

Advanced Surf Kayak Leader Training Notes

Part A – Personal Paddling Skills

A.1 Lifting, carrying, launching and landing

The type of break surfed at this level will mean the application of a large variation in launch and landing skills. Training should allow practice in a variety of contexts including; coming in through a surf zone to land on an unknown beach, launching and landing on rocky foreshores, boulder beaches, steep high tide banks and piers or breakwaters.

A.2 Control

Training will focus on a high level of personal performance. Paddlers will need guidance in the subtlety needed to show the difference in control between Surf Kayak Leader and Advanced Surf Kayak Leader. Training should place an emphasis on identifying the level of error acceptable at Advanced Leader without limiting experimentation and improvisation. When conditions are appropriate the provider will prioritise the paddler's needs from the following core themes of:

- Using the full wave face both top and bottom.
- Hull speed.
- With and against the grain/shoulder.
- Ride length.
- Reactionary and choreographed sequences.
- Positioning, timing and closure.

A.3 Paddle out

The variations in wave type and venues are far too vast to cover the exact solution on any given day but the principles are similar. Training will need to consider extremely well thought out and proactive strategies for negotiating pitching waves and the skills of rolling under waves. The varied types of wave venues and conditions encountered at this level will mean a huge number of possible decisions and actions on the part of the paddler. Training should paint a clear picture that the rules of engagement to allow safe surfing will not always follow simple principles, and even the most proficient surfer may sometimes have to admit defeat, after having exhausted many possible solutions. The access to some breaks will require paddlers to have the knowledge, skills and leadership necessary to undertake short journeys in surf kayaks. Training should cover these aspects, as well as tidal movement and group leadership on coastlines with limited landings. Providers should make paddlers aware of the additional training British Canoeing provides for sea kayakers, and how it might complement surf training.

A.4 Take off

Training should allow paddlers to gain the considerable experience and judgement, linked to patience and etiquette, that consistent and effective take-offs require. As in the previous section the

range of scenarios are far too vast to cover every option but the principles outlined above are the significant partners to excellent physical skills of late take-offs, steep waves and regains. On reefs and points paddlers should be shown how to use transits, foam cones and wave patterns to position themselves with accuracy.

A.5 Turning

The provider's aim is to equip the paddler with bottom turn variations that will enable decisions on speed, angle, height, etc. to be made, allowing accurate access to the ride. Training should address the bottom turn options to allow both steep reef waves and thick rolling beach break waves to be ridden. Providers should note that the use of specific surf craft will greatly speed this process. In the context of the ride the paddler should be aiming to drive the boat, using the paddle to add to the process, not to slow or put the rider in negative positions from which there are few proactive options. The rider will choose to slow the boat or slingshot it into an accelerated state. The provider should make it clear at this point that the rider dictates the sequence, not the wave. Other turns might need the provider to work on timing issues and forward body positions to initiate skids and slides.

A.6 Variety, pace and attack

As soon as the riders 'default' has been established, the provider should emphasise the options that are not being exercised, so as to develop a wider band width of variety. Changes in boat, wave type and power will help paddlers build an understanding of how to ride in a more varied and appropriate style for a given wave; one size does not fit all. The end of the run should be coached as a positive event

A.7 Timing, height and the shoulder

Training should again begin from the paddler's current knowledge base, with providers using tools such as video and isolating sections of the run in an attempt to broaden the paddler's performance and understanding. An example of enhancing current understanding would be the work at the top of the wave where the perception of being at the top is based on the stern of the boat rather than under the seat, the same parallel can be seen in the bottom turn, often perceived to be back 'up' the wave but more normally slowing down at the bottom of the turn and the wave moving under the boat giving the feeling of carving up toward the top of the wave. Providers should note that shoulder proximity is easily understood with the use of video and purposefully riding too close and/or being overtaken by it will also help develop understanding. The ability to drive the boat at an approaching wall or lip is central to beginning aerial work, although not always within a paddler's ability range. Efforts to clarify the sequence necessary to develop this aspect of the ride should be made.

A.8 Roll in advanced conditions

Paddlers should have the opportunity to spend time experimenting with rolling strategies, both as a means of self-rescue, and as a paddle out skill. Although a single type of roll would be sufficient, providers should highlight areas of weakness in the paddler's rolling skill.

Part B – Rescue Skills

B.1 Deep-water rescues

B.2 Beach landings

B.3 Water based repairs and first aid

B.4 Rescue management

As the paddler will undertake the British Canoeing Advanced Surf Safety and Rescue Training course prior to assessment, training should equip the paddler with a skill set that allows them to be able to rescue from a variety of positions with multiple strategies. Providers should engineer complicated rescue scenarios that are indicative of the types of waves surfed at this level. Paddlers should demonstrate a solid understanding of the rescue building blocks, checked in a controlled environment, before progressing to more demanding situations. The provider should be extremely careful not to expose paddlers to potentially dangerous exercises whilst they are learning the application of problem solving and decision-making skills. The application of skills practiced would include:

- Re-entry and roll.
- Deep water rescues.
- Paddling a swamped craft ashore.
- No paddle surfing.
- Two paddle surfing.
- Towing a swimmer.
- Towing in swell.
- Carrying a casualty in the surf zone.
- Rescuing an unconscious surfer.
- Assisting a casualty ashore.
- Rip scenarios.
- Difficult beach landings.
- Water based repairs and first aid.

Part C – Leadership and Group Skills

C.1 Safety awareness and risk management

C.2 Group control and communication

The Advanced Water Leader should be able to manage a group of competent paddlers and set up a safety framework appropriate to the environment.

Training should develop the following themes:

- Information gathering.

- Group/environment and objective identification.
- Decision-making.
- Dynamic risk identification and management.
- Creating a safe working environment.
- Group briefing, organisation and signals.
- Adapting initial plans and decisions to match changing conditions.

C.3 Group safety equipment

Equipment at this level should be of a very practical nature and may be spread throughout the group. The equipment should be able to help the paddlers to create solutions to scenarios where the surf venue is exposed and the group face the following conditions:

- No landing zone.
- Travelling with a casualty.
- Equipment failure or loss.
- Injuries.
- Travel in and out through a surf zone.
- Summoning help

C.4 Appropriate leadership strategies, judgement and decision making

Paddlers should be given clear demonstrations of the use and implementation of the CLAP principles, and how they can affect the decision making process.

C.5 Demonstrate the capability to manage a range of incidents

Paddlers should be trained to manage scenarios and situations that will occur during leadership opportunities, they should be given techniques that help them in managing the group, individual and leader's needs.

C.6 Provide guidance through top tips and handy hints

A selection of simple hints and tips that the paddler could give to their group should be discussed. This is not meant to encourage a full coaching session, but should encourage the paddler to make things easier for themselves by up-skilling their group.

Part D – Theory

D.1 Advanced surf forecasting

Paddlers should be led through the process of making an accurate surf forecast for both the immediate area and when in unknown venues. Paddlers should be able to interpret data from a variety of forecast sources and understand the difference between macro and micro forecasting.

D.2 Wave theory

An applied understanding of the bathymetric features of reefs, convex and concave points should be dealt with in detail, equipping paddlers with the knowledge to accurately select a venue and understand how to manage the wave type encountered.

D.3 Etiquette

Training will include all aspects of wave etiquette, both in theory and in a practical context. Given the environments used at this level the consequence of inappropriate application of etiquette or wave riding protocols would be increased risk or possible injury. For this reason the provider should clearly create safe situations where paddlers are exposed to the practical implementation of these principles.

D.4 Well-being, health and first aid

The provider should present a problem solving approach to the application of first aid that is particularly relevant to the environment commonly encountered in advanced surfing. This would include current CPR protocols for water asphyxiation and treatment of cold shock hypothermia.

D.5 Equipment and design

Paddlers should be made aware of the characteristics of boats that govern speed and manoeuvrability. They should be made aware of the effects fins can have, and how to change the feel of a boat through fin movements.

D.6 General knowledge

It would be expected when working towards this award, that paddlers should develop both a depth and breadth of knowledge. Training should include a session to improve understanding of competitive surf kayaking should be covered.