

## Winter Training Guide Part 4 – Gym Training

### *Circuit training*

The club runs a weekly circuit training session at eight o'clock on Wednesday evenings during the winter at the Hill Centre, Tunnel Hill, Upton, and attendance at this is highly recommended.

This is very effective in increasing your cardiovascular fitness as well as general muscular endurance. It is clearly less rowing-specific than ergo sessions but complements it very well by adding a broader dimension to your body conditioning.

If you are unable to attend these sessions you may want to consider running and cycling as alternative ways of developing broader cardiovascular fitness

### *Strength training*

None of the above forms of training is particularly good for developing muscle bulk and power. For that to be achieved, the use of heavy weights is the best method. This must be done in a properly equipped gym under good supervision, because otherwise there can be a significant risk of injury, particularly if you are using free weights rather than multigym equipment.

In order to develop strength, you should be doing small numbers of repetitions with weights close to the maximum you can lift (once) for each exercise. Among the exercises you should include are dead lift, power clean, bench press, pull-up to bench, full or half-squats, sit-ups and back extensions. As with other forms of training, there are many sources of advice on the web, including the Concept 2 site. Here is another example: <http://www.sport-fitness-advisor.com/weighttrainingprograms3.html>.

NB – It is particularly important that you warm up properly before undertaking any training with heavy weights.

### *Core stability and flexibility*

Core stability comes from the development of the various muscles around the abdomen and spinal column with a view to sustaining and improving your posture while rowing. This both helps to protect you from injury and makes your rowing more effective – it allows you to transmit the full effect of your leg drive through the rest of your body so as to engage with the oar handle without losing some of the power because of a weak posture.

Again there is substantial material on this subject on the web and elsewhere. Here is a link to the Rowperfect website: <https://www.rowperfect.co.uk/an-introduction-to-core-strength-for-rowing-static-exercises/>

Developing your flexibility is also important. Good rowing technique requires you to operate freely through a long range of movement, and if you are stiff or inflexible – for example in your hamstrings – you will not be able to row an effective and powerful stroke. In addition, lack of flexibility increases the risk of injury or strain. This link <http://www.sport-fitness-advisor.com/flexibility-exercises.html> contains some examples of stretching exercises you might consider. Again, there are many more sources.