

3 Star Wild Water Racing – Tutor Notes

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At 3 Star the paddler is classed as being at an intermediate level. They must be at home in their boat, both on flat and moving water. Flat water can mean anything from a canal to a more exposed area with waves and wind or a slow moving river. However, the skills they have learnt in this relatively closed environment have to be transferred to rivers with reasonable flow and rapids up to grade 2. This is a more open environment and ability to read the river, make appropriate decisions, select the correct skills and then carry them out becomes necessary.

Decisive action and decision-making is important, as doing nothing is not an option and drifting into dangerous situations and putting others into compromising situations. could be a consequence. The element of working with others becomes important. They are not responsible for a group on the moving water, but they should be aware of their peers and help them by discussing tactics and giving way as and when necessary. Coaching this important aspect will be an essential element combined with coaching the skills in dealing with a moving river.

Craft:

Any Wild Water Racing kayak or canoe can be used, this includes Wavehoppers or other similar plastic boats. The award can also be taken in C2, it would be expected that both paddlers are at a similar standard and ideally both are training for the award.

Venue:

For the flat water personal paddling skills, any flat water environment can be used, preferably sheltered as coaching many of the skills requires a fairly static environment in the initial stages For the white water personal paddling skills; a river of Grade 1 standard with sections of Grade 2 is required.

All venues must be risk assessed and their suitability 'on the day' must also be assessed.

Training can be done at race venues before or after events on that stretch of water, but other stretches of water can be used providing the skills can be covered. The same venue does not have to be used for all the skills and training ideally would be carried out at a number of different venues with potentially different types of features.

Suitable sites and individual rapids will be identified and information published to assist trainers in their selection of venues.

Pre-requisites:

The only pre-requisite required for training is the ability to swim with or without a buoyancy aid Proof of swimming ability prior to training can be by witnessing the swim, or personal qualifications/certification from ASA/RLSS/STA etc.

There are other pre-requisites that have to be in place however prior to assessment for the award.

Swimming: The test will be swimming 75m on the front and 25m on the back.

Foundation Safety and Rescue Training

First Aid: A recognized 4 hour first aid qualification.

Evidence of Paddling on fast flowing water: This can be evidenced by log book or race results

Training:

Attendance at a training course is not a requirement, however it is recommended that training be carried out by a L3 (WWR) Coach or above. This can be done within a club trip or training, at a race venue. Individuals, who wish, can present themselves for assessment, however all the pre-requisites must be in place prior to assessment.

Part A – Flat Water Personal Paddling Skills

A.1 Fundamentals of Paddlesport.

Students should be taught the fundamentals of paddlesport. Use of the Forward Paddling DVD followed by practical coaching in developing the components is recommended.

A.2 Basic Principles of Forward Paddling

This is to outline the key principles of Forward Paddling, paddlers should be coached following these principles in order to establish a good foundation for developing their skills as they progress through the sport.

A.3 Efficient forward paddling.

This is putting the previous 2 elements into practice. Students should be trained to understand the key points of good forward paddling technique and the importance of engaging the larger muscle groups of the body and not just relying on their arms. This is a consistent theme and should be built on from 2 Star. A relaxed but efficient technique should be encouraged with good use of the legs in a kayak and the upper body in a canoe and not just the arms.

A.4 Steer and control with the edges of the boat:

The students should be taught to put the boat on one edge or the other to initiate and then control a turn without breaking paddling rhythm or changing technique. Avoiding doing sweep strokes is desirable. A course of buoys or other obstacles can be laid out as targets for the students to aim at.

A.5 Moving sideways both stationary and on the move

Stationary draws:

Students should understand why the body should be rotated, the paddle shaft should be as vertical as possible and the blade relatively deep in the water. Appropriate edging to help the boat move sideways should also be understood, Sideways movement should be efficient with little or no yawing, the students should know how to correct this quickly.

Moving Draws:

At this level a continuous fluid movement should be evident.

Students should be encouraged to experiment using the stroke in the normal forward paddling cycle. This should be co-coordinated and smooth, with a clear movement of the boat sideways and yet the boat should continue moving forwards on its new path with little loss of forward speed,

Students should appreciate the role that the boats speed has on an effective side slip and how they can maintain this speed using fine adjustment of blade angle in combination with boat trim and edge.

A.7 Supporting, both stationary and on the move:

Students need to understand why they would choose one particular support over another and be able to perform them on both sides in a kayak or towards and away from their paddling side in a canoe. They should be off balance and the paddler should keep their actions within their 'safety box'. An understanding of this concept is important.

A.8 Rolling on flat water:

The ability to roll is essential for the Wild Water Racing Paddler. It is appreciated that this skill may be new, or have been learnt in a swimming pool and possibly not performed outside, transferring this skill into an open water setting is important. The roll does not have to be perfect but it must be successful first time on flat water

A.8 Wash hanging on the side wash:

The student must learn to sit comfortably on the side wash of a boat of the same class and be able to maintain the position on the wash with changes of pace from the lead boat. Positioning can be achieved through use of edges, dropping off the power, change of stroke rate or leg pressure.

Part B - White Water Personal Paddling Skills

The ability to manage the boat on typical grade 1(2) white water

The students should experience paddling on simple rapids using good paddling technique and use of the water to help their progress. The rapid needs to be appropriate e.g. deep enough so a good clean paddle stroke can be applied and should be typical of a wild water racing venue on this level of water.

Students require considerable training on moving water so that they can develop the skills needed to cope with this 'open environment'. Training in a range of circumstances will be necessary.

Personal skills: Moving water.

Training should be conducted on sections of moving water of grade 1 to 2. Students initially need to be led down and build up to running sections of grade 2, they should be able to navigate as directed by the leader. They should train to perform the following skills

B.1 Lifting, carrying & launching

Training should aim to develop good lifting and carrying techniques. An understanding of why certain lifting and carrying techniques are more appropriate than others; e.g. spine in line, slide and glide etc, and an awareness of the importance of sharing the load whenever possible should be developed. This training should also incorporate loading and unloading boats from a trailer, roof racks and other common storage facilities. Students should be trained in launching and landing from a range of reasonable access/egress points e.g. beach, steps, high riverbank, rocks etc. This aspect is the progression from 2 Star. The student should also practice fitting his or her own deck before leaving the launching point.

B.2 Breaking in and out:

Students should practice suitable techniques to get into and out of simple eddies successfully with effective use of speed, angle, edge, trim, timing, dynamic balance and good body rotation. With regard to body rotation looking for 'future water' when turning should be understood and evident. Eddies on both sides of the river should be used.

B.3 Ferry gliding:

Working on forward (upstream facing) ferry glides. The students should experiment crossing a consistent flow without any major loss of height, from a simple eddy to a simple eddy on the other side, maintaining the ferry angle and making adjustments in ferry angles as required i.e. to cross eddy lines.

B.4 Efficient forward paddling on moving water with constant cruise speed:

The student should work at transferring the forward paddling skills from the flat to moving water, Simple stretches of consistent, but fast moving water should be used with minimal steering strokes, minimal loss of balance and good application of the Fundamentals and Basic Principles of Forward Paddling

B.5 Good negotiation of rapids:

Practice negotiating the fastest, clean lines down rapids with minimal use of steering strokes.

B.6 Reverse Ferry Glide:

Students to practice slowing the boat in the stream, creating an angle across the river and reverse ferry glide (facing downstream) to one side of the river. This is to simulate readjusting a line down a river in case of a sudden obstruction or a blockage in a route.

B.7 Shoot small drops:

Carefully selected simple drops to be used, the student must practice negotiating without 'banging' the boat and time their paddle strokes correctly to avoid any loss of speed or damage to equipment. Appropriate boat speed into the drop, then stroke timing and reacceleration out of the drop must be emphasized.

B.8 Turn to one bank, then the other:

The student to practice down river boat skills: Whilst keeping the boat moving downstream, steer to one bank and then the other in a series of zigzags, if rocks are present, then avoidance of them would be part of the training.

B.9 Re-accelerate the boat immediately after a feature on the river:

The student to practice slowing the boat down, then picking up the speed again suddenly after passing a particular point of the river. This could be done in conjunction with another skill (e.g. **B.7**)

B.10 Take split times for a group of paddlers

Practice and understand how to take split times during a time trial or a race with a small (6) group of paddlers, how to record, calculate and give the paddlers the information.

Part C – Rescue Skills

Training for this section will be covered in the Foundation Safety and Rescue Course, however it is essential that further training is given if the students have not performed the skills in either a Wild Water Kayak or Canoe

C.4 Throw line rescue:

Training should include a lot of practice at throwing lines to rescue a swimmer 10m from the bank.

The line should reach the swimmer first time, practice should also take place using a coiled line as well as a bagged line and different throws should also be practiced to allow for differing surrounding environments

The swimmer should have hold of the line in a time limit of 1 minute from opening the bag

- A dynamic and safe stance should be evident when the swimmer takes hold of the line The
- "Clean line" principle should be taught.

C.5 Capsize with spraydeck, swim and self-rescue:

The student to practice basic capsize drill in moving water of sufficient depth not to cause injury, remove spraydeck and swim to the shore with all equipment, empty the boat and re-enter. This can be combined with a throw line training session with the students working together.

C.6 Defensive Swim

The student should be taught and practice 'defensive swimming' on a simple fast flowing river, this can be combined with the throw line session with students working together taking it in turns.

Part D – Safety, Leadership & Group Skills

D.1 Personal risk management

Training needs to ensure that students have the experience and judgment required to safely operate as a group, on grade 1(2) water. They should practice the ability in identifying hazards and choosing suitable lines. They should understand the use of suitable equipment and clothing for a training session and they must demonstrate good river etiquette i.e. keeping clear of other paddlers on a descent, pulling out directly into the path of a descending paddler and understanding the needs of other paddlers on the river.

D.2 Awareness of others

Students should understand and be aware of the importance of what is happening to them and others around them. They do not need to be responsible for others but they should work together when

descending as a group and physically moving out of the way to allow faster paddlers to pass. They should also be aware of the needs of others they approach, particularly if they are in a 'playwave' or similar feature, or practicing sequences of gates.

D.3 Paddle a section of grade 2 water as part of a led group

Experiences on different rivers or sections of river are important, being led; not paddling too close, or too far apart is key here. This is to ensure that paddlers can train together in a group and work without impeding each other and also prepare them for paddling as a team

D.4 Chase boating:

The student must understand the principles behind safe effective 'Chase boating' and be able to assist in recues on rivers of grade 1(2) of both swimmers and equipment

Part E – Experience

Students would be expected to participate in a number of Wild Water Racing events in a single season, this can be before or after the training for the star award, but would be in the season of the assessment or the one preceding if not enough events have been held that season at the time of assessment. Classics, sprints and team events may be considered at the same venue on the same weekend, however, the same event cannot be counted over the same course over the same weekend if the weekend was a 'double header' This is to show the paddler can paddle in a variety of conditions at a variety of venues and not just be able to paddle one river

Part F – General Fitness:

The student should be using the listed methods for training in their preparation for Wild Water Racing. In their training they could be advised where to access information to commence training in these activities. Students should be encouraged to keep a training log/diary to record progress.

Part G – Compulsory Theory:

Students should be at least familiar with answers to the sample questions outlined in the Syllabus

Part H – Selected Theory

Students to select 3 topics from the list to study or research and answer questions on at assessment, or provide other evidence of study, this could be a written log or report, attendance at a presentation etc.