**Gym doesn’t lie - Slalom is adaptation**

**Mr Daniele Molmenti, Italian Citizen, started paddling when he was 11 in his hometown, Pordenone (North East Italy) and his first white-water experience was in Solkan (Slovenia). It is a good biathlon memory as he had, during a Slalom session, to swim for 2 kms in white-water due to a mistake of edging and missed eskimo-roll.**

**He’s been paddling for 16 years on slalom boats.**

**He’s chatting here about his view of gym training in his preparation to high performance level.**

**1.When did you start with the gym sessions?**

**As I’m 27 now, I realise that starting gym drills while I was 13/14 was a must in order to learn the good way to do basics at gym. It is crucial in order to secure and preserve my body from injuries… root of the path to perform on a High level.**

**I started working with weights about 15/16, when my positions and realizations were optimal.**

**2.What his the part of physical training/gym training in your yearly plan?**

**During the off-season (winter), it is about 40% gym, 10% global physical efforts (mainly mountain climbing) and 50% on the water.**

**During the competition season, it is about 15% at gym, 10% at mountain climbing and the rest on the water.**

**Yearly talking I divide the season in 3 periods: 2 for the off-season (general and specific) and the last during the race time (agonistic):**

**-General training (50% resistance and lactate – 50% strength and power)**

**-Specific training (25% lactate – 75% strength and power)**

**-Agonistic training (50% strength on free body (without the use of machines) – 50% power)**

**3.What kind of benefit you can get with gym training?**

**Hmmm…. Gym doesn’t lie… it means, you can not cheat with weights: 50kg is 50kg… by paddling, you can pretend strokes at 80% of your max and do 60%, at gym, no way, 1kg is 1kg.**

**Then gym workout helps me to get a good power that I have to transfer from paddling on flat-water into the white-water. That’s the key: transfer the power gained in the gym room to the slalom paddling.**

**4.During your drills, do you seek a position as close as possible to the slalom position?**

**Yep, the closest, the better. The goal is not to lift up 150kg in the gym! The goal is to be able to transfer the power you need to your boat. Gym is like a tool you use to paddle better and stronger in your slalom boat. If you miss the transfer, it’s useless.
So the feeling of your strokes in the water is crucial. And the outside feedbacks (coach, videos, sparring partner) are fundamental to confirm your feelings.**

**While I was 14/15, my coach always insisted in keeping the right position on the boat to help the transfer of the energy. If you learn how to paddle correctly, you can grow the power in the gym and automatically you feel it on the boat. In this way you can improve your skills in gym and in slalom at the same time, there must be an homogeneity between: paddling gently at 13 and work with no weights at the gym, paddling tough at 20 and lift heavy.**

**My favourite drill in the gym is the pulling-machine. I always use the grip and the leg position as on the boat. My favourite drill on free body is the push up and all his variants.(video link)**

**5.You travel quite a lot then access to the nice fitness room is not always easy, how do you handle with it?**

**Slalom is adaptation, and keeping this in my mind I did as a life philosophy.
With push-up, pull-up and those kinds of drill, it is easy to find a way to make it if you really want and if you are creative. If you are lost in the wild, the final option could be to climb on trees then chop them down!**

**During the off-season, I need more repetitions than weight work, easy to handle with any kind of stuff. At the competition season, I need more weights, so I change the position and make it harder. (video link)**

**6.Do you practice gym « in your Slalom boat » as using resistance?**

**When you are a top athlete and sure of your feeling, you can try to improve the strokes power using a resistance that get your boat slower (rubber around the deck / weight in the boat). Make sure that your strokes don’t lose their shape. Fatigue in a bad position is worst than anything else.**

**7.Gym can help to prevent injuries?**

**Well, injuries are a plague and we all have to work to avoid this problem. I can’t say I do a gym session for that, but every day I take 5/15 minutes for the classics exercise with elastics or others drills close to Pilates or yoga’s exercise. It is your own health insurance to protect and preserve your body. (Movie)**