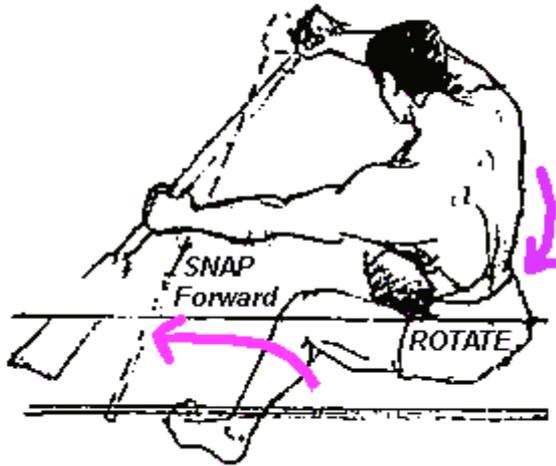


# Paddle Technique - Phase Four

## The Recovery



The RECOVERY is the key to the forward stroke technique as it sets up the CATCH well forward of the torso.

The most efficient RECOVERY is achieved by rotating the torso to push the outside shoulder straight forward while the inside shoulder is pulled to the back i.e. in reverse of the STROKE. The lower arm must punch forward to create a long 'reach' while the upper arm is pulled the opposite direction and thrown back over the head to open up the chest. This must be a quick and snappy motion since it is effectively 'down time' — when energy is not spent moving the boat forward; i.e. the less time it takes 'get up front' the more time a paddler can spend pulling the boat. A fast recovery must be trained since it makes great demands on the Abdominal muscles, Deltoids and Traps, different from the efforts needed in the POWER phase. The key to a higher rating is a faster RECOVERY which allows stroke length to be maintained.

Precise timing in the boat is controlled by a coordinated RECOVERY where each paddler must execute a sharp and deliberate snap forward with the lower arm pushed from the shoulder.

***"Don't keep your recovery the same speed as the power phase of the stroke. Watch the good paddlers - their recoveries are fast. The time your paddle spends swinging through the air isn't helping you at all. To go fast, you have to get that paddle back in the water where it will do some good. To increase your stroke rate, do it making quicker recoveries."* — Peter Heed**

Remember, a clean recovery is executed in a snap forward motion and is not achieved very well if the outside arm is carving great circles in the air. It is a relatively straight linear movement forward aligning with all other paddles in the team with outside elbows and paddle blades kept close to the gunwale.

A slight pause before the CATCH phase will mark both the end of the full stroke cycle and will help to synchronize the timing of the team; though at a high rating the 'pause' is more of a mental punctuation mark than any noticeable lapse in time.

Though the movement forward should be kept 'bright and crisp' the paddle should be held lightly to relax forearm muscles. Very often paddlers exert too much power getting forward. The RECOVERY should be fast but light. Over time it will become effortless movement, but it takes a lot of work to achieve speed and should not be neglected as part of a training regime.

Boat speed in the RECOVERY phase will slow down obviously due to the break in paddling, though the rate of deceleration known as the Check can vary from team to team as a result of different technique. As paddlers move forward, their centre of gravity (CG) can also move forward causing the boat to decelerate more. Strangely enough the boat will actually accelerate slightly on its own at the end of the RECOVERY phase once the paddler's forward movement ceases. In this respect, you should focus on minimal movement of the CG in the RECOVERY, and confine that movement to a forward and backward line, not up and down or side to side.

One common problem is that the upper arm is allowed to drop too much resulting in a horizontal RECOVERY. In a tight boat, this will be problematic and will also begin to hamper efforts to increase rating.

Bending the upper arm also leads to excessive movement which will limit performance at a higher rating and can cause the boat to jump around a lot. Neither the upper or lower arm needs to flex very much in the RECOVERY, or for any phase for that matter.