

ROWING 
NEW ZEALAND

WORLD ROWING

2017 YOUTH COACHES CONFERENCE

NOEL DONALDSON



– MEN'S HEAD COACH

“Pathway from juniors, through U23 up to Elite level – what are the pitfalls on this way?”

KIWI PAIR



Hamish Bond and Eric Murray

(Coach 2013 - 2016)

***But more time spent working with athletes
from school to Olympics for 40 years!!***

Case study examples from: New Zealand and Australia

- **PATHWAY ESSENTIALS:**
 - **RECRUITMENT**
 - **DEVELOPMENT**
 - **RETENTION**

Recruitment

- **AUSTRALIA:** (country of 24 million)
 - **SECONDARY SCHOOLS** (Primary target, higher % are 18 years old at completion; ie not Junior age)
 - **FORMAL TALENT ID PROGRAMS**
 - **CROSS SPORT ATHLETES** (Kim Brennan)
 - **UNIVERSITY**

Recruitment – Pathways (Teams)

- **AUSTRALIA:**

- **JUNIOR**

- **Mixture School and Club athletes**

- Majority of school leavers are too old for Junior
 - Upon selection usually looked after by State Institutes

- **Nationally lead programs by RA**

- **De centralised (7 States – geographically large country)**

- Live at home, attend school/university/employment
 - Pay for tour expenses
 - More difficult to monitor standard
 - Not always best crews at this age due to location

Recruitment – Pathways (Teams)

- **AUSTRALIA: (cont.)**

- *UNDER 21*

- *Australia and New Zealand compete annually (2) with teams of 10 men and 10 women*
- *Pay tour expenses*

- **UNDER 23**

- **Usually identified athletes from the State Institute pool (from Clubs, past Juniors and past U21's)**
- **Young athletes in National Training Centres (2 – M/W)**
- **Pay tour expenses**

- **ELITE**

- **Only from the National Training Centres (Centralise programs)**
- **Athletes progress from Under age teams or identified athletes from the State Institutes**
- **Returning athletes from USA universities**
- **Generally fully funded (semi professional athletes)**

Recruitment

- **NEW ZEALAND:** (country of 4.7 million)
 - **SECONDARY SCHOOLS** (Very high percentage of all teams – outstanding Secondary School's Annual Regatta; excellent liaison with Clubs)
 - **UNIVERSITY/CLUB/TALENT TRANSFER** (very low numbers; eg Mahe D)





Recruitment – Pathways (Teams)

- **NEW ZEALAND:**

- **JUNIOR**

- **Mixture mainly School and very few RPC/Club athletes**

- Identified from Secondary School's Regatta (wider event base)
 - Previous year Under 18 North/South Island competition.
 - Often quite young teams

- **Centralised program**

- Athletes from all over the country
 - 6 weeks live in camp program at Lake Karapiro
 - Supervised and integrated school program while on camp
 - Fully exposed to a High Performance environment
 - Pay tour expenses

Recruitment – Pathways (Teams)

- **NEW ZEALAND:**

- *UNDER 21*

- *Australia and New Zealand compete annually (2) with teams of 10 men and 10 women*
 - *Pay tour expenses*

- **UNDER 23**

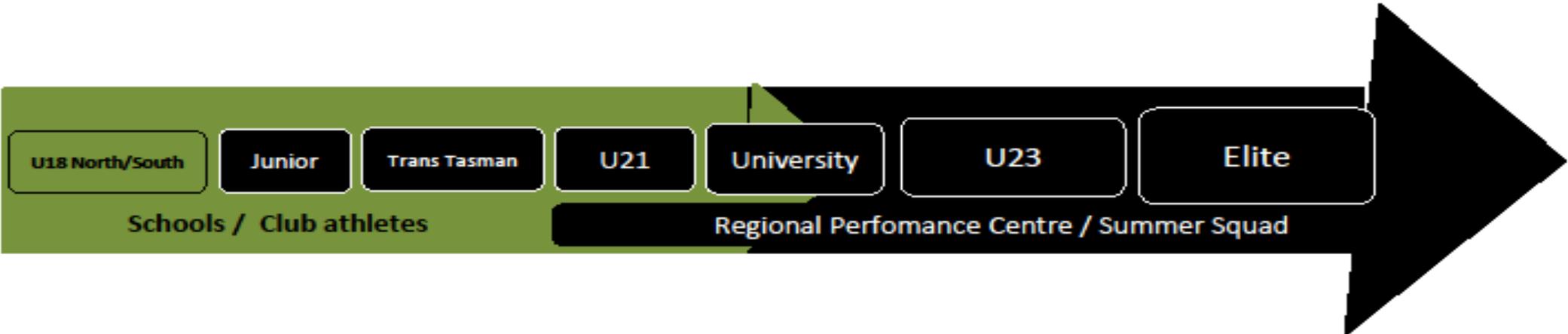
- **Identified athletes from regionally based RPC's (4)**
 - **Very few Club (wild card) athletes**
 - **Pay tour expenses**

- **ELITE**

- **Only from the RPC's (Centralised Summer Squad and regional RPC's)**
 - **Athletes progress usually from Under age teams**
 - **Generally fully funded (semi professional athletes)**



HIGH PERFORMANCE PATHWAY



Australian pathway information

[https://www.rowingaustralia.com.au/
hp-development-program/](https://www.rowingaustralia.com.au/hp-development-program/)

Recruitment

- **“PROBABLY THE KEY TO SUCCESS!!”**
- **MIXTURE OF PHYSICAL TALENT AND COMPETITIVE INSTINCT.** (Must have one key attribute, better if more. No \$'s for TID.)
- **CAPTURE THEM WHILE THEY ARE CAPTIVE!**
- **8 YEAR PRINCIPLE** (Patience and Governments change)

Development

- **NEW ZEALAND:**

- Generally select many repeat athletes from an early age. Young but not inexperienced Elite teams.
- Common for athletes retained to go through ALL year levels.

- **AUSTRALIA:**

- Larger population and geography, often structure changes means more turn over of athletes. (May change in future.)
- Smaller % of continuing athletes, wider selection base.

Development (very similar opportunities)

- **COACHING:**

- **Consistency and Structure**

- Full time professional/National Centre coaches work all year with the Elite athletes
 - RPC (NZ) / SIS (Aus) full time coaches work with Under 23's
 - School / Club (usually Full Time) coaches work with Juniors
 - Develop expertise relevant to age group and competition needs.
 - Under pinning programs in place by RNZ/RA.

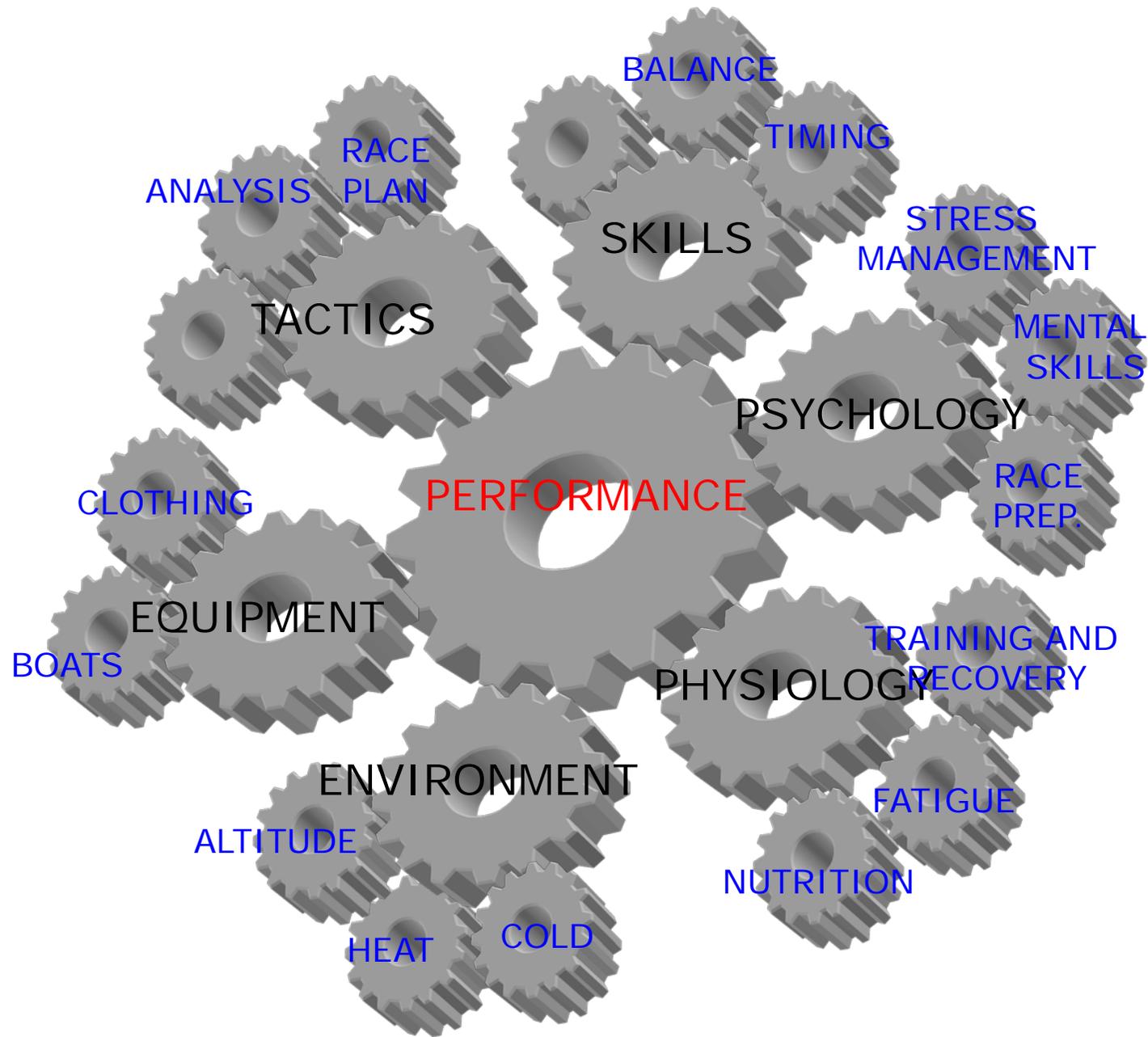
Athlete Performance Support

- Strength and conditioning
- Nutrition
- Mental skills and sports psychology
- Physiology
- Performance and Technique Analysis Unit
- Rehabilitation
- Medicine
- Performance planning
- Overseas support

OTHER

- PM Scholarships
- PEGs – Performance Enhancement Grants





(WENGER, 1990)

Development

- **ATHLETE PERFORMANCE SUPPORT:**

- Tailored to the age group's needs and availability.
- Increase level of service through the pathway.
- Learn to be an elite athlete.

- **NEGATIVES:**

- Athletes take it for granted. (“Spoon fed”)
- Many don't pursue things for themselves.
- Lifestyle!!

Development – expectations (goals)

• GRADED GOALS:

– JUNIORS:

- NZ, Final A standard (review this)
- Some long term development athletes

– UNDER 23:

- Final A standard with some medals
- Retention to RPC's or promotion to "Summer Squad" (learn more)

– ELITES:

- NZ, "Strategic Plan" Agreed Final A and medal numbers in only Olympic class boats
- Aus, include Paralympic (and under pinning Non Olympic events)

Development

- **GRADED DEVELOPMENT:**

- **PHYSICAL**

- Load (strength and endurance) management
 - Guided by a Periodised Plan for each age group (copy)
 - Injury management

- **TIME MANAGEMENT**

- Rest, recovery, enjoyment
 - The need for studies or work (Under age pay!!)

- **SKILLS**

- Increase skill ability over time
 - Exposure to sweep and sculling
 - Big and small boat balance

Outline to the specifics of the training phases

- **BASE**
- **GENERAL CONDITIONING (GC1 and GC2)**
- **SPECIFIC CONDITIONING (SC1 to SC3)**
- **TAPER**
- **RECOVERY WEEKS**
- **GENERAL**
- **OTHER**

Retention

- **NZ – SMALL POPULATION:**
 - Giving the same athletes multiple international exposures.
- **POSITIVE EXPERIENCES:**
 - Athletes enjoy representing the “Silver Fern”
 - They get paid, it’s their job.
 - We care, provide supporting structures for education and future work experience.
 - We are trying to understand the needs of the “Millenials”
 - More engaging, feedback, etc.
 - Can’t afford to lose them

Retention

- **PROBLEMS / ISSUES / NEGATIVES (NZ):**
 - Alternatives in sport or life (fear?)
 - Burn out, intense school programs
 - USA college “global” education (currently not working for NZ)
 - Socio economic and family situation
 - Retain “lifestylers”
 - Some early developers don’t progress
 - Inappropriate management of “Millenials”.
 - Selected out or just give up (despite best efforts) – IT’S NOT THAT EASY!!

Progressⁿ monitors - train^s & race^s

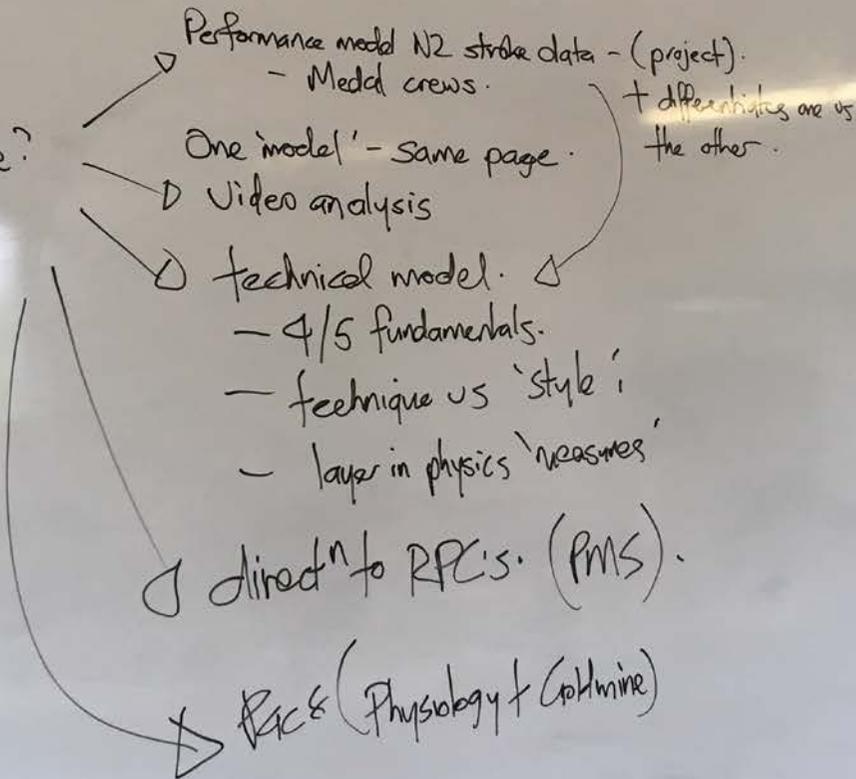
'Game' knowledge - deepen understanding @ sport.
- Performance models - 'join the 'discipline' dots.
- Physics models.

Steps tie back into bigger picture?

1. What do we need to measure?

2. What's the next thing to build deeper knowledge?

P.T.A.



IDEA's

Combine force gates & rower (CPR)
foot plate - combining follow-ups.
- telemetered.
Performance Model stroke (boat specific).

Centralised data.

- design framework.
- NZ vs World.

PTA/Physiologists - consolidate existing work.

Consistent software to capture data.

PTA can add to Pac^s data.



WIRELESS

RNZ Athletes

WORD: GoldM3dals

Technique – the big picture

Purpose

- **Consistency of Technique**
- **Systematic Teaching and Appraisal of Basic Rowing Technique**
- **Technique vs Training Implications**
- **Integrated Approach on and Off the Water**

Technique – the big picture

Key Ideas

Power Phase Sequencing

Recovery Sequencing

Posture

Grips

Blade Work

Balance

Stroke Length

Rhythm and Ratio

Timing

Correct Rigging

Feedback Aids

TECHNICAL ESSENTIALS

Technical descriptions endorsed by Rowing New Zealand High Performance Coaching Staff. Photos: Andrew Matheson, RNZ High Performance Manager, Sculler: Mahé Drysdale, 2005, 2006, 2007 World Champion Men Single, World's Fastest Time 2006.



CATCH/ENTRY

Place blade in water at farthest reach. Cover the blade quickly in one motion. Hands move to execute catch - keep shoulders/body from lifting.



DRIVE 1A

Start drive with LEGS. Body connects hands to feet; holds pressure.



DRIVE 1B

Connect the legs at same instance as blade enters the water. Bodyweight suspended off handle.



DRIVE 2

Body and arms naturally blend into leg drive to maintain pressure.



DRIVE 3

Blade(s) taken out of water still under some pressure. Handles pulled almost as wide as shoulders.

“I have always found that telling a beginner to watch his blade, and to make it cut through, will in five minutes, bring him to manipulating his blade correctly, whereas, when working through the body and not the blade, I found it used to take fully two years of teaching body form to get the same truly controlled movement of the blade, which means the same true working of the body. “This is not exaggeration. I used to tub for body form at first, and I noticed the truly drawn blade only began to show regularly at the end of the second year, and now, coaching for watching the blade, I can get the same true blade in ten minutes. So the best way to get the blade to work truly through the water is to watch it; and to make it feather high and carry forward truly and evenly is also to watch it. Further, watch your blade moving evenly through the air freely, away from the water, and sometimes waggle it in the air to sense the feeling that the blade is in your hands. This feeling will give you a true balance.”
Steve Fairbairn, *Some Secrets of Successful Rowing* in: Ian Fairbairn (ed.), *Steve Fairbairn on Rowing*, 1951, pp. 282-283



Blade Entering



Blade in and loaded.



RELEASE

In rowing the outside hand takes blade out of water. Inside hand feathers the blade. In sculling, feather mostly with fingers.



RECOVERY 6

Blade(s) squared before arriving at Catch.



RECOVERY 5

Seat rolls in behind ankles until shins vertical. (Thighs rise to chest.)



RECOVERY 4

Catch position with body by half slide. Body stays relaxed and stable to frontstop.



RECOVERY 2/3

R2: Relaxed body pivots from hips. Maintain good posture. R3: Hold legs until the handle(s) clear(s) knees without interference.



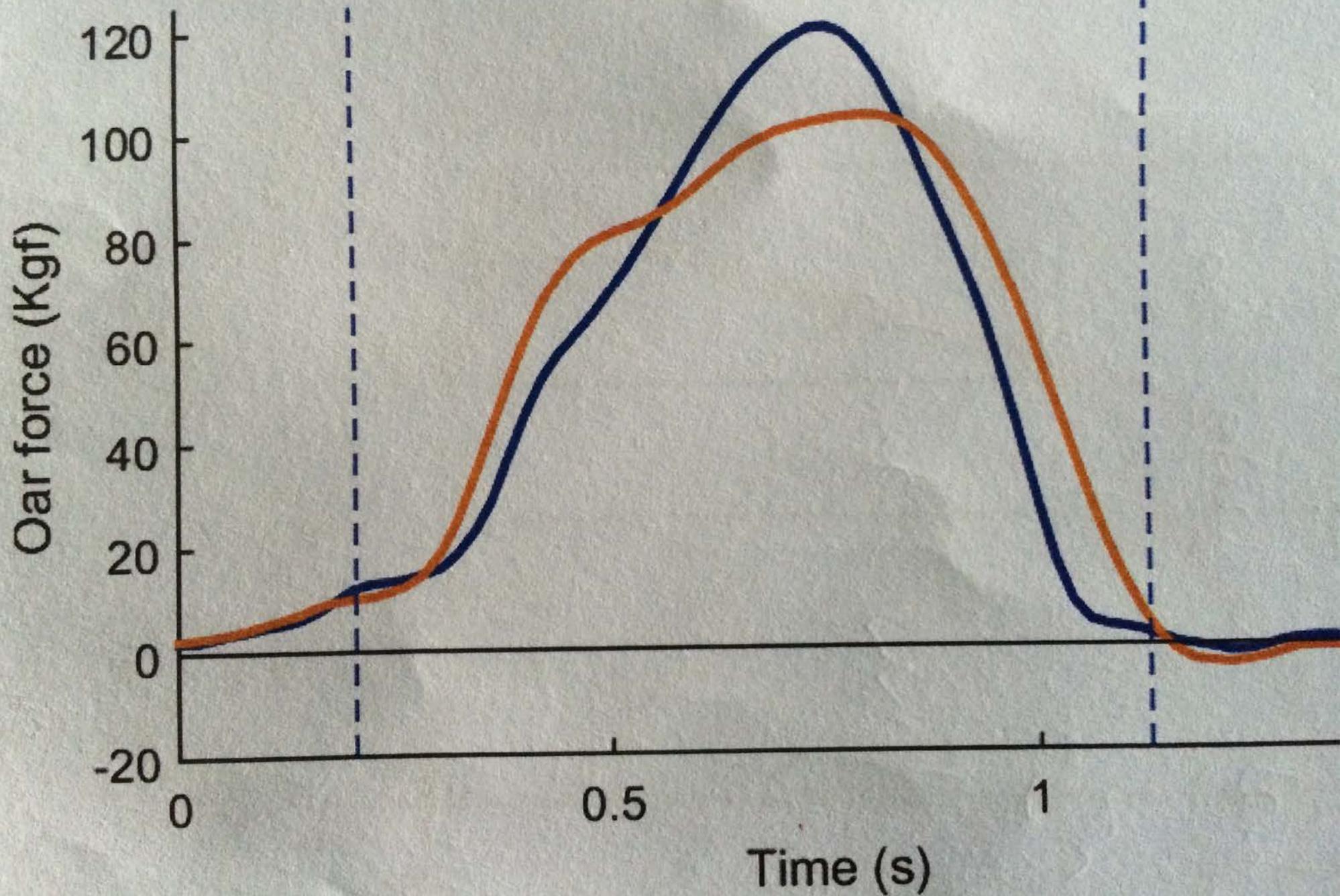
RECOVERY 1

Hands lead away. Body led away by relaxed, straight arms.

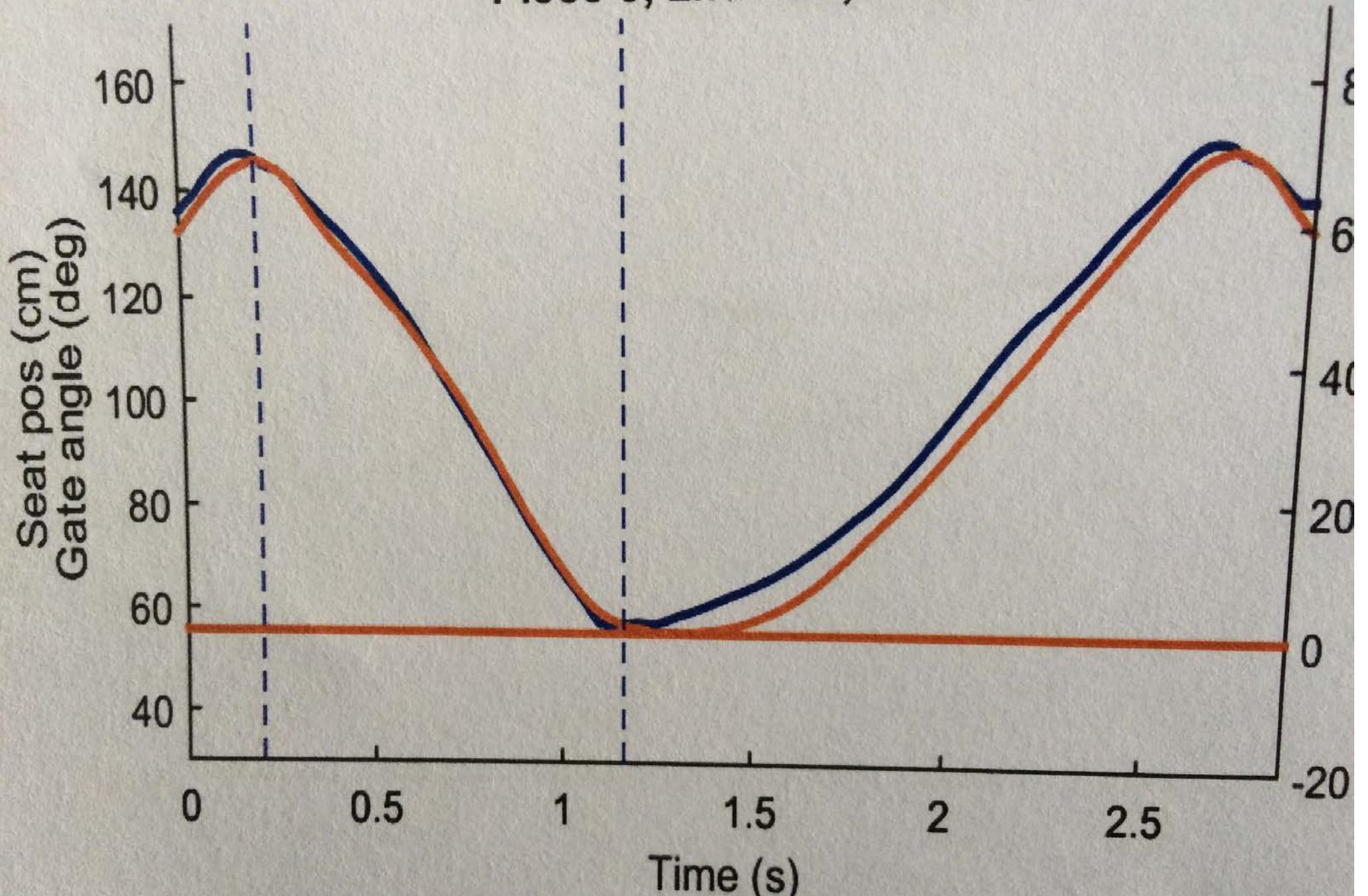
Rowing New Zealand gratefully acknowledges the support of the following:



Piece 2, 2nd half, r26.4



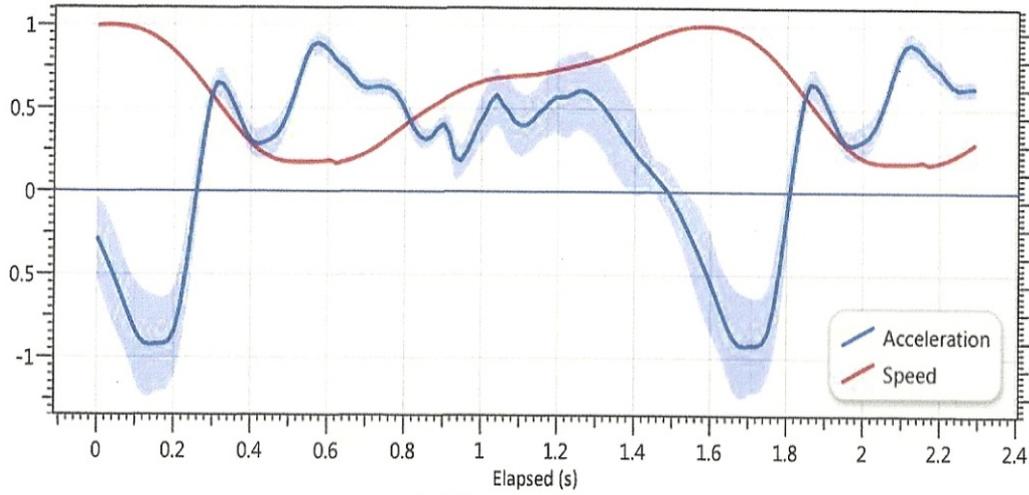
Piece 3, 2nd half, r24.4



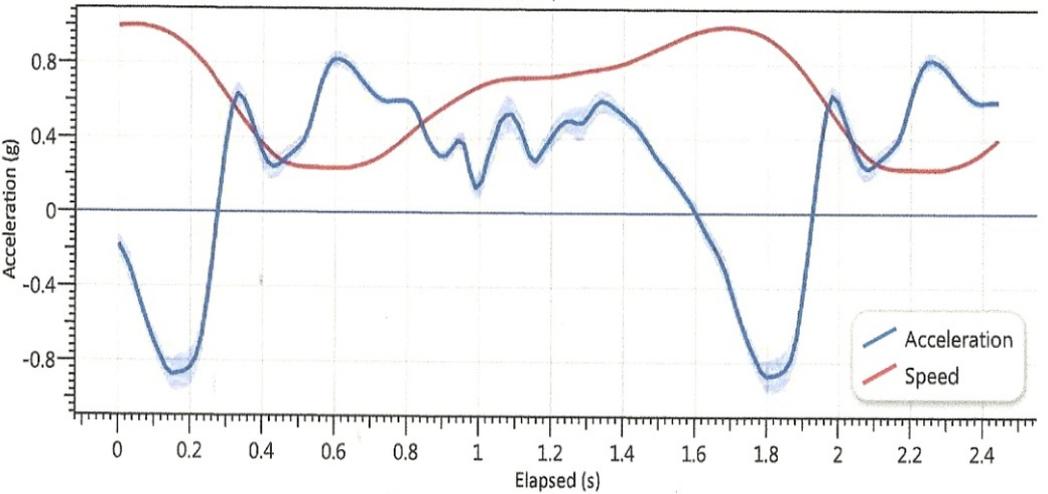
Options

Acceleration/Speed vs Stroke Elapsed

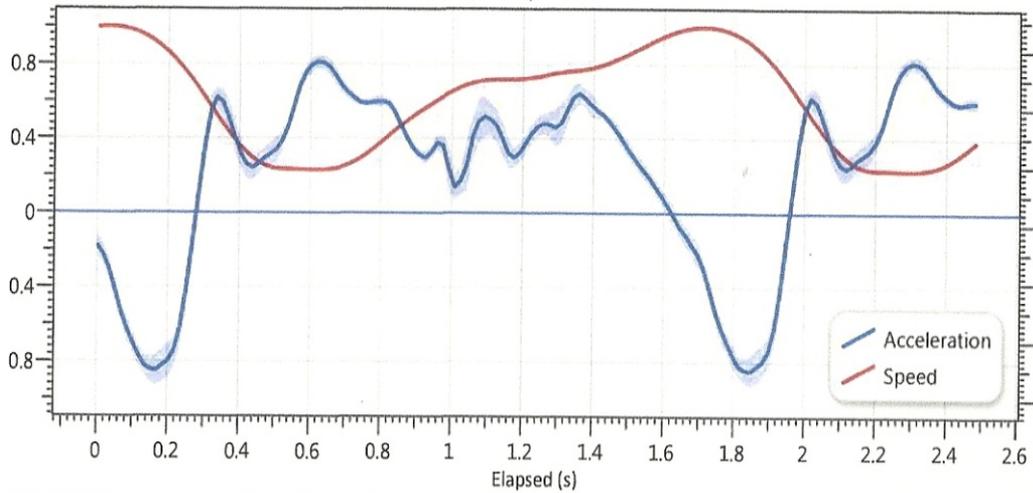
1st Quarter, SR 39.8



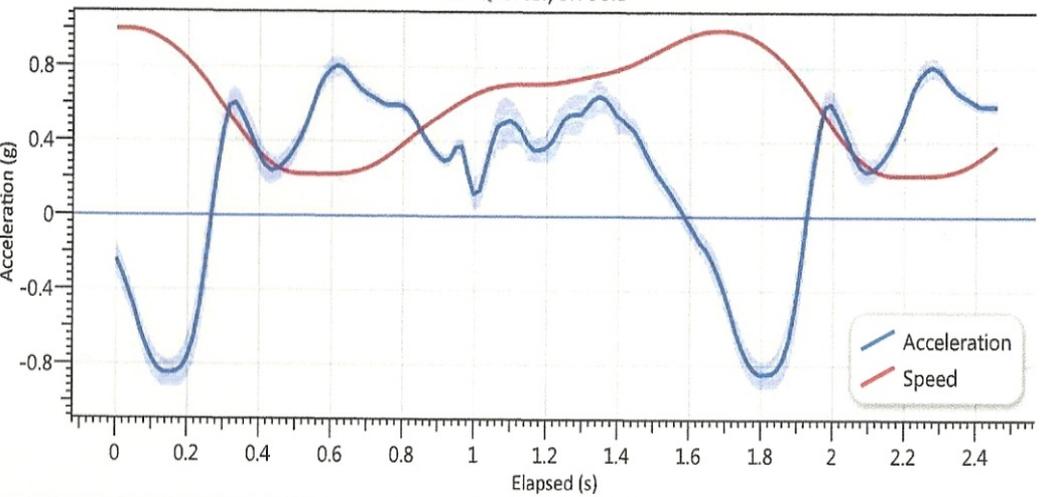
2nd Quarter, SR 36.2



3rd Quarter, SR 35.9



4th Quarter, SR 36.3



Try getting one of these to go fast!!



Case study – NZ Men

- IF TIME?
- 2012 JM4+ (GOLD)
 - 6 people primarily all involved each year from 2012 – 2017 (6 years)

Retention – will this help?



Thank you

- **QUESTIONS??**
 - **Keep doing your best**
 - **Plan well**