

COACH PAT BRADLEY- THE EXIT

Pat Bradley ~ WORLD CHAMPION Coach who has led Team USA & Team Canada to multiple GOLD medals. Here he demonstrates the importance of an explosive exit at the back of the stroke.

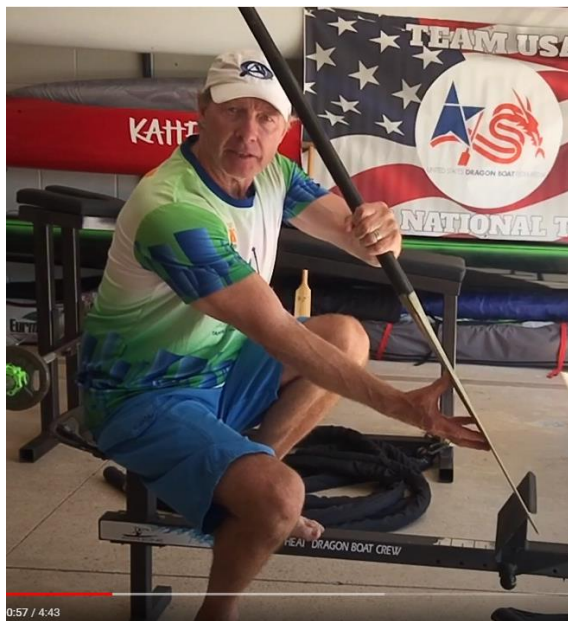
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hmfdVPo-Cn0>

Transcript of video with screen shots

Hi everybody, Pat Bradley here with Pan Am Dragon Boat in Tampa, Florida.

Today we're going to talk about the exit. What is the exit? Well, the exit happens at the back of the stroke. You'll notice I didn't say the end of the stroke. Happens at the back. There is no beginning or end to the stroke. It's a continuous motion. There is a front and a back, but there is no end. We don't stop the paddle at the exit. Okay?

The purpose of the exit is to lift the paddle out of the water without slowing the boat down and creating drag. In fact, we want to actually find a way to accelerate the boat off the exit. So how do we do it? It's a good question. The exit is probably the hardest part of the dragon boat stroke to master. But in order to find pressure at the exit, we have to follow through with that load that we talked about at the catch. So, at the front of the stroke at the catch - Remember this? This is the water. This is the paddle blade. We have that instant connection. That instant resistance at the catch.



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We drive down.



But in order to maintain that, because we're putting such pressure on the water, and the boat is moving, we've got to keep driving. Because if we don't keep maintaining pressure, the water is going to start separating from the paddle.



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It's going to be an easier stroke, less effort, but you're not going to be contributing to the forward momentum of the boat. So, we want to accelerate the paddle all the way through, all the way through, until your thumb knuckle on your bottom hand is at your hip bone. We don't want to go past that. That's just negative angle, and all that's going to do is pull the boat over sideways.

Exit with thumb knuckle at hip bone



Thumb knuckle goes too far back causing negative angle



We want to exit with our thumb knuckle at our hip and accelerate the paddle – accelerate, accelerate - by driving off that leg. Pushing hard off the leg, and crunching up as we sit up, building that wall. Okay, so there is no wall, you have to create it. So, the resistance is there. You push, push, push, and the more acceleration, the more pressure you put on the paddle, the more of a wall, the more resistance you're going to have at the exit.

Pushing hard off leg, crunching up as we sit up



More pressure on the paddle creates more of a wall



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That wall at the end is going to give you that brace to push off of. When we get to the exit, we lead with our hip.

Lead with hip



So, pressure, pressure, pressure, pressure, and then lead with the hip. Bring the hip and the paddle up together like this. I come up big, cross, catch again, big catch, come through, come through, come through and up we go.

Come up big



Big Catch



Come through, and up we go



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What we **don't** want to see is if you're paddling with all this pressure, is for your paddle to stop at your hip, even for the smallest fraction of a second. Then you'll get this action where if you stop while you're moving the water, the water is drifting off.

If you stop your paddle, the water drifts off



So, you're getting that separation, and there's a hole behind the paddle. So, there's no power, there's no pressure, no resistance at all. Your paddle will come out nice and clean out of the exit, but if you're not generating any pressure, you're not pushing off the back at all.

Okay. Now, what we do want to see at the end is pressure, pressure, pressure, and then an explosion of separation like that, pushing off the water. Paddle going one way, the water going the other way.



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Okay? NOT this!



We want the paddle to - boom - explode that way.



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Okay, so what would that look like. I'll use the paddle machine here.

And you'll see that I'm leading with my hip. My hip is coming across, driving off my leg, back towards the exit. I'm going to lead with my hip, launch off my hip to the exit. I'll do it in slow motion. Down, down, down. Press, press, press, press, press, press, press. Outside shoulders down, lead off my hip, come across. Rotate, drive. My leg is relaxed now, so I'm going to drive and load the paddle. Load, load, load, load, load, load. Leg is starting to straighten out. Outside shoulder is down, and I'm going to launch right off my hip. Boom!

Leg is relaxed, torso rotated, press the paddle down



Launch off hip to exit, drive, load the paddle



At exit, outside leg straightens, outside shoulder down



Launch off hip to the catch



And that is the exit. It takes a lot of work. You got to repeat, repeat, repeat if you want to get this right. And, it doesn't come quickly. Like I said, it's one of the toughest parts of the stroke to master.