

## Constructing a paddling session – goals and set up

You should start constructing every session **around clear GOALS**. Knowing exactly what you are trying to achieve with a particular session is fundamental. Before planning the content of the session itself we shall first determine whether the session is **ORIENTED towards**:

- Recovery
- Maintenance
- Development

Defining this is the first step – so the athlete is clear about the level of effort he will need to invest in the session. The hardest development sessions are called **KEY SESSIONS** and the whole program is built around them. There are usually 2-3 key sessions in a week in an advanced athlete's program.

Every session **consist of PARTS** and these can be different according to the goals we are trying to achieve during the main part of the season. A simple scheme of how to build a session would be:

- Warm Up
- Main Part
- Cool Down

The main part of the session is usually the longest part. If the intensity of the main part is moderate, the warm up and cool down parts can be shorter. On the other hand the warm up and cool down parts of sessions where intensity is very high can last longer than the actual main part itself.

When using our Sprint Canoeing Training Intensity Zones one shall define these additional **CATEGORIES inside particular zones** (especially with A0, A1 and A2 zones):

- Moderate
- Hard
- Very hard

A moderate effort in the A1 zone feels much lighter than a hard effort on the upper limit of the same zone. Furthermore a moderate effort in the A2 zone probably feels pretty close to a hard effort in the A1 zone. To distinguish such nuances the athlete and the coach should use both, feelings based on experience and HR/SR/LA/DPS data gained from measurements.

A session can have **SPECIFIC goals** in areas such as:

- Learning - technique, efficiency, skill etc.
- Physiology - endurance, speed endurance, strength, power etc.
- Testing - general preparedness, specific preparation, equipment selection, stroke parameters etc.
- Confrontation sessions and Race simulation - weekly sessions geared towards teaching the athlete to express his full potential
- Fun activity, Recovery activity - low intensity activity, games, other sports etc.

These goals can be achieved in any part of the session.

The goal setting is important for many reasons but the most important is the fact that setting a goal for the session enables us to check at the end of the session if we have achieved it.

Always remember the goal is not to be perfect. The goal is to be better by the end of the session!