

The Power of the C2 Performance Monitor

A Guide to the Display & Unit options on the Concept2 Performance Monitor

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So you've spent some time on the C2 Indoor Rower, but do you really know how to use the Performance Monitor (PM)? The power and accuracy of the PM are key in setting the C2 Erg apart from other exercise machines. The automatic operation makes the monitor easy to use; but it's worth digging a little deeper and learning what else the PM has to offer. In this article we'll focus on the five display options. Have fun, and row hard!

Displays

The PM3 and PM4 offer five different display options. You can select them in either of two ways:

1. Press the "Change Display" button until you get the display you want

OR

2. Press one of the five buttons down the right side of the PM—each one corresponds to one of the five displays, in the order listed below.

BUT FIRST, before you start to struggle with the decision of which display to choose...please remember that you can press Change Display at any time before, during or after your workout to change to a different display. This will be the best way to try them all out and decide which one(s) work best for you.



1 of 4



All Data

If you're a numbers person, or looking for maximum data on your performance, this is the PM display for you. You get your current stroke output, elapsed time, average pace, meters rowed, heart rate (if wearing a HR monitor), and cadence in strokes per minute (spm). You also get data for your last split: meters rowed and average pace. The PM will set up a default split or you can specify your own split if desired. This is certainly a very informative display, but the other options each offer advantages and we encourage you to give them a try.



Force Curve

The Force Curve is an immediate graphical representation of your force application during the stroke. It shows how your total force varies as you use your legs, back and arms in sequence during the drive. A smoother-shaped curve indicates a smoother application of force. The greater the area under the curve, the better your results for that stroke.

What should my Force Curve look like?

In general, you should strive for a broad arching Force Curve, without any sharp peaks or wobbles. This will show that you are achieving a smooth, continuous drive.

How do I change the shape of my Force Curve?

You can change the shape of your Force Curve by varying the relative timing and emphasis of the legs, the back and the arms during the drive phase of the stroke. For example, if you really try to "explode" at the catch, the peak of your curve will shift to the left, like this:



Comparing these curves (and remembering your math), you can see that it is not necessarily better to reach a higher maximal force. A broader curve with lower max may even give you a larger area under the curve.

Recommendation: Use this display during warm-up when you can be thinking about your technique.



Paceboat

This display of the PM allows you to race against, or row along with, a companion Paceboat. You can set the Paceboat to move at a desired steady target pace, or you can choose to "ReRow" a previous workout by having the Paceboat be driven by your previous results. You can even race against a friend's stored results.

The benefits of rowing with this display will be obvious to the competitive amongst us. What better way to keep yourself motivated than with a race? The Paceboat is also good for anyone who relates better to pictures than to numbers.

Warning: Be sure you set the Paceboat to the right speed, or it may disappear off the edge of the screen sooner than you'd like. You'll still get feedback from the simplified data section at the top, but there will be no competition in sight.



Bar Chart

This is the best display for showing the recent history of your workout. It's also a good choice for anyone who prefers graphics to numbers. With a quick glance at the plot, you'll know whether your performance is improving, fading or holding steady. If you're doing intervals that are short enough to fit on the screen (like Tabatas), you'll get a visual comparison of your level of intensity from one interval to the next—and a nice sawtooth pattern.

If you're wearing a HR monitor, the plot will display your HR as a function of time over the last 30-50 strokes of your workout. If no HR is present, it will default to showing your power over the last 30-50 strokes, which is generally more relevant to CrossFit.



Large Print

OK, so this display reveals the fact that we are getting older. Some of us need reading glasses. Or maybe it's just that the light isn't very good. Or we are working so hard that we can't read the monitor. ☺ In any case, this screen is designed for those who prefer fewer—but larger—numbers. You'll still get all the critical data.

Setting up the PM for Tabata intervals

(and saving it to your "Favorites", if you have a LogCard).

Note

Do your warm-up first, because the PM will be ready to rock when you finish this quick procedure.

Press

Select Workout > New Workout > Intervals: Time

Use +/- and >/< buttons to set a work time of 0:20 and a rest time of 0:10.

Optional

Set the pace for the Paceboat if desired.

Press

"Checkmark" when done.

If no LogCard is present, you are ready to row. The PM will start counting down your first interval as soon as you start rowing.

If you have a LogCard inserted, you will now have the option of saving this workout to your "Favorites." Answer "Yes" and you will be given a choice of existing "Favorites" to replace.

Then you'll be ready to row and the PM will start counting down your first interval as soon as you start rowing.



2008 Fall Rowing Challenge

CrossFitters, we'd like to invite you to take on The 2008 Fall Rowing Challenge, which begins on September 15 and ends on October 15. You can join and add team members any time up to midnight September 30. This is one of our annual team-based challenges, designed to get people into rowing for the Fall. Since it's team-based, we thought of you guys. It would be great to have a healthy competition between a number of affiliates.

For more details on the challenge and information on creating a team, go to www.concept2cts.com/frc

Prizes!! Prizes!! Prizes!!

All participating teams will have a chance to win your choice of a new Model D or Model E Indoor Rower. We will draw from all teams participating who have at least 10 members on their team who have rowed 100,000 meters or more during the challenge. The lucky winner will receive a brand new indoor rower. There are also prizes for all participants who row over 100,000 meters, as well as extra special prizes for those who row at least 200,000 meters! All participants will also be able to purchase a limited edition Fall Rowing Challenge T-shirt through www.cafepress.com. More details on the shirt will follow.

If you have any questions, please email info@concept2cts.com. We hope to see your team on the challenge roster this year!



Judy Geer was a member of three U.S. Olympic rowing teams (1976, 1980, 1984). She placed sixth in both 1976 and 1984; 1980 was the boycott year.) Since then, she and her husband Dick Dreissigacker (also an Olympic rower and co-founder, with Peter Dreissigacker, of Concept2 Rowing) have raised three children who are national-level competitive athletes in their own right. Judy continues to train and race in sculling, running, Nordic skiing, and biathlon.