

## 3 Star Open Canoe Training Notes

### Technical Syllabus

Throughout their development the paddler should be trained to appreciate the importance of maintaining an active posture whilst adopting a variety of positions within the boat. This will support effective power transfer between the paddler and their boat.

Paddlers are expected to be able to paddle solo and as part of a tandem crew. When paddling as part of a tandem crew the paddler is expected to be able to paddle at both bow and stern and it is expected that the other crewmember will be of a similar standard.

The essence of the requirement to be able to paddle solo and tandem is that tandem paddlers can cope if their partner becomes incapacitated, falls out, or is needed to join another crew. Whilst a Solo paddler may need to be able to bring another paddler into their craft to help them. Paddlers would normally participate in their 3 Star course as per their normal paddling preference (i.e. solo or tandem), but would be required to spend a short amount of time dealing with 'what if' type incidents.

For example;

- For tandem paddlers, could they solo paddle in the required conditions and recover their swimming partner back into their canoe.
- For solo paddlers, could they carry a passenger and paddle to reunite them with their own craft, or manoeuvre into position to rescue a capsized boat.

### Part A – Personal Paddling Skills

#### A.1 Lifting, carrying, and launching and landing

Paddlers should develop an understanding of the principles of safe lifting and carrying. Training should include launching and landing at a variety of environments, and how to minimise damage to the bank or boat.

#### A.2 Efficient forward paddling

Paddlers should gain an understanding of the key points of good forward paddling technique. Training should emphasise the importance of engaging the larger muscle groups of the body, like the torso, and not relying just on the arms, which should allow the paddler to effectively transfer power into boat movement.

Trim: Training should allow paddlers to develop an appreciation of wind speed and direction and how it affects their boat. They should understand how boat trim, paddling side, wind speed and direction affect performance. Paddlers should experience and experiment with a range of techniques to enable them to adjust their trim and optimise their performance e.g. their seating position, carrying a load etc. Paddlers should develop an appreciation of the impact of these

different techniques on the fundamentals of paddling. This awareness should include experience of winds of up to force 3 as well as paddling a range of types of canoe, and whilst paddling solo and tandem. Training could include the use of a triangular course, which may be of use when developing this awareness of trim. Trim should be a key underpinning point throughout training.

**Acceleration:** Paddlers should develop the ability to accelerate the canoe from a stationary position and whilst on the move within 3-4 strokes. The need for a vertical paddle shaft should be appreciated as well as a short, sharp correction to keep the boat on course.

**Cruising:** Paddlers should gain an appreciation of how variation within a J-stroke affects its performance. They should be helped to develop a fluent and rhythmic forward paddling stroke that is predominantly a J-stroke. Coaches should make paddlers aware of the effect the length of a stroke has on its performance, as well as how corrections made using the gunnel and without touching the gunnel affect outcome. An awareness of how boat trim and tilt can enhance this stroke is also crucial.

**Knifed strokes:** Training should develop both paddle finesse and an awareness of how to use the recovery phase of a stroke to help to maintain boat control.

### **A.3 Reverse paddling**

Paddlers should gain an understanding of the key points of good reverse paddling technique, and the importance of engaging the larger muscle groups of the body and not relying just on the arms.

**Trim:** Paddlers should develop an appreciation of wind speed and direction and how it affects their boat. They should understand how boat trim, paddling side, wind speed and direction effects performance. Paddlers should experience and experiment with a range of techniques to enable them to adjust their trim and optimise their performance e.g. their seating position, carrying a load etc. This awareness should include experience of winds of up to force 2 as well as paddling a range of types of canoe and whilst paddling solo and tandem. Training could include the use of a triangular course, which may be of use when developing this awareness of trim. Trim should be a key underpinning point throughout training.

**Stopping and acceleration:** Paddlers should develop the ability to stop the canoe and then accelerate in reverse within 1-2 boat lengths; this is an essential skill should the paddler wish to descend rivers where they may need to check their speed and set the boat up for a reverse ferry glide. A vertical paddle shaft and effective cross-deck correction strokes play key roles in this manoeuvre.

**Control over a figure-of-8 course:** Paddlers should develop a range of reverse paddling strokes and techniques. The aim should be to paddle a reverse figure of eight course around markers approximately 25 metres apart, in sheltered light air conditions. Coaches should introduce a wide variety of strokes and techniques such as reverse-J stroke, the cross-deck backwater strokes and compound back stroke. Wind awareness and boat trim will again play an important underpinning role in a skilful performance. Paddlers should be trained to maintain good speed and control (the use of controlling strokes that maintain momentum are acceptable, but it is expected that the reverse J will be used in the main).

#### **A.4 Turns whilst on the move**

Tight turns and open turns must be performed on both the on and off sides of the boat. Paddlers should develop an appreciation of how to carry or lose speed during a turn. They should understand the effect that speed, boat tilt and hull shape will have on the shape of their turn. In addition they should be able to use appropriate strokes to assist in tightening a turn up or opening it out.

#### **A.5 Moving sideways, both static and on the move**

Paddlers should be able to move the canoe sideways, both toward and away from the paddle. A balanced application of the stroke is required in order to avoid the canoe rolling or yawing. Training should cover a range of strokes including draw, sculling and pry strokes. The aim is for the paddler's upper body to be rotated toward the paddling side, with the blade deep for maximum efficiency and effectiveness.

Additionally, when on the move fine adjustments of blade angle and its position should be made to maintain the sideways movement.

#### **A.6 Supporting, both static and on the move**

Training should develop an understanding of a good brace position; loose hips, firm blade placement and upper body movement back inside the boat.

#### **A.7 Entering, crossing and exiting a simple flow**

Paddlers should be encouraged to explore the effects of angle, speed and tilt when entering and exiting simple flows from and into a range of different eddies. They should experiment with differing boat speed and angles to the current when crossing these simple flows.

#### **A.8 Poling**

Paddlers should develop balance and basic control with a pole whilst standing in the canoe. The role of trim should also be appreciated. They should work on being able to move the canoe forwards, backwards, stopping, turning using the pole both in a kayak style paddle motion as well as working the pole off of the bed of the lake or river.

#### **A.9 Sailing**

Through training paddlers should experience a range of improvised ways to 'capture' the wind to assist downwind travel. They should understand the limitations of any improvised sail and any safety considerations.

#### **A.10 Securing**

Training should cover a number of methods used to secure boats. This securing may be temporary such as a pier, jetty, riverbank or shoreline, as well as for storage or transport; boat racks, roof racks and trailers.

#### **A.11 Painter Use (launching, shallows, securing to a jetty etc.)**

### **Part B – Rescue Skills**

#### **B.1 Capsize, swim and self-rescue**

Paddlers should develop confidence capsizing, as well as the ability both to swim 25m to shore with their boat and to climb back into a canoe with someone holding onto the far gunwale.

#### **B.2 Deep-water rescue**

In performing any rescue paddlers should be aware of the importance of safe lifting techniques and how to best use the person in the water to assist in their own rescue. This should be covered within the training course.

#### **B.3 Towing and use of towline**

Paddlers should experience a range of towing techniques that can be efficiently deployed.

They should also understand the importance of a releasable system and the dangers associated with towing.

### **Part C – Safety, Leadership & Group Skills**

#### **C.1 Personal risk management**

Training should cover the practical application of the theory elements, D.1 Equipment and D.2 Safety.

#### **C.2 Awareness of others**

Training should raise awareness of the importance of good observation of other group members and enable paddlers to relay signals through the group.

### **Part D – Theory**

Paddlers should be given background theory as appropriate throughout the training and be shown a list of information resources.

#### **D.1 Equipment (including paddle selection and injury prevention)**

The coach should provide paddlers with an understanding of how and why a range of equipment has evolved and how best to use it. Specific consideration should be given to the potential long-term damage that can result from using inappropriate paddles for prolonged periods on flat water.

## **D.2 Safety**

Paddlers should develop a sound safety framework with use of practical, dynamic risk assessments.

## **D.3 Weather**

Paddlers should be able to understand and interpret weather forecast information from a variety of sources.

## **D.4 Wellbeing, health and first aid**

Paddlers should understand the factors that contribute to hypothermia and have strategies to avoid it.

They should also be able to deal with the most likely paddlesport injuries.

## **D.5 Access**

Training should promote an awareness of the range of access issues throughout the UK and of where additional information can be found.

## **D.6 Environment**

An appreciation of the environment we paddle in should be a key underpinning principle for paddlers. Paddlers should be aware of their environmental impact and be proactive in minimising this.

## **D.7 Planning**

Paddlers should know what questions to ask and how to go about organising a day out.

## **D.8 Group awareness**

Paddlers should become a productive member of the paddling group and understand different roles within the group of paddlers on the water.

## **D.9 General knowledge**

Paddlers should develop a wide general knowledge of all aspects of the sport.

## **D.10 Navigation**

Paddlers should be able to use a map and compass to identify obvious features and identify their position.

## **D.11 Etiquette**

Paddlers should be encouraged promote a positive image for paddlesports with other river users and local residents.