

KIWI EIGHT DRILL PACK.

The drills we did almost every training in the Kiwi eight, one card each.

The foundational exercises in the Kiwi men's eight. Nothing fancy. Just the basics, done properly.

01 GUNNEL TAPS

WHAT IT IS The whole crew taps the handle on the gunnel at the same point, with exaggerated clearance off the water.

HOW A light tap of the handle on the gunnel at the square-off mark, as your hands clear your knees, all together. 10 strokes on, 10 strokes off, about 3 or 4 times through.

FIXES Blades clipping your own puddles on the way out, and a crew tapping out at different points.

"To make sure our blades weren't hitting our own puddles, to make sure we're tapping out to the same point."

02 CATCH SLAPS

WHAT IT IS Roll up to the front with a feathered blade and slap it in as hard as you can.

HOW The whole crew together, 10 or 15 strokes, literally as hard as you can. Then go back to normal rowing. Especially good right before some race pace.

FIXES A soft catch. You learn how decisive you need to be, and how relaxed you can be while still being decisive.

"That helps so much with that decisiveness that you need to get on the catch on such a fast moving boat."

03 QUARTER-SLIDE PAUSE

WHAT IT IS On the recovery, the whole crew stops at quarter slide, then rolls up to the catch together.

HOW Tap out, hands away, rock over and break the knees slightly. That's quarter slide. Pause there together, then roll up to the catch. 10 strokes on, 10 normal, 3 or 4 times through, and move the pause each round: hands in, hands away, hands and body, quarter slide, half slide. You can stack two in one stroke, like hands in then hands away.

FIXES A crew arriving at the catch at different times.

"Just getting everyone to that same point together at the same time so that we could roll up to the catch with a bit of confidence."

04 FEET OUT

WHAT IT IS Rowing with your feet sitting on top of your shoes, not in them.

HOW The first 4 to 6K of every row, feet out, with a bit of pressure on. We did it every single day in the Kiwi eight.

FIXES A lack of control of your body weight. It turns your core on and makes your rowing smoother.

"You'll realise how much control you've got to have in connection with your core."

05 PAUSE AT THE FINISH

- WHAT IT IS** Ian Wright's style: exaggerated time around the finish, to the point of a full pause, then flow away.
- HOW** Pause at the finish with the hands down: you've just dropped out, body in your lean-back position. Then flow away together and be quite swift up to the front, especially at the lower rates. 10 on, 10 off, 3 or 4 times through. Everyone buys in, or it doesn't work.
- FIXES** Rowing in time. It brings the whole crew to one point.

"This technique makes it easier to row in time because it is so black and white."

06 ERG TIE-DOWN

- WHAT IT IS** A strop or tie-down around the erg handle and the machine, to push against at the catch.
- HOW** Get to your catch position and adjust the strop. Push through your whole body until the seat goes light underneath you, with no slippage. Hold for 20 seconds, then lower. Do that a few times.
- FIXES** Slippage in your chain, from your fingertips to your feet. If your arms fold away, you're not locking on through your shoulders and lats.

"The only thing you want to see is that the seat becomes light underneath you."

07 SET UP THE CATCH

- WHAT IT IS** A quick catch is set up before you get there. If you're thinking about the catch when you're at the catch, you're too slow.
- HOW** Hands away off the back, rock over, knees break. That's your set position. From there, all you do is roll into the front and put your blade in. No extra reach.
- FIXES** A late, slow catch, and the last-minute reach that puts you in a vulnerable position.

"Getting a good catch is all about the prep."

08 COMPLETE EVERY STROKE

- WHAT IT IS** One of the simplest things we talked about in the Kiwi eight, and especially powerful from the start.
- HOW** Before a race start, talk to your crew about being super thorough with each stroke: swing through, pull through to the lower ribs, drop down together and get out cleanly.
- FIXES** Getting fumbly around the back and rushing, the moment you start thinking about the next stroke.

"We want to complete each stroke before we move on to the next and be quite deliberate about that."

Which one does your crew need?