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THE ASTRONAUT'S SPACE AGE WORKOUT

NSBRI Researchers Discover That Rowing is the Ideal Exercise for Space Travelers

June 20, 2007, Burlington, VT — Researchers at the National Space Biomedical Research Institute (NSBRI) have discovered what Concept2 has known for years: The Concept2 Indoor Rower is the best way to exercise your entire body and stay heart-healthy...in the universe.

Staying fit when you're galaxies away hinges on keeping your entire body in top form. That's why the team at NSBRI set out to develop a fitness regimen that would counteract the physical changes caused by microgravity — the state of weightlessness astronauts experience during their travels. Decades of research on athletes and performance revealed that astronauts needed a workout that kept blood pumping and maintained bone and muscle strength. Rowing was the perfect solution.

"We choose indoor rowing for several reasons," Dr. Benjamin Levine told *Space Daily*. "It uses a large muscle mass, it is non-impact so there are low chances for injury, and astronauts could use similar equipment in space." What's more, rowing combines static and dynamic exercise, which improves heart function. The heart works 15–20 percent less during weightlessness than it does here on Earth.

Dr. Levine, who leads the NSBRI team, explains that dynamic and endurance exercise is necessary to engage the large muscle groups of the body. Whereas swimming, running and cycling do work these muscles, rowing is the only activity that exerts muscles through strength training *and* contracts muscles through sustained effort.

You don't have to be on the next mission to Saturn to get a space age workout, though. Concept2 offers two indoor rowers — the Model D and the Model E — through their Web site, www.concept2.com; their rowers can also be found in major gyms and rowing clubs.

The astronaut's workout can easily be simulated on Earth. Start with what they call a "base-training session" by rowing at a moderate pace. You should be able to talk with a training buddy during this stage. To work your body more, try rowing at a faster pace. Astronauts call this "threshold training" because it trains you at your maximum sustainable effort. End your workout with a real push, rowing hard for one to three minutes for "interval training" and capping off with a "recovery session" — rowing one final long distance at a lower intensity.

Now you're ready to travel to the moon and back.

Concept2 was founded by Dick and Peter Dreissigacker in 1976. Fresh from Olympic training, the two brothers designed and manufactured carbon fiber racing oars, and went on to create the world's first wind-resistance indoor rower. Dreissigacker Racing Oars are now used by more than 70 percent of the rowing community. The Concept2 Indoor Rower has been redesigned and upgraded four times since the Model A was introduced in 1981. For more information about Concept2, visit www.concept2.com.

NSBRI, funded by NASA, is a consortium of institutions studying the health risks related to long-duration space flight. The Institute's science, technology and education projects take place at more than 70 institutions across the United States.

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