

Physiological And Psychological Change During A Novice Season Of Dragon Boat Paddling Among Breast Cancer Survivors

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The purpose of this study was to examine the implications of physiological and psychological changes experienced by Abreast in a Boat participants during their first 12-weeks of dragon boat paddling. The participants (N=8, M age=55 years) completed assessments of BMI, sum of skinfolds (SOS), maximum strength (10RM), VO₂, and interview questions regarding their expectations and physical self-perceptions during time 1 (pre-season) and time 2 (post-season). Content analysis was used to deduce themes from the interview data. Several participants reported feeling stronger, increases in endurance and competence, and weight fluctuations. Significant changes in 10RM and VO₂ were observed over the 12-weeks. The perceived changes, coupled with the increased strength and aerobic capacity, appear to contribute to the participants' confidence and interest in other physical activities, athletic identity, and competitiveness. Employing interview data to compliment traditional physiological measures allowed for greater insight into the benefits of the Abreast in a Boat program. The women's increased interest and confidence to become involved in other physical activities may result in long-term health benefits, since perceptions of competence are significant predictors of initiating and maintaining active lifestyles. The implications of Abreast in a Boat therefore go beyond physiological change, and are only evident when researchers employ a combination of data collection methods.

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