



News for Coaches

October 8, 2007

Hello Coaches,

Since July 9 I've been sorting out my role here in Morrisville, Vermont, as the new rowing advisor at Concept2. Like many of you, my own rowing career paralleled the innovations Peter and Dick Dreissigacker brought to the rowing world. In the fall of 1979 I laid my hands on a first generation Dreissigacker oar. The grey-green shaft and almost metal blade seemed to float compared to the timbers I had grown up with on the Henley course in St. Catharines, Ontario. Then, in 1982, the first rowing ergometers arrived at Payne Whitney Gym in New Haven, Connecticut, and what we now know as the Model A saved me from the squeaky, always moody mechanical device that sat in the corner of our training space waiting for our weekly testing.

When I saw for the first time how the oars and ergs are actually made in the shop here at Concept2, I was blown away. I'm not sure if I had ever considered how an oar is made, nor had I given much thought to all of the testing that is undertaken to ensure a product is good enough or different enough to be considered a possible innovation. We wide-eyed Canadians are pretty trusting beings.

On the innovation front, I suspect I am also like you in recent years—trying to keep up with the team of engineers in Vermont who continue to unveil new products at a rate that leaves me scratching my head at times. (And, it is also true that I have ordered up Crokers for the collegiate women's crews I most recently coached.)

So, I thought I could share a bit of an inside scoop with all of you who might be interested in what goes on up here. There are oodles of technical explanations on the Concept2 website, but who has time to find an answer given all of the other coaching tasks being juggled?

We plan to send you an e-news message once a month. Topics I'll tackle include blade design and power application; vortex edge—how it's changed, why it's an asset; low stroke/high force chart and effects when rowing on the erg; use of slides; and any other questions to which you'd like a response. More than anything, we also hope that this newsletter for coaches will help you communicate with us and will provoke discussion among the teams of coaches who work out of the same boathouse or who might meet for lunch once a week because they work from different boathouses on the same river.

I look forward to sharing the latest Concept2 news with coaches I respect.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Wilson".

Chris Wilson

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