



# *St. Albert Canoe Kayak Club*

## *SAFETY EDUCATION MANUAL*

The Club coaching staffs is required to have at a minimum the National Coaching Certificate Program (“NCCP”) Community Coaching Course, or ELCC, training in C.P.R. and Safety and First Aid, and to have the authorized Port Authority and Coast Guard motor boat licenses. No one without a boat license may drive a boat.

Our coaches educate paddlers on the risks, on how to avoid them and what to do if the unplanned happens. They are required to enforce the Canoe Kayak Canada Code of Safety and the regulations that follow, and paddlers are expected to cooperate fully.

All paddlers must be insured through Greater Edmonton Racing Canoe Kayak Club before being allowed to participate in the canoe/kayak program. This is done automatically by the Club after a fully completed Membership is submitted to the Registrar. This cost of insurance is covered in the registration fee, so it is important that you register on time.

### ***General Rules***

All paddlers must and will receive safety instruction before going on water. In addition....

All paddlers must be able to swim to the proficiency of the Canadian Red Cross Swim Level 6 requirements, which includes being able to:

- Put on a life jacket (PFD) in deep water
- Stay in the fetal position for one minute
- Stay above the water for one minute
- Swim 15m crawl, and 20m backstroke
- Bantam aged paddlers must always wear an approved flotation device.
- Paddlers up to age 15 must wear a PFD approved life jacket when practicing and an approved flotation device when racing.
- No boats or equipment may be removed from the Club facilities unless first approved by the Head Coach.
- All paddlers, despite their ability, must wear a PFD approved life jacket from the start of spring training until at least June 1, during fall training from October 1, and at other times when the water/air temperature is below 8 degrees Celsius.
- The Club's Cold Water/Air Waiver must be signed by each paddler (or his/her parent/guardian if under 19 years of age) training on water during the spring and fall.
- The Club's Individual Cold Water/Air Waiver Form must be signed by those adult paddlers choosing to paddle solo and/or unsupervised, and without a life jacket during the spring and fall. These paddlers do so at their own risk.
- All paddlers must inform his/her coach of any change in his/her health which may affect his/her ability to participate in the sport or which may endanger the safety of other participants.
- All paddlers must inform his/her coach that he/she is under the effect of any medicinal drug.
- Paddlers may not be "tied", "strapped", or "secured" to a boat or its floorboard, in any manner, during training or in competition.
- Paddlers must not purposely jump out of their boat at any time or throw equipment while on the water.

## **Bullying, Sexual Harassment, Alcohol and Drugs**

Bullying and Sexual Harassment will not be tolerated or condoned. Any complaints of this nature will be dealt with by the Head Coach and the Greater Edmonton Racing Canoe Kayak Club executive. Underage drinking/illegal drug use is prohibited. Any violations of this policy may be subject to suspension and parents will be notified.

## ***PFD & COLD WATER TRAINING***

Information from Canoe Kayak Canada: Spring and Fall offer unique challenges to training on Canadian water. Competent coaches and sound safety practices have been key factors in maintaining a good safety record within our organization. We need your cooperation to ensure this is continued. Your diligence in communicating and enforcing the sprint code of safety will help to prevent tragedies. We will be communicating several cold water safety protocols through our social networks this week and ask that you take time to review them with your athletes:

### **Personal Flotation Devices (PFD)**

- Mandatory for paddlers under the age of 18 while the water is below 8 degrees Celsius
- Mandatory for anyone under the age of 15 all the time
- Recommended for everyone while the water is below 8 degrees Celsius. Paddlers over 18 who choose not to wear a PFD must sign a waiver and have an approved PFD accessible in their boat or in the accompanying safety boat

### **Coaches**

- Stay close to your athletes in the safety boat / Safety Canoe
- Don't put inexperienced paddlers on the water
- Keep you athletes near the shore in cold water
- Carry a cell phone with you in the motorboat if possible

### **Weather**

- Don't put your athletes out in inclement weather
- Club Safety Officer and/or Head Coach must monitor environmental conditions including water temperature, air temperature, wind, precipitation

### **Cold Water Effects**

- Know the Effects of Cold Water and treatments

## ***MANAGING A CAPSIZED BOAT***

### ***SHOULD A SMALL BOAT TIP***

Paddlers must:

- Turn the boat over so that it is in the upright position.
- Find paddle and any other equipment that may be floating in the water and place in boat.

THEN -

- Hang on to the boat and wait for help, or
- Hang on to the boat and hand paddle and kick his/her way to shore.

## ***SHOULD A WAR CANOE OR DRAGON BOAT TIP***

Crews of war canoes must use the “buddy system”. In other words, each paddler must identify a “buddy” at the start of the practice. In the event of a tip, each paddler must find their buddy.

- All paddlers will attempt to locate the person directly in front of them. Report anyone missing or injured immediately to the cox.
- The cox shall do a head count.
- Paddlers shall, if possible, turn the war canoe over so that it is in the upright position.
- The cox shall do another head count.
- Rescue boats should be on the scene by now. Priority for getting out of the water shall be given to persons who are most in need of assistance (i.e., injured, asthma sufferers, etc.).
- All paddlers should now be in the rescue boats.
- The cox shall do another head count.
- If circumstances permit, rescue boats should now, and only now, attempt to pick up any equipment (i.e., buns, paddles) which may still be floating in the water.
- The war canoe / Dragon boat should be towed back to the dock in the upright position.
- As the war canoe / Dragon boat approaches the dock, it shall be turned over again, and lifted out bow first, upside down.

Although this is an unusual occurrence, it has happened and it will happen again. Above all, everybody must **remain calm!**

## ***CLOTHING***

- Paddlers must wear the Club’s official racing jerseys at all regattas.
- Clothes should be tailored to weather conditions and the level of activity. With the possibility of a boat capsizing, clothes should not be of the type to absorb water to the point of limiting the ability to swim or stay afloat. Loosely secured hats and sunglasses are discouraged.
- Depending on the site and the availability of docks, paddlers may have to wade into the water to enter the boat so it is recommended that shoes are worn at this time to avoid any injury to the feet.
- It is highly recommended that paddlers attend practices with a change of clothing and a towel.

## ***SUN PROTECTION***

Paddlers clearly are susceptible to sunburn but hopefully are aware of its adverse side effects and the more established concerns about skin cancer. Although shade is sparse on the water, races are of short duration so should not cause any substantial risk. Where regatta sites lack natural shade, the Club will use a canopy to protect paddlers both from the sun and the rain. Paddlers are reminded to minimize exposure between 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. when the sun is most intense; to cover up and use a sun screen with a rating of 30+ as those generally provide more effective protection. Since the sport involves water and perspiration, a waterproof sun screen should be the preferred choice.

## ***MOSQUITO PROTECTION***

Information is available concerning the West Nile Virus on the Ontario Ministry of Health website at [www.health.gov.on.ca](#) or from your physician. Some mosquitoes carry the West Nile Virus and bites may lead to West Nile Virus infection and, in turn, mild or serious illness. Research indicates that approximately four out of five people bitten by an infected mosquito do not show any symptoms. While most people who become infected will experience no symptoms or have very mild illness, for some the symptoms will be pronounced. Everyone is at risk and precautions are necessary to protect oneself.

Consider using a personal insect repellent. Use only products that are federally regulated such as those that contain DEET. The concentration of DEET should be no greater than 30% for adults and no greater than 10% for children. Apply repellent sparingly on exposed skin surfaces but not on open wounds, or if skin is irritated or sunburned. Apply on top of clothing and a light coating will do. Wash skin with soap and water when returning indoors or when protection is no longer needed.

## ***BOAT STORAGE POLICY***

The Greater Edmonton Racing Canoe Club assumes no responsibility for your boat and/or boat parts for damages that may occur while your boat is in storage, in transport for Regattas or practices.

In addition, GERCKC will not insure private boats.

1. Club boats are allocated spaces and cannot be relocated without prior approval from the Head Coach
2. All active members have first priority for storage of one boat within the building if storage subject to availability.
3. Active members are defined as a full paid member of a program that requires the use of the boat to be stored, during the winter/summer session immediately following the due date of the annual boat storage fee.
4. No Boat storage for inactive members or members who are enrolled only in the war canoe program.
5. All members are responsible for their own boat insurance.
6. Boat storage fees not paid will result in forfeit of allocated space and the boat will be removed from the storage facility. SACKC will not be responsible for the boat once it has been removed from storage.
7. Boat Storage fees are non-refundable and not pro-rated. Members who terminate their memberships early will not be refunded partial boat storage fees.

## ***BOAT CARE***

Some paddlers have purchased their own boats, floorboards, paddles, buns, lifebelts, etc. These are marked accordingly and should not be used without permission. Coaches will determine the appropriate boat for paddlers to use, one of the reasons being that there is a maximum weight rating for different kayaks. Only experienced paddlers may use the boats that are designed for racing.

### **Before and While Using Boats and Equipment**

Make sure you are instructed on how to carry your boat and place it in the water. Ask a coach if you are not sure.

Remember:

- Two people, especially if Bantam aged or new paddlers, are required to transport single boats.
- Larger boats always require a minimum of two people carrying them.
- K-4s are to be carried by a minimum of three people, preferably four, closer to the cockpit area, not by the bow or stern.
- War canoes require a combined effort by all its paddlers to get it in and out of the water.
- Don't lay a boat on the dock.
- Don't lift K boats by the rim of the cockpit – it is only glued on and not strong enough to withstand the weight.

- Handle paddles carefully. Don't throw them. Don't lean on them. Don't grind them into the ground.
- Floorboards are required in all wooden C boats.
- All wing nuts, foot rests, seats and runners must be left in the correct boat.
- Do not stand up in a boat, especially a wooden boat.
- Do not hang your feet out of a boat.
- Never purposely jump out of a boat at any time during a regatta or throw equipment while on the water.
- Never tie, strap or secure yourself to a boat or its floorboard, in any manner, during training or in competition.

#### After Using Boats and Equipment

- Never try to take a kayak out of the water when it is full of water! To empty the water from a boat,
  - First turn the kayak right side up.
  - Push down on the nose, letting as much water run to the front of the boat as is possible.
  - Pick up the nose of the boat and quickly turn it upside down, letting the water run out of the cockpit
 Repeat this procedure two or three times.
- Towel off your boat to dry and clean it before placing it on its storage rack. This applies to both wood and plastic boats. A wet plastic boat can drip onto a wooden boat below causing dry rot. At the same time, examine the boat for any damage.
- Return boats to their designated spot. Boats stored outside the boathouse must be secured with a bungee cord.
- Replace paddles after use in the appropriate coloured rack. Paddles left on the ground or dock could get broken or cause a fall for someone carrying a boat.
- Boat covers left on the ground pick up dirt and sand which scratch a boat's finish. Make sure covers are hung up or rolled and placed in an appropriate spot off the ground.
- All other equipment should be returned to its proper storage place. This includes life belts, life jackets, buns and floorboards.
- Report any damage at once to your coach

**By Zak Mahmoudi**

**Head Coach**