How to Paddle FASTER

TIPS FOR OPTIMAL TRAINING

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Table of Contents

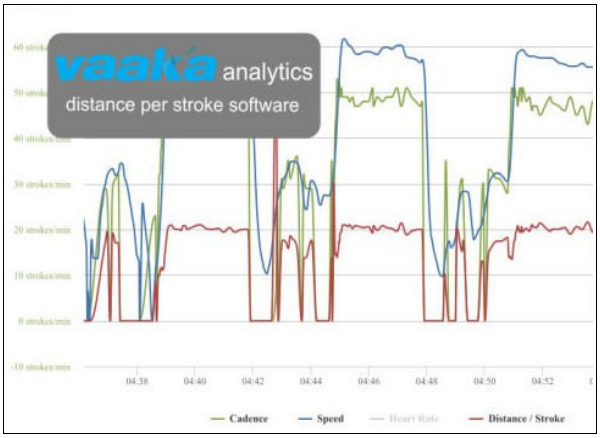
Illustration 1: New Zealand womens K4 training for the Rio Olympics

Boat speed = stroke rate x distance per stroke.

'You can't manage what you don't measure'. - W.E. Deming

1 Stroke rate and distance per stroke

Whether you are a rower, sculler, outrigger paddler, canoeist, stand up paddle boarder or a kayak athlete there are really only two things you can do to go faster. You can increase your strokes per minute and you can achieve more distance through the water from each stroke. Is it really that simple? Anyone involved as a coach or competitor in one of these sports will tell you NO! And of course they are right. Peak performance is an art just as much as it is a science, like baking the ideal cake, you need all the correct ingredients, but then you need experience, skill and attention to detail to achieve the result you want.



Achieving a sustained increase in stroke rate or generating more distance from every stroke requires dedicated training, cardiovascular fitness, endurance, strength, suppleness and exceptional technique with the ability to apply all these attributes when on the water. The training goal is more speed but when an athlete gets onto the water to compete, stroke rate and distance per stroke are the only two variables that matter. So bearing this in mind it makes sense to measure stroke rate and distance per stroke, to help identify strengths and weaknesses, to inform the type of training you need to do and to monitor and measure progress.

Illustration 2: Stroke rate is displayed alongside other training metrics on your GPS device

How can you identify weaknesses and work to improve them and what are your strengths that will take you to new peaks? What combination of stroke rate and distance per stroke is optimal for your unique blend of strength and fitness? What specific training do you need to do to improve your stroke rate or improve your distance per stroke? How do you know if you are making progress?

The following chapters will briefly explain the basics of how feedback on stroke rate and distance per stroke can generate more boat speed. There in never just one path to success so you may also have your own ideas on how to make use of this new exciting technology.

[Expect the next chapter by email in 1 week!]