Wolverine Workout Training Plan Information

Level 1

Level 1 workouts are the backbone of the Training Plan. These workouts are critical to develop true racing speed, and are performed at intensities of 95-105% of competitive 2K pace. But as effective as they are, they are very demanding and require significant recovery to realize their full benefits. As a result, only perform Level 1 workouts **once a week**. The basic format is to row intervals of 250m to 1000m. The total number of meters in one workout should add up to about 4000. (This figure is determined simply by doubling the competitive distance of 2000 meters).

For reference, a typical Level 1 workout is **8 x 500m.** Other common variations include **4 x 1K** and a **4K Pyramid** (250m/500m/750m/1K/750m/500m/250m). The most important factor is to maintain the proper *high intensity* over the duration of the workout. The suggested goal pace refers to your *average* pace for the entire workout. There will be some fluctuation of pace from piece to piece, but fluctuations should not be too large. The basic idea is to be consistent, and be smart, so you are able to finish strong.

It is also necessary to consider the *recovery* intervals that follow the work intervals. A key term to understand is the process of *active recovery* (distinct from *passive* recovery, which is simply becoming totally inactive). The idea is to finish a work interval, say 500m, and after a few seconds of catching your breath and recording your score, to immediately reset the monitor for the recovery distance (for Level 1 workouts, generally the same distance as the previous work interval). At a low rating (16-18spm), row at the designated minimum recovery intensity. Active recovery after high-intensity work promotes faster and more complete recovery and minimizes fatigue by increasing circulation and promoting the removal of metabolic waste products. This is critical when attempting to maintain high performance during high-intensity training. It is important to feel fairly recovered as each piece starts (though you may quickly lose that feeling as each piece progresses).

Level 2

Level 2 workouts are similar to Level 1 in that they are fairly high intensity (~ 90-95% 2K intensity). The duration of each piece is a little longer (generally 1500m-3K) and the total meters for the workout almost twice that of Level 1. Typical workouts include **5 x 1500m; 4 x 2K;** and a pyramid of **3K/2.5K/2K**. Workouts are generally **once a week**. The minimum (or slowest pace) for Level 2 is roughly 2K pace * 1.08. You should average this pace over the entire workout. Active recovery intervals will be a little shorter than the work intervals (for example, 2000m work → 1500m recovery).

Level 2 workouts are perhaps the most psychologically demanding in the Training Plan. Anybody can punch it out for 500m, but to keep up the intensity for 2 or 2.5K takes guts. These workouts are crucial for training your mind as well as your body.

Level 3

Level 3 workouts are generally continuous in nature, performed at a consistent pace for a total duration of ~ 12K. The intensity is ~ 85-90% of 2K velocity. The focus is on endurance more than speed. Level 3 workouts are typically performed **2-3 times/week**. Sample workouts include **Continuous 12K**; **2 x 6K** (with 7-8' recovery between pieces); and **15 x 3'** (with 1' recovery between pieces).

Level 4

Intensity is generally ~ 80-90% of 2K. Level 4 workouts are unique and contain a few features the other Levels do not. In the first place, stroke rating is always strictly prescribed, whereas rating for Levels 1-3 vary somewhat from person to person. The ratings are fairly low, beginning at 16spm and occasionally reaching 24 or even 26spm, but most ratings will be in the 18-22 range. On the water or on the erg, these workouts can be used to develop timing & rhythm as well as conditioning, since all rowers must follow the same cadence. But the primary physiological benefit is to develop not only endurance, but also strength and *power per stroke.* Another important benefit is to develop a very accurate sense of pacing. Still another potential benefit that encompasses psychological as well physiological and neurological adaptation, is that by learning to produce a given power output at lower ratings, it should be possible to eventually produce the same power output using a higher rating, creating a decreased perception of effort. In plain English, that means that even though you are performing the same amount of work on the oar, it feels easier and you are more likely to hold the pace longer.

Another feature of Level 4 is that goals for 500m splits and distances covered in a given time period are very explicit and individualized. **Level 4 workouts range from 40-70' of continuous effort**. Other variations include **2 x 40'** (with 6-7' recovery between pieces) and **4 x 10'** at a proportionately greater intensity (with recovery intervals of 3' 20"). Each piece will be subdivided into segments of either 10' or 6' length, so a 40' workout may be thought of as 4 consecutive 10' pieces with no recovery.

Since your 2K pace as well as your Level 4 goal paces and distances are all calculated with a certain amount of rounding off, your numbers may vary slightly from what is expected. But with a little practice you should be able to come very close to hitting the numbers you want. The most important thing is to develop consistency within the framework of your own workouts.

Perform Level 4 workouts **3-4 times/week**.

More about Stroke Rate: Ratings during Level 4 are designated as part of the workout**,** but for Levels 1-3, athletes should select ratings most comfortable for them and allow ratings to develop naturally, without too much conscious thought. In general, ratings for Level 3 will probably be in the range of 24-28; Level 2, 26-32; and Level 1, 30-36. A general rule of thumb is if an athlete can reach her goal at a lower rather than a higher rating, good. That leaves more room to improve. If an athlete must row excessively high to reach her goal early in the season, there will be problems later. (Lack of strength is probably a factor and could be addressed specifically during other conditioning portions of the overall training season.) On the other hand, if an athlete's paces are stagnating during different workouts, she may need to consciously work on bringing the rating up.