

Course Content: L2 ESSENTIALS OF RIVER CANOEING

Outline tweaked for Rec School on Spring River ----- from IPC / SEI – 05/2010

Introduction & Logistics

- Welcome
- Introduction of Instructors and Participants
- Course expectations, limits, and time frame
- Goals : Help you make good decisions , Especially:
 1. Recognize and Avoid Common Hazards
 2. Improve skills used paddling rivers
- Review waiver, assumption of risk, Challenge by Choice, and medical disclosure
- No alcohol/substance use
- PFD Policy (always wear on water)
- Arkansas Boating Laws - *PFD, no glass, no spill cooler*
- Proper etiquette on and off the water
- Site specifics: regrouping, toilet facilities, etc

The Paddling Environment:

- 4-W's: Wind, Waves, Weather and Water
- Dynamics of Accidents - (*Poster & handout*)

Personal Preparation:

- Personal Ability - *skills, knowledge, judgment*
- Swimming - *are you competent to swim this rapid?*
- Fitness, conditioning, and warm up
- Basic skill- *Recognize & Avoid Typical Hazards*
- Safe paddle and boat handling
- Safety -- Speak up, Do Not Continue if Not Safe
- Personal Equipment
 - PFD, clothing, footwear, weather related gear
 - Water protection for gear, securing gear

Getting Started:

- Stretching and warm up to reduce injury
- Car Topping: Loading and unloading, racks, tie down
- Knots: figure 8 or bowline to form loop, trucker's hitch and 2 half hitches to tie down
- Canoe carries: overhead and suitcase
- Trip planning - 4P's:
 - proper planning prevents problems*
 - #1 Consideration - The River at that time!*
 - Online gages are useful, but look before decision to go*
- Avoid Trouble / Manage Risks by choosing
 - The Rivers you Paddle,
 - The People you Paddle with,
 - and the Equipment you Use.
- River Etiquette ,
 - Other paddlers, Landowners, general environment
 - Arkansas Laws - glass, trash, & coolers

Equipment:

- Canoe: types, parts, materials, outfitting
- Paddle: straight, bent, parts, sizing, hand position
- Life Jacket (PFD): type 3&5, USGS approved
 - good and serviceable condition, proper size
 - age 12 and under per Ark Law (*handout*)
- Equipment for Safety, First Aid, and group

Safety/Rescue

• Prevention is the Key

Lean into turns, lean downstream, hug the rock,
Walk Around or Out, *Don't Put On*

- Principles & Types
 - Rescue Priorities: People First , boats & gear next
 - Rescuers - Protect Self, Team, then Victim. **KISS**
 - Self Rescue - **QUICK-** Do Not Wait for rescue by others
- Rescue Sequence:
 - Stay Safe, Reach, Throw, Row, Go (SRETHROG)**
- Controlled capsize drills
- Deep water exits (*Vault and slide - not diving*)
- How to empty a canoe
- Swimming a boat to shore -- *with painter*
- Towing or bumping a canoe
- Towing a swimmer
 - Canoe over canoe rescues
- Side-by-Side
- Re-entry, Self & assisted, heel hook, rescue sling
- Receiving Throw Rope
- Basic Wading
- Swimming in current,
 - **Face Downstream On Your Back, TOES UP !**
 - Upstream Of Boat And Gear, use painter, ferry angle
 - Don't stand up or push against bottom until shallow

Strokes

• Basic Principles

• Body

1. Use whole body - Torso Rotation
2. Protect shoulders - Hands inside Paddler's Box
3. Balance, - Head above Butt, Relaxed & Erect Posture

• Paddle ---- C P R

1. Blade
 - Buried - far forward, fully immersed
 - Square - to travel Clean and Quiet
2. Shaft
 - Horizontal, blade far, boat turns
 - Vertical, blade close, most power, boat straight

• Boat ---- P A L M S

Position -- Choose best position to initiate maneuver
Angle -- Pick a target and go to it
Momentum -- More Speed solves lots of problems
Lean Boat -- Into turns, downstream, into rocks & trees
Strokes -- When in doubt, paddle!

• Tandem Teams

Communicate and Cooperate
Paddle in Cadence & On Opposite Sides
Trim Stern Down , Paddle Choices Matter

- **Tandem (Bow):** Forward; Back;
Draw; Bow Draw; Cross Bow Draw; (*combine into duffek*)
Push Away; -- Forward & Reverse; Pry
Sweeps -- 90° Forward & Reverse;

- **Tandem (Stern):** Forward; Back; Draw; Stern Draw & Pry; Push Away; Stern Sweeps -- 90° Forward & Reverse; Rudder; J Stroke; Pry

- **Solo:** Forward; Back; Draw; Stern Draw & Pry; Bow Draw; Cross Bow Draw; (*combine into duffek*) Sweeps -- Forward & Reverse; Rudder; J Stroke; Pry; Push Away;

Flat Water Maneuvers:

- Launching/landing
- Water confidence - comfort test - head still, rock boat
- Forward -- reasonably straight forward
- Reverse -- reasonably straight backward
- Stop: within 1 boat length
- Spins: (Onside and Offside, 360°, 45° at target)
- Abeam -- sideways without headway
- Turns in arc with leans while underway - 180° & 360°

River Running

- Characteristics of river currents
 - Downstream and Upstream V's, river left?right
 - Eddies/Eddy Lines
 - Bend
 - Waves, Holes
 - Pool & Drop v Continuous
 - Volume + Gradient = speed & power
- **River Classifications** are subjective!
 - + Is rapid Easy /Difficult for trained paddlers
 - + Is Scouting needed, necessary, or difficult?
 - + Danger to Swimmer/ Rescue Likely or Not?
- **Scouting**
 - from boat or shore , read from bottom to top
 - consider lines, features, and hazards
 - where can I stop without any doubt?
 - am I willing to accept consequences?
- **How to paddle in current**
 - **Do not boat out of control, be able to STOP** before reaching danger.
 - Look down river and choose best line of current
 - Immediately move boat to best current line
 - Move faster than current (or slower, or across)
 - Keep boat aligned with current approaching obstacles
 - Keep your faith in your paddle & paddle in the water
 - Lean into and pivot off obstacles, hug the rock.
 - * Spacing / Avoid "tunnel vision"
 - Be aware of entire river environment *from farthest visible downstream to nearest eddys and safe shore.*

River Maneuvers: P A L M S

- Forward Ferries
- Eddy Turns
- Peel-Outs
- C-Turns
- S-Turns

Dealing with Hazards

- **High Water --- most frequent fatality**
- **Cold Temperatures & Protective Clothing**
- **Scouting** if you can't see next safe stop!
- Currents -- Lines, interactions, where is it going?
- **Strainers/Sieves**
- Bends -- faster and trash on outside
- Rocks (Upstream and downstream V's)
- Broaching
- Pins and entrapment
- Ledges, low water bridges (Horizon Line)
- Hydraulics
- Undercut Rocks/Ice
- Dams/Flow diversion structures
- Portage and Lining, **Take Out and Walk!**

Group Management

- Trip planning - consider people, river, weather, equipmt
- Put-in Briefing - review plan, take out, & options.....
- Group (3 boat minimum, max = compact group)
- Group Organization on river *and shuttle*
 - Lead - set pace to keep group together,
 - Sweep - deal with the problems,
 - Safety - head count, watch each other
 - Spacing to maintain Visual Contact & Manuever
- River Signals -- paddle, hand, and whistle
 - Stop, Help, All Clear, Clear Center/Right/Left,
 - I'm OK are you OK?, +Special+
- Leave no trace

What's Next?:

- Wrap up ---
 - *ask about course goals, basic principles, etc.*
- Course limitations (not a whitewater course)
- Need for more instruction, practice, experience
- ACA and ACC Membership and activities
- Participation cards