

Dear All,

Following my recent return for the World Championships it has been a very busy few weeks.

Firstly, some short impressions from the World Championships:

The standard and quality of racing was extremely high with no sign of any post- Olympic break from the top nations this quality extended to both the physical and technical way athletes were moving their boats. Holding length while at the high rates was the key to going fast.

Some races I would recommend reviewing are the M2-, LW2x and M8+ A finals. The M2- for the total commitment to doing anything that it takes to win, the LW2x as a picture of the quality necessary to compete at both U23 and senior level (this crew won at both levels) and the German eight for how to move with the boat and apply power so efficiently.

This is of course with the expectation that you have all enjoyed watching how to dominate a field tactically and physically from our own Ondrej in the M1x.

It is easy to look at any crew and find faults but the key with watching these videos is to find all the things they are doing well.

Testing Uherske Hradiste:

It was excellent to see the commitment to the first set of testing as we start the selection process for the 2017-2018 teams. My impressions from the racing were that there was a large disparity in states of preparation strategies, this was most evident in the range of rate from 25-35.

It is important to remember that at this time of year we are trying to build length and power to each stroke in order to have a strong base to build higher speeds as the season progresses.

As a general point I would say are you really racing at rate 25 and is your training good winter training if you are already able to race at 35? It is of course an open race and the aim is to win but remember the longer- term view as well.

It was good to see some new names appearing straight from the junior ranks in Zima and Cermak with the men and some of our Junior World Champion women taking their first steps towards senior selection.

Next steps:

For the potential National Team: from the testing in Uherske Hradiste I have made some selections to take part in a land training camp, this will be to build physical capacity and resistance to injury. The selections were based on both the ergo and water results with a basic level of physical performance relative to the demands of each category being an important part of the selection process.

It is early in the process and the door is still open for team selections.

VSCM: Testing continues at Racicie 3,4,5 November with a range of physical tests to measure athletic ability. There are a couple of new tests so please check the protocols carefully. Over these three days there will also be some training and similar testing undertaken for those not competing for the VSCM places.

Silver skiff and Basel Head:

These are 'club events' and I look forward to seeing how Clubs perform against what should be some good international competition.

2nd National Test in Prague, this will reverse the previous format with the 6km ergo on Saturday followed by the water test on Sunday and should see the return of the World Championship team. More details will be published over the coming weeks.

U23: Currently all U23 candidates should follow the Senior A testing process, as I start to see results I will look to see if a separate pathway is needed. It is clear that to be a successful U23 it is necessary to be competitive with good SA level athletes- (the Dutch U23 8+ was in the final of Luzern and the Romanian women won both U23 and senior events) Please direct any particular questions regarding the U23's to me.

Other points:

I have had many good questions about the need to perform on both the ergo and on the water. It is very clear that to succeed on the international stage it is essential to have both excellent physical capacity and technical ability. If we look to hide behind being better at one of these we are only addressing half the issue. I of course appreciate that ergos do not float, but, without addressing a weakness in this area as a positive challenge to make it a strength we are putting ourselves at an instant disadvantage. The converse is of course true, just a big ergo and no water skill will leave us in the same position.

Both areas must be addressed with a positive attitude using the basic ergo limits that are now in place not as a barrier but as good incentive to train alongside the technical water improvements.

International racing is unforgiving and hard; it is essential that we do not shy away from challenges in our domestic environment of being the best at both if we are to succeed on the international scene.

Physiological testing:

Currently the National Team testing is based on the ANP test from which there is now a good amount of data. There has been a question about also testing VO2 max, I am looking at some proposals for testing this but as with any testing or technology we need to answer the question- "Interesting to know or making us faster?"

Questions:

If there are any further questions then please do contact me.

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