



USRowing Safety Committee Bulletin  
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## The Scoop on Summer Safety

### How to deal with Heat

Here's how one can deal with these challenges whether in Florida or anywhere with hot summer weather;

Mornings are best rowing time- Best temperature. Best water quality. Best lack of pleasure boaters. Best energy to give to your sport. Least sun. Least heat. Low thunderstorm probability. Least wind. Mosquitoes are hungry! Sorry!

#### Planning your row

Consider having it begin no later than 7:00am and end by 10:30am. By the time everyone arrives at the boathouse, most have already broken a sweat just walking down the drive.

Warmups don't take too long to accomplish. Did I mention the bugs? Not a bad idea to have plenty of repellent on hand if you are in a mosquito-prone site.

If you plan on a 2 hour session on the water, this takes you to at least 9:30 or 10:00 am depending on your routine at the boathouse. By the time 10:00am rolls around, everyone is looking for the nearest pool, shade tree, cool concrete boathouse floor and an ice cold water fountain!

Most have expended their water bottles (plural) by that time and the sun is getting to the point of boring itself into any exposed area of your body. Sunscreen may not be as necessary early in the day, but 2 hours in the sun without sunscreen, even in the morning can get you burned. The toughest sun times are in the middle of the day, like 11:00am to 4pm, that is why we row early or late.

If evenings are best for everyone to head to the boathouse, then you are looking at 5:30-7:30 or 8:00pm. Why?

The sun is easing up.

The winds are hopefully dying down.

Oh yes, and summer is thunderstorm season. Like clockwork in Florida and likely the same in other areas, the afternoon heat produces thunderstorms. Equate this to lightning, which is not a good thing while you are in a shell 4 miles from the boathouse.

Regardless of whether morning rows or evening rows work best for you and your program, the time on the water is worth every drop. Just get out there!

Sunscreen and rowing have a hard time mixing. So does mosquito repellent. Do you put on sunscreen AND mosquito repellent? Which one goes on first? They get on your hands, making them slippery on the oar handles. Both get in your eyes when the sweat starts running down your forehead.

If sunscreen in your eyes makes you cry, then wear a hat or headband to keep the free flow away from the eyes. Oh yes, don't stick your recently sunscreens fingers in your eyes to wipe off the sweat. Kind of defeats the purpose. Also, a hat makes a very good container to fill with water from the side of the boat and soak your head. Keeping your head cool with water will help you cope with the heat. If you don't have a hat, then just scoop up the water with your hands and soak your hair.

### **Training for racing**

If you are training for races during the summer (or fall), and putting in some long hard miles, twice per day, on the water or erg, then here's a water intake tip.

**DRINK 2/3 OF YOUR BODY WEIGHT IN OUNCES OF WATER EACH DAY.**

This does NOT include any other liquids you might want to consume. This is just water. A gallon of water is 128 fluid ounces. I weigh 205 lbs, so for me, that is 136 ounces of water a day! Makes one think you will float away! Again, I'll remind you that this intake is suggested for one working out 2x per day. I like my rowers to take ONLY WATER in the shell and not sports drinks. The exception to this would be if we were going for a long row of 2 hours or more.

If you are at the races on one of those fine, 100 degree days, then make sure you have shade, a chair, water and something with electrolytes in it. Sports drinks are good for this. Your body's electrolytes get depleted with lots of sweating and drinking your gallon of water does not put them back in balance. I like to keep a gallon jug of drinking water at the trailer or tent in a cooler or at least in the shade. I also like to keep a large bottle of a sports drink, too.

It eases your mind that you do not have to ration your precious 1 liter bottle (or less) of water. Put on your hat, keep your head cool with periodic splashdowns and go soak your feet in the river. If you have a nearby hotel, go back to the hotel after your races and R&R in the air conditioning, jump in the pool for a cool, refreshing stretch and relaxing float. If the pool is outside, don't stay out there too long, 'cause at 100 degrees, Mr. Sun will be watching you. If you have to race again that day, stay at the hotel and out of the sticky heat until it is time to go. It drains your energy if you just hang out at the course.

Good stuff to eat on those hot race days?

Watermelon and grapes are a couple of great foods. Here's a race day secret to take

out with you on the water to kill the "cottonmouth" when water no longer does the trick. Slice(s) of lemon. Try it, you'll like it.

This is enough for dealing with the heat for now. More heat to come all summer long!  
Stay Cool!

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Casey Baker has been rowing and racing for nearly 40 years, coaching collegiate men and women at Florida Tech (as well as individual scullers) for more than 20 years. He lives in Melbourne, FL where rowing, surfing and fishing are all enjoyed! He has worked with Resolute Racing Shells as the SE Representative since 2006 and is a member of the USRowing Safety Committee. He enjoys helping others improve their game, whether coaching, rowing, rigging, planning or just bouncing around ideas.