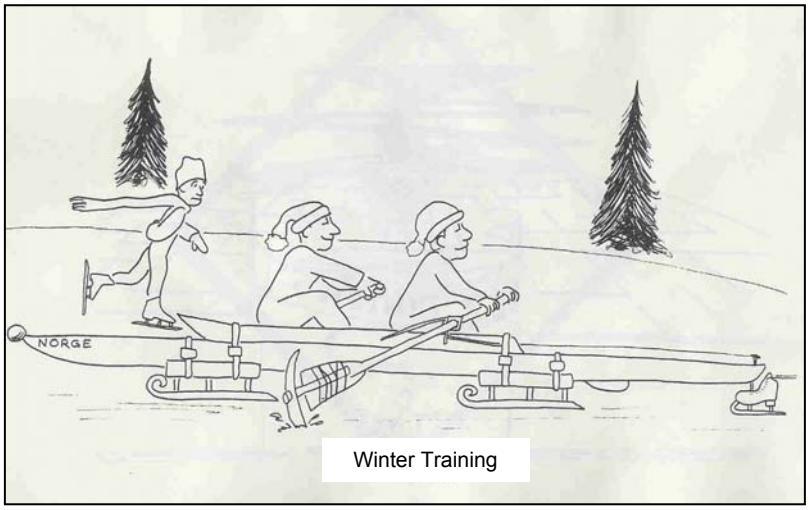
At MIT, the heavyweight men row at 130-133. Coach Gordon Hamilton told me he likes his team to emphasize quickness, regardless of the type of workout, unless they are doing a specific power workout. At the University of Tennessee, the varsity women test at 122, because that's the national team standard. They lower the drag to 115-118 for steady state pieces. Casey Baker from FIT points out that Rob Waddell won the CRASH B's with the drag set as low as 99!!!

You'll find a chart of recommended drag factors at www.concept2.co.uk/guide/guide.php?article=damper_lever.

But all of these are guidelines only. This is not an exact science. However, you should find that setting the drag factor at the right level gives you a comfortable ratio with maximum power transfer.

"Everyone has the desire to win, but only champions have the desire to prepare."

Overheard during the 1997 Boston Marathon



Winter Training

2006 PWRC Board Members

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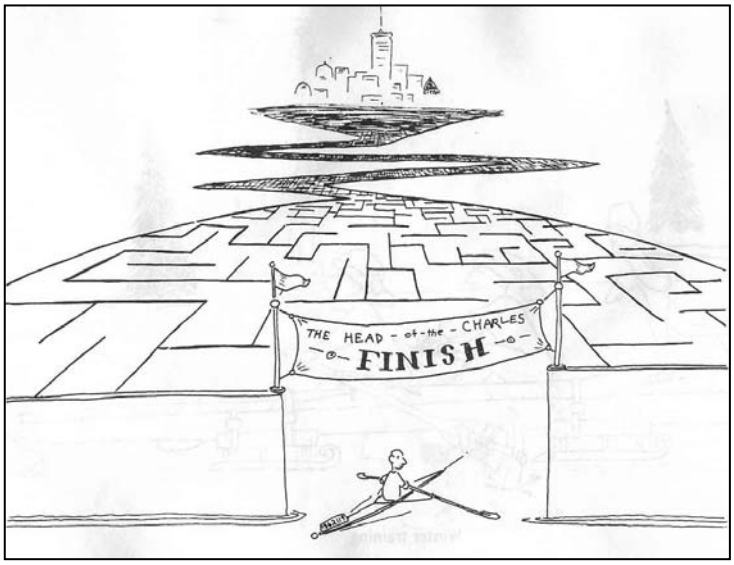
Communications Director (website/publicity)	**Nalini Rhea**

Editor's Note: E-mail your suggestions & ideas for future editions to Nalini Rhea at info@pwrc.org

Winning medals is good, racing is better, loving the sport is best.

Brad de Grandis



Picture of the Month

Photo by Mike Lee