

Outdoor News

Journal of the Outdoor Educators' Association of South Australia
Volume 27 No 1, December 2008

From the Chairman

Mike Meredith

Greetings all and welcome to the last edition of Outdoor News for 2008. The next edition will come out early next year with details of the 2009 activities and events.

Speaking of events, last term was a very busy one for the committee with the State Outdoor Conference being held at the Education Development Centre Hindmarsh. The State conference was held over two days with a smorgasbord of presentations that were all of great interest and well presented. OEASA combined with Recreation SA to host the event and it proved to be a very rewarding arrangement. Over the two days approximately 120 people attended, some for the Aquatics on Thursday, some for Thursday night to hear Tim Gill's dynamic and entertaining talk of his adventures in Antarctica and some for the Friday to be stimulated, provoked or educated about the environment, programs and activities in the great outdoors. A great diversity of people attended and all were very complimentary of the sessions, the venue and who can forget the catering.

I would like to thank Rosemary and her team of Bec, Julie and Kayla from Rec SA for the superb job they did in organising the conference. Without their organisational ability it would not have been as successful. The sponsors for the conference must also be acknowledged and thanked for their assistance and support. In particular Anaconda for the conference bags and bottles, Griffin Wines for providing wine for presenters and for the happy hours, Venture Corporate Recharge, Wilderness Escape, Adventure Outdoors and State Swim. The caterers did a wonderful job with the food and must be

thanked for their professionalism and finely prepared and presented foods ensuring no one went hungry. Libby and Wayne as always helped out in the planning and conduct of the conference as did many others who provided valuable advice or assistance. If I have missed anyone deserving of thanks I apologise but your efforts were appreciated. Also, if anyone has feedback on the conference that would be useful in planning the 2010 conference please contact one of the committee and let us know.



There are a number of other events happening in the background at present which you should all be aware of many of these are at a notional level.

The Outdoor Council of Australia (OCA) held a summit 8-9 August in Brisbane which identified a more specific role for the Outdoor Sector and in part OCA. A National Outdoor Strategy is one of the outcomes of the summit and a first draft has been produced and responded to. Essentially it looks at how the quite diverse sector can promote, quantify and grow in a sustainable manner. As the draft is refined it will be open to wider comment and you should get an opportunity to view and comment on it.

The OCA has also launched through WA the National Outdoor Leader Registration Scheme (NOLRS). This

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And: Paddy Pallin, Mountain Designs, Outdoor Adventure Skills and Scout Outdoor Centre

From the Editor

Peter Carter

This edition was always intended to be a little later than usual, however it has turned out much later than originally planned. A couple of regular items are missing, but there's a concentration on the recent conference.

Wayne has a brief overview of the event, lamenting the fact that with parallel sessions it's impossible to attend all presentations. That's always been a problem, overcome in part by having all papers published in the conference proceedings.

We don't have such a document, but we do have the outlines of three of the presentations. Mike Meredith's 'Developing a Risk Management Plan for your camp or activity' and 'Outdoor games and problem solving activities' are here, with their titles acting as abstracts. Also in this issue is 'Enrichment on expeditions' by Wayne and Libby.

I've condensed my own presentation on the new Australian Canoeing Award Scheme to a couple of paragraphs, the outline diagram, and a couple of pages from the revised resources. Official launch (some training sessions have already been to the new syllabus) was 1 December, with assessment to the SRO 03 VET scheme available, mainly for TAFE's benefit, until 1 December 2009.

From across the border, Tony Carden, Executive Officer of VEOA, shares a few thoughts on outdoor education and the need to have the community behave in environmentally responsible ways.



The state government recently announced \$2.7 million for upgraded cycling and walking trail networks, together with a new strategy document. Environment and Conservation Minister Jay Weatherill's media release is on page 12.

Thinking trails still, the *Sustainable Recreational Trails Guidelines*, a manual put together by a team including Urban and Regional Planning Solutions, Harlen Graphics, and members of the South Australian Trails Coordinating Committee, won an award in the Environmental Planning or Conservation section of the Planning Institute of Australia 2008 Awards for Planning Excellence.

Anyone interested in planning, building, and maintaining trails should have a copy of the *Guidelines*, which can be downloaded from www.southaustraliantrails.com.

With the school year almost at an end and you're no doubt thinking of some outdoor activities without students.

Enjoy the break and the festive season.



The Outdoor Educators' Association of South Australia

Aims

- 1 To promote the development of Outdoor Education in South Australia
- 2 To represent Outdoor Educators on issues and matters concerning the use of the outdoors
- 3 To maintain the professional development of personnel working in the area of Outdoor Education
- 4 To maintain, support and develop the role of Outdoor Educators in South Australia
- 5 To promote the professional interchange of information between members and other related organisations through conferences, meetings, seminars and publications
- 6 To promote a philosophy of environmental awareness, preservation, conservation and positive attitudes towards the use of the outdoor environment
- 7 To act in an advisory capacity to community, government and non-government agencies

The Outdoor Educators' Association of South Australia

supports these national ethical guidelines for outdoor educators:

- The Outdoor Educator will fulfil his or her duty of care
- The Outdoor Educator will provide a supportive and appropriate learning environment
- The Outdoor Educator will develop his or her professionalism
- The Outdoor Educator will ensure his or her practice is culturally and environmentally sensitive

OEASA Committee 2008-2009

Chair: Mike Meredith

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Chairman's report

...continued

scheme enables nationally acknowledged skill sets to be registered. This should assist instructors in having their awards/skill nationally accredited and help with inter-state moves, etc. More details are available from the OCA Web site: www.outdoorcouncil.asn.au/9.html.

The OCA has also produced an Outdoor Activity Benefits Catalogue which outlines the research done in Australia showing the benefits of Outdoor activity. Useful for people studying in the area or those trying to justify programs. One thing it did show was how little was out there. Work for the future. A copy of this is available from the OCA Web site.

Lastly, a little closer to home the SACE Outdoor Education Course is being reviewed in line with the New SACE proposals. It is open for public comment through the Future SACE Web site: www.futuresace.sa.gov.au/schools.htm.

On a final note, I will be away for the next six months and Peter Kellett will be taking over as Chairperson in my absence. I wish you all great last term and peaceful festive season.

It is as always a pleasure to be of service,

Yours in the outdoors.



16th National Outdoor Education Conference, January 2010



Job opportunities

Anyone looking for Outdoor Education employment in Australia or New Zealand can consult the excellent Web site www.cooeeads.com.au.

COOEEads provides a weekly email listing of jobs, conferences and training opportunities in the outdoor education/ recreation; environmental education/extension; and conservation/park management fields in Australia and New Zealand. It is free to receive, but there is a cost to advertise.

For a range of employment listings visit www.voea.vic.edu.au/employment. Direct links to outdoor education employment opportunities on www.seek.com.au are also available.

A Outdoor Education Centre near Byron Bay in Northern NSW is looking for staff for 2009. Their home base is Nightcap (formerly Mebbin Springs) a 1200 ha private landholding in northern NSW surrounded by World Heritage National Park. Most clientele are school based. Programs are a mixture of expeditions in northern NSW and centre-based outdoor education programs www.interactionel.com.au.

News and notes

Teaching

At a recent symposium hosted by Teaching Australia their special guest, Joseph Aguerrebere who is the CEO and Chair of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards in the USA, made a simple statement that many wrote down: 'Teaching is the profession that enables all other professions to exist.'

ACTOEA State Conference

Urban Adventures

At Canberra Boys Grammar School

22–23 Jan 2009

Pre-conference activities 20–21 Jan

Urban Adventures, our conference theme, mixes the ideals of adventure with those of the modern urban lifestyle. We ask some challenging questions about the role of technology in the outdoors and the place of the natural environment in outdoor education today.

Register for the inaugural ACT Outdoor Education Conference in January 2009 by the form at www.actoea.org.au. Conference Programs are available from the same site.

16th National Outdoor Education Conference

The conference will be held at Notre Dame University in Fremantle, Western Australia from 10 to 13 January 2010. The call for papers has been issued, and details are available at www.outdooreducationaustralia.org.au.

Forestry matters!

PIRSA Forestry has released a new forest education resource and is keen to spread the word about this uniquely South Australia publication.

The resource is currently being successfully used by several schools in the south east which are taking part in an educating for sustainability pilot program as part of the Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative (AuSSI).

For information on the program and downloads, visit the Web site at www.pir.sa.gov.au/forestry and select the New forest education resource link.

OEAQ Conference

Ian Boyle has uploaded several of his conference presentations to a site called SlideShare. A number of other presentations from the conference can be found at his site also. You can also find some of our conference photos in a PowerPoint file at this site. Follow the links from the OEAQ events page at www.oeaq.org.au.

Safety in the Outdoors

A literature review has been conducted in the UK looking at parental attitudes towards risk, the nature of risky behaviour, and the benefits of risks for children. There are obvious parallels to the Australian situation and many of you may find the information interesting as it indicates that risk can be good! See www.playday.org.uk/PDF/Risk-and-play-a-literature-review.pdf.



State Conference Report

Wayne Hooper

The program committee for the State Conference need to be congratulated on a most stimulating conference program. In particular Mike Meredith, Rosemary Sage and Libby Robertson.

Informal feedback from people who attended was positive. My only criticism of the conference is that I was only able to attend one of the presentations programed each session and there were often more than one presentation that appealed.

David Nicolson from Paddy Pallin presented an enthralling session on equipment, both past and present. It was most interesting to see the changes in equipment over the last 50 years. He brought some examples of early bushwalking gear and his photos of early adventurers all kitted out were a hoot. David's knowledge of the latest technology provided valuable information and the gear freaks in the audience were drooling.

Tim Gill, the keynote speaker, gave a most interesting insight into the role of a training officer in Antarctica. I was particularly inspired by this quote.

“Do not try to satisfy your vanity by trying to teach a great many things.

Awaken peoples' curiosity. It is enough to open minds; do not overload them.

Put there just a spark. If there is some good inflammable stuff, it will catch fire”

Anatole France

Barry Hayden from DEH presented some thought provoking information on the issues facing managers of National Parks. He outlined with facts and figures, the dilemma of conserving the fragile ecosystems of SA while providing meaningful experiences for more visitors within a limited budget. He outlined current thinking re Park usage and management and he emphasised the different needs of stakeholders. An example is that in current times it might be appropriate to provide trails for mountain biking, which was not a priority in the past.

Richard Geytenbeek from Arbury Park Outdoor School had us enthralled while demonstrating boxes suitable for a range of birds, bats and possums. The culmination of his presentation was to use his ingenious camera on a pole, connected to a monitor, to observe the activities of possums in nesting boxes along the Torrens. Passing cyclists, like us, were enthralled to see possums high up in the trees spending their day in boxes, live.

Peter Boggiano, also from Arbury Park, had us looking for evidence of life along the Torrens using simple techniques which any teacher could adapt to enrich their outdoor activities with students of any age.

Peter Carter from Canoe SA updated us on Safety Standards and the new Award Scheme for Canoeing. All instructors or 'would be' Instructors should visit the Australian Canoeing Web site for these updates. 



David Nicolson and an old pack



Tim Gill



Richard Geytenbeek

Conference presentation

Developing a Risk Management Plan for your camp or activity

Mike Meredith

Scope of the presentation

- What is Risk?
- Why is a RM plan required?
- Risk and Outdoor Activities
- Planning considerations
- Developing a RM plan
- Resources

Risk: The potential to lose (gain) something of value. The loss (gain) may be physical, mental, social or financial. The presence of risk creates uncertainty.

Risk (Safety) Management: The collective processes used to reduce losses to an acceptable level.

Why do we need Risk Management?

DECS: Risk Management Policy (March 2008)

- Activity planning helps accountability and minimises loss
- Duty of care (Zero harm workplaces)

DECS: Risk Management Framework (November 2007)

- Every school, preschool must carry out a risk assessment at least:
 - Whenever a camp, excursion, or trip is undertaken; and/or
 - Whenever there is an event on or off the school grounds that involves students/staff/parents/volunteers/contractors (e.g. fairs, games, etc).

DECS: Camps and Excursion Guidelines (September 2007)

- Section 2.2.1—Safety
- Section 2.2.2—Hazard assessment
 - The assessment must be conducted and documented before the camp or excursion takes place and should occur before the principal/preschool director gives approval.
- Section 2.3: Contingency plans

Risk and Outdoor Activities

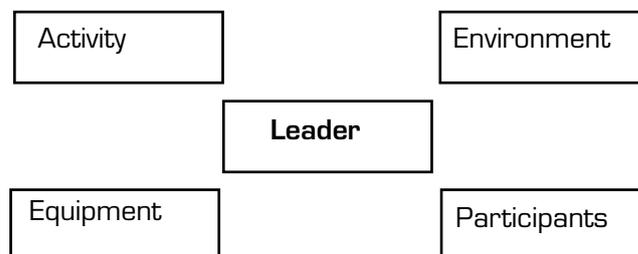
- We are surrounded by risk (threats)
- We live in a “No Harm” society with litigation
- For Outdoor Activities
- Why do we do it
 - Potential costs (risks) of doing it
 - Potential cost (risks) of not doing it
 - Benefit vs risk
- Intent should be “harm minimisation”

Planning Considerations

- Purpose
 - Educational outcomes and setting the context
- Environment and Location
 - Suited to group
 - Minimal impact of group or activity
- Activities
 - Suited to group (maturity and competence)
- Clothing and equipment required

- People
 - Staff/Leaders: experienced and qualified
 - Students: prepared
- Transport
- Communication plan
 - Emergency contact
- Weather

The Planning Model



Planning Cycle

Plan—Do—Review

Approval Process

- Principal has authority to approve Camps and Excursions in DECS schools and preschools
- DECS - Camps and Excursions Guidelines – 2007
- Contingency Plans developed
- Informed Parental Consent
 - Educational purpose
 - Nature of activities
 - Details of transport/supervision/equipment
 - Risks and safety
 - Emergency contacts
- Land Owner consent (e.g. NP&W)

Risk Management Plan

- Identify the Risks
 - Brain storm
 - Select threats to ‘life and limb’ and
 - Serious others

Risk and Causal factors

Risks

- Death or injury from a car crash
- Getting lost in the bush
- Getting hypothermia
- Drowning
- Head injury while rock climbing
- Lost student on a school trip
- Child injured or drowned by tipping out of boat
- Looking foolish in front of peers
- Failing to climb a rock route: resulting in loss of confidence
- Losing a kayak on a river trip
- Vehicle accident
- Feeling of failure, not wanting to try the activity again
- Process of learning impaired
- Severe blisters
- Burns
- Hunger or starvation

- Exhaustion
- Environmental damage
- Frostbite

Hazards, dangers and perils (causal factors)

- Hiring inexperienced staff to run an outdoor programme
- High ratios of students to instructors
- Inadequate clothing for the conditions
- Lack of physical fitness
- Inadequate equipment for the task
- No medical forms or medical forms incomplete
- Lack of teaching progression for kayak trip down a river
- Inadequate food and drink
- Tracks poorly sign posted
- Changeable weather
- Winding tracks, limited places where whole party can be seen at once
- Wet road conditions, poor visibility
- Bee/wasp sting
- Rock climbing: Using worn ropes
- Lack of adequate first aid kit
- Vehicles not serviced
- Not being able to access help if needed: lack of communication
- Age level and experience inappropriate to activity
- Lack of knowledge of area

Risk Management Plan

- Assess the Risks ('life and limb')
 - Analyse (consequence and likelihood)
 - Evaluate (rate the risk)
 - Treat (causes: controls and minimisation strategies)

Risk Treatment Options

- Reduce likelihood, reduce consequence, transfer, isolate or eliminate

Risk Management Plan

- Document: Incident Response Plan
- Document: Other relevant information
- Monitor, Evaluate and Communicate
- Risk Management is an ongoing process

Resources

New Zealand Mountain Safety Council's RM CD-ROM
www.mountainsafety.org.nz/resources/outdoorsafety/index.html

Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors (Victorian Education Department) www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schooloperations/edoutdoors/

DECS Risk Management Framework (PMIA—Policy, framework and matrix) www.decs.sa.gov.au/pmia/default.asp?id=29944&navgrp=2636

DECS Camps and Excursions—Guidelines (2007) www.decs.sa.gov.au/wallaradistrict/default.asp?id=28722&navgrp=1283

The Bureau of Meteorology www.bom.gov.au

Canoe SA: Education resources (includes Australian Canoeing Safety Guidelines) www.sa.canoe.org.au/default.asp?Page=7500&MenuID=Education/c775/0/



Australian Outdoor Adventure Activity Benefits Catalogue

Tony Carden

In recent times we have seen significant attention and energy devoted to the improvement of risk management in the outdoors. Some excellent initiatives and outcomes have flowed from this focus. The resulting enhancement of public confidence in the outdoors sector should pave the way for increased participation in outdoor activities. For outdoor education in particular however, there are a number of potential barriers to the prospect of growth in participation. One key challenge lies in the analysis by school administrators of cost vs. benefit of the various program options competing for bits of a limited budget. Such analyses are never likely to be easy.

Those of us who work toward providing more students with access to good quality outdoor educational experiences are perpetually faced with the need to maximise benefit and minimise cost. Our challenge is compounded by the generally low level of awareness of what the benefits of outdoor education are. The Outdoor

Council of Australia has released its Australian Outdoor Adventure Activity Benefits Catalogue. This document is the result of a survey of literature and studies from around Australia that relate to the benefits of participation in outdoor adventure activities in a range of contexts, including outdoor education. This survey and the resulting catalogue was conducted by researchers from the University of Canberra and funded by a number of sponsors. It has been noted by a number of outdoor educators from around Australia that the evidence published in the catalogue of benefits from outdoor education is rather light on. In order to move toward improving this situation, the VOEA is interested in collecting any and all studies, outcomes evaluations and any other kind of documentation of the benefits of outdoor educational programs. Please email your contributions to this growing body of evidence to education@voea.vic.edu.au. We will work alongside other organizations like OCA and Outdoor Education Australia (OEA) to make available an ever more comprehensive catalog of benefits.

Download the Catalogue at www.outdoorcouncil.asn.au.



Enrichment on expeditions

Wayne Hooper and Libby Robertson

It is our opinion that often the potential for enrichment on expeditions is not realised. Many students when away from the school on expeditions have not been given the tools to experience the environment around them and thus a significant potential benefit has been minimised.

There is no doubt that students develop new skills through expeditioning and the physical and emotional challenges presented by the activity are an important part of the learning. The opportunity for social interaction, the exposure to decision making processes, leadership opportunities and the need for initiative and teamwork are all valid reasons for undertaking expeditions.

Why take the students out into parks and forests to achieve these goals if these learning outcomes could be achieved by demanding activities in the gym or on the sports field?

It seems to us that the environment and the student's interaction with it is a significant part of the rationale behind Outdoor Education.

Most courses in Outdoor Education have an environmental component and thus there need to be overt teaching to enable students to access this component. Just as students need to be taught how to put up a tent, read a map or cook on a Trangia® they need to be taught the skills to interpret the environment they are in while on the expedition.

Like all teaching, the students need the tools to achieve and they need to be engaged so that they are motivated to undertake the learning.

Teachers can't be expected to be experts in every environment they take students to, but they need to have a range of basic skills and understandings that can set the students on the path to understanding the environment around them.

One technique which I have seen used is for the students to research a topic prior to going on the expedition. The Internet, National Parks Facts sheets, Field Guides, tourist brochures, interpretation boards, etc. provide a host of information.

In our experience often the student research prior to the expedition is not applied on the expedition and the students don't relate the research to what they see. The research is then presented as part of the report of the trip but bears no resemblance to what was experienced in the field.

To overcome this problem the teacher needs to assist the student to develop the skills required for the student to interact with the environment while on the trip. The teacher needs to ensure the student can access the resources they need prior to the trip and facilitate the use of these resources while in the field.

There is no harm in the teacher being part of this process and learning with the student while in the field. It is a

discovery process and the idea is for the discovery to happen in the field. If the teacher demonstrates an interest in finding out about the environment by modelling not only will they learn things they can relay to students in the future but it will motivate the students to follow suit. One technique which can be effective is to take photos or make sketches of points of interest when in the field and to research the topic when back at school.

Examples

Weather

Weather is an important consideration when taking part in an expedition and has significant implications for planning and risk management. Students can be involved in this process and by observing the weather during the expedition and relating it to expectations prior to the trip gain valuable insight.

Prior to the trip students could receive instruction on the normal weather patterns in the area and the factors and indicators involved in determining weather patterns. The students could use weather maps, forecasts and, climate statistics to predict the weather in the region for the duration of the camp. While on the expedition the students could identify wind direction and speed, cloud formations, temperature, precipitation, etc. to test their predictions and on return check the records to gain a much greater understanding of weather. If the school uses the same area over several years this data could be compared with previous years. The implications of weather conditions on the expedition should also be a consideration in this study, e.g. routes, distance travelled, clothing, food choices, fire bans, lightning, hypo- or hyperthermia.

Astronomy

Most students from urban environments are excited about the night sky when they are in the bush. Anyone can learn the basics of Astronomy to keep the students interested and to motivate some to do further research.

Astronomy tips

Obtain a star chart and learn how to use it. There is a monthly one on the last Saturday of each month in *The Advertiser* with lots of interesting information about the month's sky, *The Australian* has info each day about what is of interest in the sky. You can buy star charts for all year round from Australian Geographic or Dymocks. Many school science departments have them. It is easier to read the star chart using a torch with red cellophane over the lens, which enables you to keep your night vision.

There are numerous books on field astronomy and short courses run that can help you gain skills. The planetarium at Mawson Lakes is a useful resource. Paul Curnow writes about Aboriginal perspectives of the sky, which is also interesting.

Interesting facts/tricks to get you started

The sun and the moon move across the sky on a path called the ecliptic. This is the path the planets take also.

Thus if you see a bright object on the ecliptic it is likely to be a planet. See *The Advertiser* or *The Australian* to identify. The bright stars are easy to identify just after the sun has gone down because at that time they are the only ones visible.

Alpha Centauri, the bottom Pointer, is the closest star to earth other than the sun. The Coal Sack near the Southern Cross is easy to see. In July Scorpio, the most obvious constellation, is a large constellation which is easy to see almost overhead. It has a very obvious red star (Antaries) and a sickle tail. Appropriately, Regulus in Leo is obvious in the west and Achernar and Canopus in the South. Spica is very bright in the North West. In March when many are on expedition there are many easily identified stars. Everyone knows Orion (the saucepan). Rigel and the two red stars Alderbaran and Betelgeuse are very easy to identify. Pleides (the seven sisters) which is part of the legend is also visible low in the sky) Sirius, Canopus and Achernar are very prominent while Procion and the twins Castor and Pollux are also prominent. The Magellenic Clouds are also very easy to see overhead.

Don't forget the technique of using the Southern Cross to determine South also.

Plant identification and ecology

The first response by many people is that plants are boring and you won't turn students on to learn about them. We agree that unless there is some extra incentive or relevance this is the case with most students. What is the point of learning the names of plants out of context? We agree, none!

Some strategies to interest students in plants

Draw the student's attention to the two insectivorous plants which are common in many areas of SA, the two sundews *Drosera whittakeri* and *Drosera peltata*. Students are generally interested in them snaring insects, their adaptations, where they grow and why, and their different flowers. Plant Ecology through the back door! Most students are intrigued by native orchids and can be engaged in finding the range of these delicate plants. While focusing on looking for these small and elusive plants it is amazing what else they find and the interest generated. When paddling on the Murray backwaters, highlighting that the floating reddish green weed (Azolla) is actually a floating fern opens the door to further inquiry by some students. The above three examples are the micro approach. The macro approach which I believe is easy and relevant for students to grasp is the concept of plant communities. Thus while walking in Mambray Creek or paddling the Murray it is easy for the students to see the different plant associations in different areas which focuses their attention on the whole area of plant ecology. Another general approach is to highlight the adaptations of plants rather than what they are. Traditional uses of plants over the years provide another insight into the study of plants.

History

Researching the history of an area and being able to tell the story of earlier times never fails to engage students. I have witnessed the attentiveness of the students as

Peter Kellett describes the lifestyle and hardships of the original settlers in the Mount Crawford region where the students can see the ruins and visit the graveyard and get a feeling for the history of the area. This experience was highlighted by the fact the students had carried a pack for three days in wet and windy conditions and could relate to the hardships endured by these people. In the Chowilla region there is an excellent historical trail where the sites can be accessed by walking a few hundred metres from the creeks being paddled. The trail provides a snapshot of early times in the area when it was the overland coach route from NSW to SA. The put in point at Border Cliffs where the Customs House still stands is part of the story.

We believe that an important part of the expedition experience is for the teacher to ensure the students have access to the history of the area they are visiting and that the remnants of that history are put into context when coming across significant indicators, e.g. ruins, monuments, graves, canoe trees, middens, interpretive signs.

Bird identification/ecology

Most students will be interested when they see a wedge-tail eagle fly over or a flock of swans take off, but how do we focus their attention to the next level? Once again the skill is to give them the tools, to make the task not too onerous and to engage their interest.

We believe the first step, as is the case for all these areas, is for the teacher to express interest and to stop and take the time to observe. Bird watching is a difficult activity and so there is no point in starting with small brown birds unless there is something of note happening, e.g. obvious territorial behaviour. It is useful if the teacher has facilitated the identification of the more easily identified, common birds likely to be encountered on the expedition and anything of interest about each species, e.g. nesting or feeding habits. Examples are spoonbills, which have a distinctive way of feeding, and rainbow bee eater's nest in holes in banks. Easy to use silhouette charts identifying features should be available. Also, students should have appropriate practice in using binoculars and the techniques of observing and identifying birds. Field Guides should be readily available to build on the initial interest and debriefing at the end of the day to share experience are essential.

Wrap Up

These examples are only the tip of the iceberg. Strategies like creative writing, solo time, Van Matre activities, photography and sketching can all be part of the enrichment experience. Areas like geology, geomorphology, mammal, insect, reptile, crustacean, shell studies can easily be facilitated.

Final word

Like any area of study the students need to be empowered by the teacher to achieve the desired outcomes. Overt teaching prior to the expedition and ensuring the students have the resources and tools to undertake the learning are essential.

Conference presentation

Outdoor games and problem solving activities

Mike Meredith

Safety

Safety is of prime importance with all outdoor games and group problem solving activities.

In particular ensure the following guidelines are used:

- Challenge by choice: some people may be uncomfortable or unable to participate, allow them to join in as best possible but don't force them into activities which may result in embarrassment or injury
- Don't allow participants to jump or throw people as part of the activities
- Where possible carefully pass people over obstacles, etc.
- All actions should be controlled and conducted under supervision
- Keep people as low as possible, e.g. on rollers or equipment to minimise the fall distance if they slip or fall
- Use spotters or helpers to assist people on obstacles or equipment if required
- Use a soft or grassed surface if likelihood of falling
- Explain the risk and give harm minimisation strategies as part of activity briefs
- Make sure the ground being used is free of obstacles or dangerous items.

Encourage maximum participation and fun whilst planning for and doing activities.

Setting the context (protocols)

Supportive: Graduated difficulty

No put downs: Fun and enjoyment

Having a go: Learning

Success oriented: Encouraging

Risk largely perceived (physical and emotional): Safety, Safety, Safety

Sequence of presenting

Activity Brief

Conduct Activity

Review or Debrief Activity

Types of activities

Ice breakers/ Acquaintance

Deinhibitizers

Trust/Spotting

Team building/ leadership

Debrief sequence

The What: Facts, relive the experience

The So What: Express feelings

The Uh Ha: Examine and think about

The Now What: Explore the future

The origin of the following games and activities are many and varied. Most have been about for some time in one form or another. Sources include but are not exhausted by, Project Adventure, Outward Bound Schools and Arbury Park School, to name a few.

Activity Sequence

Ice Breakers/acquaintance

Group selection: Line up by height/age/name, number 1-2-3, etc.

Name circle: Pass ball around calling name, I'm X passing to Y, random names

Line ups: On bench or plank line up without falling off by:

Name

Height

Age, etc.

Tusker: Start with pairs, play join on tag

Group Monster walk: Group tied together get from A-B

Dehinhibitisers

Hog calls: Pairs choose a paired call, split up, blindfolded find each other

Pull throughs: Right hand forward left hand back, join hands pull back to front

Hand tangles: Put your right hand in put your left hand in, untangle the mess

Everyone ups (two per group): Pairs sit facing, get up, increase group size and back to back

Hoop circle/relay: Form a circle, pass hoops around without breaking circle

Moon ball: Big soft ball, keep off ground volleyball style, group set targets

Group Balloon Carry: Balloon per pair +1, group needs to get A-B, no drops/holding

Balloon buddy squeeze: Pairs pop balloon by squeezing

Trust/Spotting

Blindfold walk: One blindfolded, one guide, one spotter, follow guide's directions

Three person Trust Falls: Piggy in middle with trust passes back and forward

Circle of friends: Piggy in the middle trust pass around circle

Group carries (three per group): Three, carry one; six, carry one; twelve, carry one

Team Building/Leadership/Problem Solving

Jelly Roll: Need: 1 x 2.4m plank, 5 rollers, 2 broom handles and solid surface

Task: Get from A-B on plank and rollers without touching ground

Safety: No standing, watch fingers, two hands on broom handles

Piranha Creek: Need: 1 x 2.4m plank, two crates/drums, flat area

Task: Get group A-B without touching ground in between

Safety: No jumping between crates, shoes on, watch plank falling

Magic Floats: Need: 2 x 2.4m planks, 4 crates and flat area

Task: Get group A-B without touching ground in between

Safety: No jumping, shoes on, watch plank falling

Sheep and Shepherds: Task: Shepherd rounds up blind-folded sheep without talking

Need: Blindfolds, rope pen, flat cleared area

Safety: No obstacles in area, sheep use bumper position

Life Raft: Task: Get group into life raft without talking once planned

Need: Hoop or rope circle 1m diameter

Safety: Clear area

Spider Web: Task: Get group through web, hole used once, no touching web

Need: Spider web, clear area

Safety: No jumping or throwing through, pass through safely

More games ideas

From various sources.

Bandana trick

Equipment needed: one bandanna or piece of string

The challenge is to tie a knot in a bandanna without letting go of the ends. Have your kids try to do it, especially your super smart 12 year olds. Really, play this up: let them have a good long try at it. Then you do it, with a big smile on your face. Here's the trick: fold your arms first. Grab the ends of the bandanna (this will be slightly awkward), slowly unfold the arms, thus tying a knot, and then stand back as everyone else wants to try it.

From www.camprena.com/free-tips/free-tips.html#tip2

Teambuilding game: Inhuman knot

- Group Size: Groups of 6
- Age Range: Middle school to adult
- Intensity: Mental = 2, Physical = 1
- Time: 20–40 minutes
- Space: Minimal–medium–lots
- Setup time: 3 minutes
- Props: Three ropes (each 1.5m long) for each group of 6 people

Objective

First, create a tangled mess of your ropes then trade your tangled mess with another group's and see if you can untangle their mess (while they work on yours).

Setup/preparation

- 1 Here is a great team building game that uses simple props, is easy to transport (in your pocket) and is fun and challenging. You need at least 12 people (two groups of six) to play this game.
- 2 You need one 1.5m section of rope for every two people. I use 3mm nylon rope.
- 3 People will be working in teams of six. Setup the activity in advance of the group by placing three ropes on the ground in the shape of an asterisk (*) Each team of six will have their own set of ropes in the shape of an asterisk.
- 4 Team members pick up an end of a rope with one hand. Once you pick up a rope you can't let go of it until the activity is over.

5 Each team of six will now take two minutes to tie a big knot in the center of the ropes. Keep working on making the knot more tangled until time runs out.

Remember, no letting go of the rope!

6 After time is up, lay your ropes (your tangled mess) on the ground and let go of the ropes.

7 Teams will now rotate to another team's knot and pick up a rope. Now work together to untangle the knot without letting go of the rope.

Rules

Once you grab the end of the rope you have to hold on with that same hand until the activity is over.

Debriefing Suggestions

- 1 Are you working with a team that needs to experience what it's like to make a mess and then hand it off to another team to solve? Sometimes you see this in shift workers: they will either create a problem or recognise it and then postpone solving it if they know the next shift will be more likely to solve it. It's the old 'passing the buck' syndrome.
- 2 What is perfect about this problem?
- 3 What can we do to avoid problems all together?
- 4 What is our responsibility to this problem? Is it ours to solve?

Variations

- 1 If your group size is not divisible by six than you will have to be creative. You might need to make two teams of eight (four ropes required for a group of 8). When it's time to switch, teams of eight must switch with teams of eight.
- 2 Time the group to untangle the knot.
- 3 Close your eyes while untying the knot. It takes lots longer but it can be done.

Quote

'A good knot on a bad rope is no better than a bad knot.'

Alvin Smith

Taken from www.teachmeteamwork.com



The Active Outdoor Recreation Report

The Active Outdoor Recreation Economy, a comprehensive new report by the US Outdoor Industry Foundation, estimates the economic contribution of active outdoor recreation (bicycling, camping, fishing, hunting, paddling, snow sports, wildlife viewing, and trail-running, hiking, climbing) to the US economy. The report is more than just a tally of industry gear sales. It includes travel-related expenditures and recreation's indirect economic contribution. The study is comprehensive: nearly 14,000 interviews were conducted to understand recreation's role in the US economy.

Relevant Web sites are www.outdoorfoundation.org and www.outdoorindustry.org.



Some Interesting thoughts

Tony Carden, Executive Officer, VOA

As world leaders meet in Japan this week to discuss, among other things, how they intend to lead an effective response to climate change, I'm drawn to the question of how best we, as Outdoor Educators, can contribute to this great challenge.

Outdoor Education in schools in Victoria at the moment seems to fall into two categories: learning about the outdoors and learning in the outdoors. The first category is often focused on learning about ecosystems, human impacts on environment and human uses of environment. This is mostly about acquiring rational understanding, information and knowledge. The second category seeks to capitalise on the receptivity of learners who have been shifted beyond their emotional comfort zone by unfamiliar experiences in the outdoors, to suggest, instil or reinforce, some desired personal attribute, attitude, value or belief. This kind of learning is non-rational, hard to measure and difficult to consistently facilitate. It can also be incredibly powerful.

A popular piece of internet wisdom says:

“Watch your thoughts; they become words.
Watch your words; they become actions.
Watch your actions; they become habits.
Watch your habits; they become character.
Watch your character; it becomes your destiny.”

This maxim, widely attributed to Frank Outlaw, correlates rather nicely with the somewhat simpler pedagogic triad of head-heart-hands.

The two categories of learning described earlier, would seem to cover the necessary 'head' and 'heart' learning that should lead to the kind of 'hands' action that (if globally applied) would save the planet.

It seems to me that sustained efforts over the past decades have led to great progress in popular thinking and understanding about the facts of how humans relate to the rest of nature. Despite this, the main global trends of human induced environmental degradation appear

not to be slowing. Although the collective 'head' is better informed than ever, the collective 'heart' remains tied to long standing habits. Examples of this abound, but the most topical one at the moment is probably the popular outrage in wealthy countries over the rising price of fossil fuels.

The 'heart' based learning aims of outdoor ed programs are quite often selected from among the domains of relationship with self, others and nature. At first glance it would seem that an OE program that aims to improve a learner's likelihood to engage in useful environmental action, should target elements likely to enhance the learner's emotional relationship with nature. Whilst this is certainly an excellent aim that should be included, its likelihood of occurrence is so subjective that it's almost entirely beyond the reach of a facilitator.

An area of 'heart' based learning that may be more teachable, and is perhaps less often considered, is that of valuing the joy and satisfaction that are available from the whole range of non-material sources. Perhaps controversial and ambitious, but very valuable if it can be achieved, this kind of learning, which can probably be called spiritual, may well be a necessary step on the path to environmentally sustainable habits.

So, as we think globally and act locally within our spheres of influence in designing and facilitating outdoor learning programs, I suggest we consider some of these questions:

How can we effectively 'teach' non-materialist values?
How can we design OE programs that are most conducive to such learning?
How can the insights that may arise from outdoor educational experiences be applied?
How can outdoor educators maximise the occurrence of these insights and the chance that constructive action will follow?
What opportunities exist for extending these teaching and learning opportunities beyond the sphere of schools education?

From *VOEA e News* July 2008



Earth Hour

Wayne Hooper

Many of our readers probably participated in Earth Hour and encouraged classes and friends to participate also. Below is an update from the organisers which might encourage those who didn't participate this time to join in next year.

Earth Hour would like to congratulate everyone who turned off their lights on 29 March. Every light counts, and without the support of individuals, Earth Hour would not be the global success it has been.

Polling by AMR Interactive showed that 58 per cent of Australian adults in capital cities took part in the lights off campaign that started in Sydney last year. The research also showed that respondents participated in

Earth Hour in a number of ways including turning off the lights at home (56%), turning off some household appliances (46%), and taking the mobile phone charger off standby (37%).

Internationally, 28 Earth Hour flagship cities in 10 countries participated, together with at least 370 supporting cities and towns around the world, making Earth Hour the largest voluntary power down event in history.

Earth Hour demonstrates the ways in which individuals can collectively make a huge impact on overwhelming problems like climate change. Through incorporating simple sustainable solutions in your everyday life, the mission of Earth Hour can be achieved every hour of every day.

Visit earthhour.org for more information about how you can make energy savings every day.



\$2.7 million for upgraded cycling and walking trail network

November 2008

Environment and Conservation Minister Jay Weatherill said that in recent years there has been a substantial increase in the demand for places to cycle—particularly on mountain bikes—in the State’s parks and reserves.

The Government is considering new mountain bike trail loops, cycling links between parks, and links with Eagle Mountain Bike Park.

“People have been telling us they want more places to ride their bikes, and we want to deliver that for our community,” Mr Weatherill said.

“This is all about giving people the chance to get out and be active, while at the same time protecting our natural environment.”

Linking with Nature—A Trails Strategy for South Australia’s Protected Areas 2008–2012 was developed by the Department for Environment and Heritage (DEH) to encourage more South Australians and visitors to discover and enjoy the extensive network of trails across the State.

Cycling is allowed on public roads in all parks, and on some trails and tracks in various parks including Belair National Park, Shepherds Hill Recreation Park, and Flinders Ranges National Park as part of the Mawson Trail.

Currently, the majority of trails only allow walking. The new trails strategy recommends they be opened up to

cyclists, where this can be managed sustainably and does not have an impact on other users’ enjoyment of the trail.

Trail plans under way for several parks including Belair National Park, Flinders Ranges National Park, Innes National Park, Cleland Conservation Park (including the Waterfall Gully to Mount Lofty Hike), Mount Remarkable National Park and Hallett Cove Conservation Park.

“Trails are a valuable asset to the state’s tourism industry, creating jobs and putting money back into local economies,” Mr Weatherill said.

“They also improve the quality of life for South Australians, by encouraging physical activity and providing a focus for volunteers and many ‘Friends of Parks’ groups.

“Linking with Nature sets a clear direction for a manageable and sustainable trail network that will accommodate a range of recreational activities for all visitors.

“We will now begin the process of talking to the wider community about the trails and their future use and improvement. Draft plans will be available for public comment during the next twelve months.

“Good planning will maximise the visitors’ experience, while minimising the environmental impact.”

Obtaining a copy

The document can be downloaded from www.environment.sa.gov.au/parks/pdfs/linking_with_nature.pdf 

Outdoor Recreation demand on the rise in SEQ

Rob Hales, Griffith University

Beautiful one day, perfect the next: it seems sunny Queensland is living up to its reputation when it comes to a love of the great outdoors new research has found. Results from the Southeast Queensland Outdoor Recreation Demand study were launched by Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Sport, the Honourable Judy Spence MP, at Griffith’s EcoCentre last week. Outdoor Recreation was acknowledged as a major feature of the local economy contributing around \$1 billion annually.

The research, conducted by Griffith Business School Associate Lecturer Rob Hales and former Griffith academic Dr Jackie Kiewa revealed outdoor recreation demand continued to grow in Southeast Queensland.

Mr Hales said the study was conducted every five years to determine major trends in outdoor recreation participation and demand forecasting in southeast Queensland.

The region is increasing in popularity as people are attracted by the livability and outdoor recreation options. However the growing popularity is endangering those qualities, Mr Hales said. “There is increasing concern over growth management issues, with social trends

influencing many of the observed ‘positive and negative’ changes in participation rates of the 12 activities surveyed,” he said.

The study found that there was an increase in the preference for very natural outdoor recreation settings generally across the activities but people are increasingly using somewhat natural settings as a result of spatial, social and economic constraints.

“These trends highlight the need to prioritise recreation planning and management to ensure positive experiences afforded by activities can be maintained and maximised in the future.”

The study was funded by the Queensland Department of Sport and Recreation, Queensland Department of Infrastructure and Planning, Environment Protection Agency, Queensland Health and SEQ Water.

To obtain a copy of the study please contact Di Bensley at the Department of Sport and Recreation (Outdoor Recreation Team) on (07) 3405 6943. 

Australian Canoeing Award Scheme 2008

Peter Carter

The newly-revised Australian Canoeing Award Scheme will formally begin on 1 December. The new scheme is without the formal link to VET, although people who need VET Statements of Attainment will still be able to be assessed against VET units of competency if necessary.

The changes mean that the scheme is easier to understand and administer, and more closely aligned with the needs of club paddlers. Each award consists of a number of components: Skill, Knowledge, Experience, Communication, and Leadership.

Several awards, such as Introduction to Sea Skills, have been dropped, as they were not widely accepted. Basic Skills may be in kayak or canoe on flatwater, sea kayak, or SOT.

A new stream, Coastal, designed for the increasing use of SOT craft by tour companies is now complete. Also new is the Moving water Endorsement for Flatwater Guides and Instructors to qualify them for leading and instructing on waters such as our Murray backwaters, with their snags and other hazards.

With the new scheme has come a new edition of the Award Scheme Handbook, new assessment record and project forms, and a revised set of resources. For details, see the Australian Canoeing site <www.canoe.org.au>.

Forthcoming Canoe SA courses

Flatwater Skills, Canoe/Kayak Lifeguard

Flatwater Skills: 14, 15 January 2009

Lifeguard: 17, 18 January

Sea Kayak Weekend

Victor Harbor, 7–9 March

Training from beginner to Instructor level

Holiday Programs

Paddling fun and games for children 11 and up:

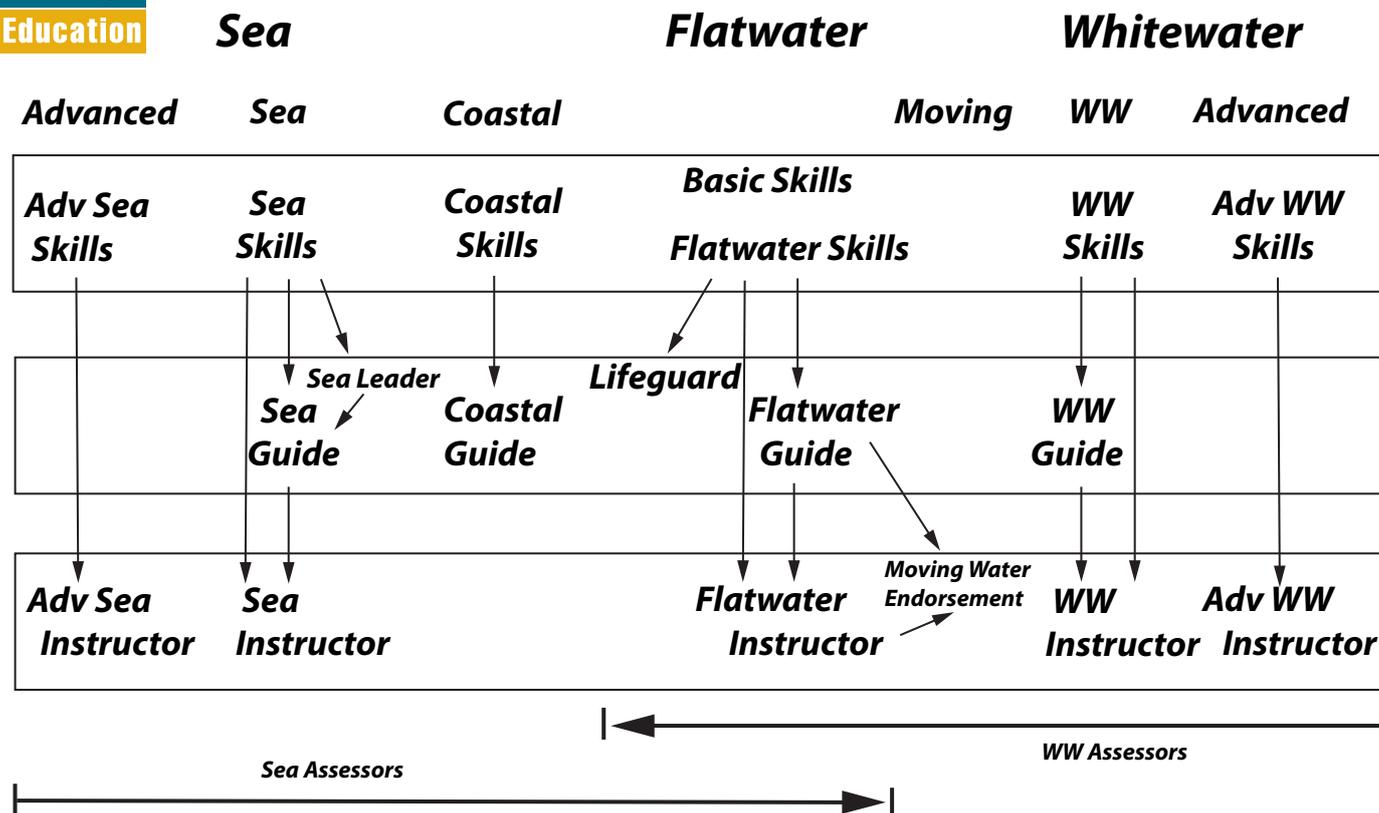
16–18 December

19–21 January

Contact Canoe SA, 8240 3294, <www.sa.canoe.org.au>, for details.



Australian Canoeing Award Scheme 2008

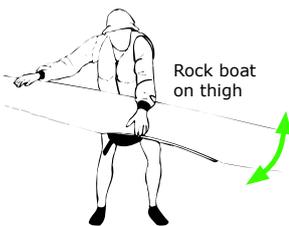


Demonstrate simple kayaking skills

Emptying out

The easiest and safest method is to have a person at each end, raising and lowering alternately. Hold the boat about half a metre in from the end so that it does not roll upright.

On a steep bank you may be able to empty the boat by raising and lowering the end nearer the water. A **light** kayak can be rocked on one thigh.



Forward paddling

You want to go places, so forward paddling is the important stroke, and is usually described in three phases.

Catch

The catch is the start of the stroke, the entry of the blade into the water. The key points are:

- clean entry, as far ahead of the feet as possible, with the blade as vertical as possible
- full rotation of the torso, bottom hand shoulder forward
- quick development of power

Think about:

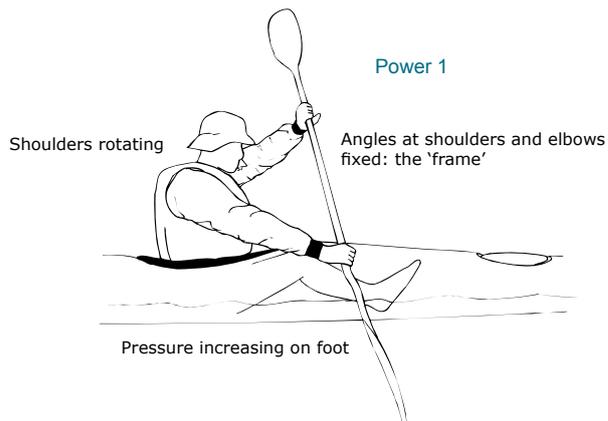
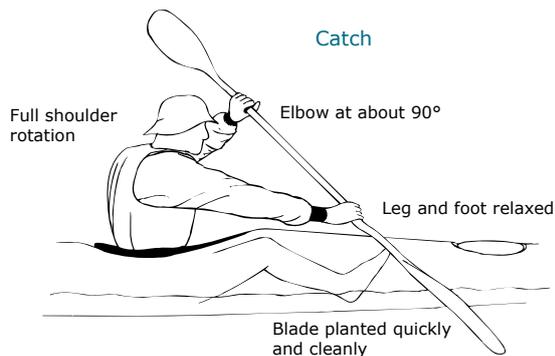
- taking the blade to the water: the bottom hand takes the blade to the water in a spearing motion, with the top hand following the shaft movement, but not pushing the blade in
- squaring the blade: the blade must be at right angles to the direction of travel—if the angle is wrong the blade will slide sideways
- burying the blade: completely immerse the blade as quickly as possible, keeping the bottom hand several centimetres clear of the water throughout the stroke

Power

Think of the blade as being fixed in the water: you pull the boat past it. From the catch, the stroke is 'taken' by the whole 'pulling' side of



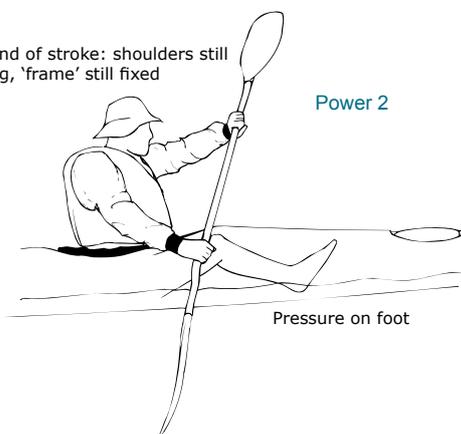
Australian Canoeing



Demonstrate simple kayaking skills

Sample pages from the revised ACAS resources, the theme here being rotation, rotation, rotation

Near end of stroke: shoulders still rotating, 'frame' still fixed



the body — toes, leg, hip, torso, and shoulder — all working smoothly together.

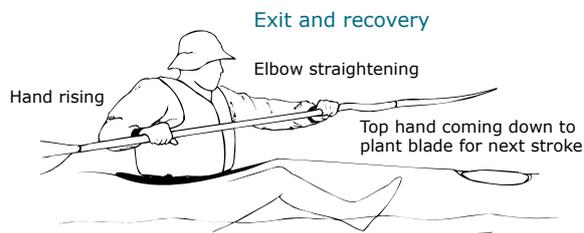
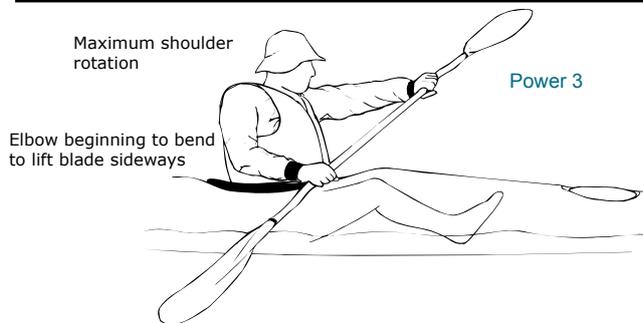
The bottom arm remains in a fairly extended position throughout this phase, with the top arm, elbow bent, and hand at around eye height and 30–40 cm in front of the head, following the rotation of the shoulders.

Flatwater paddlers talk of the 'frame', the arms and shoulders, remaining fixed through this phase: in other words the elbows are not bending or straightening but remaining at the same angles. The top hand does not push, it follows the shoulders.

The blade will tend to follow the bow wave of the kayak, moving about 5cm away from the boat, during the stroke. A blade that moves straight back, relative to the boat, may be a sign of insufficient body rotation.



Australian Canoeing



Exit and recovery

The stroke is finished when body rotation is complete. Taking the stroke too far is simply wasted effort. At exit, the blade moves out of the water to the side, with the top hand still high and the bottom elbow bending to lift the blade. That elbow should stay low and relaxed. At this stage the paddle is parallel to the centreline of the boat, but over the side.

You are now in position to set up for the catch on the other side, where the stroke is a mirror image.

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OEASA Financial report

1/7/2007–30/6/2008

Balance brought forward from 30/6/07	\$26,750.92
Balance at 30/6/2008	\$28,812.98

Income

Bank Interest	\$787.43
Award Dinner	\$5,544.00
Auction	\$1,835.00
Membership: Individual (22)	\$1,320.00
Membership: Student (2)	\$90.00
Membership: Family (2)	\$140.00
Membership: School (27)	\$1,890.00
Membership: Corporate (3)	\$210.00
Membership: Organisation (5)	\$350.00
Membership: Complementary (13)	\$0.00
Membership: Life Members (6)	\$270.00
Donations	\$102.25
Total	\$12,538.68

Expenditure

Government bank charges	\$0.00
Newsletter Printing	\$833.00
Newsletter Editing	\$318.00
OEASA Postage Costs	\$887.10
Membership (CEASA, OCA)	\$143.00
Public Liability Insurance	\$163.95
Award Dinner	\$5,115.00
Journals	\$2,312.50
Conference	\$250.00
OEASA Meetings	\$421.12
Stationery	\$32.95
Total	\$10,476.62

Summary

Total Income	\$12,538.68
Less total Expenditure	\$10,476.62
Profit/Loss	\$2,062.06

Association funds at the end of 2007–08 financial year stand at \$28,812.98

Phil Noble, OEASA Treasurer



Kiandra to Mt Kosciusko

Grant Henwood

Our recent K2K trip (Luke Adams, Mike Hillan and self) was very heavy going with lots of fresh snow. Unlike last time in 2003 (when we actually got to Kosi) we averaged little more than 10km each day in strong headwinds, boiling skis and poor visibility. Probably a blessing that Michael's binding broke when it did (near CeeJacks Hut, just before Jagungal) as it would have been a very long walk out. He is now pondering what skis to buy for his trip to Antarctica in December! A great area to spend 4–5 days in nonetheless. This photo was taken by our 'rescuers' nearing the top of Doubtful Creek, 5km east of Jagungal, just before the binding broke. Despite efforts to repair the binding that night after just 4km the next day it was obvious it would not hold (the rescuers had a 4WD 7km away and took us on a two hour trip to Jindy).



Right: The first wearable PDF seen in Adelaide

Far Right: Kayak paddler wearing PDF

[PDF: Portable Document Format
PFD: Personal Flotation Device]

Outdoor Educators' Association Of South Australia

ABN 26 588 063 701

Membership form

Membership subscription for period 28 Feb 2009 to 28 Feb 2010

Type of Membership:

- Renewal New member
- Individual \$60
- Student \$45 (with AJOE) \$20 (without AJOE)
- School/Organisation/Corporate/Family \$70

(Please tick appropriate boxes Note that we are not charging GST)

Members in the organisational category have been sent a Tax Invoice to use. If you are a new member in this category please return this form without payment and a Tax Invoice will be sent to you.

If you have this membership and would like an extra copy of a year's OEASA newsletters please add \$20. For two extra copies add \$40, etc.

Please make cheques and money orders payable to 'Outdoor Educators' Association of South Australia'.

Members will receive:

- OEASA newsletters *Outdoor News* (four per year)
- AJOE (*Australian Journal of Outdoor Education*) (two per year)
- affiliation to other State Associations via the Outdoor Council of Australia and Outdoor Education Australia

Member details:

School/Organisation/Corporation (if applicable) _____

Last Name _____ First Name _____

Postal Address _____

_____ Postcode _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Fax _____

E-mail _____

Individual/student/family members: what is the school or organisation you are connected with?

Forward to:

OEASA Treasurer
Phil Noble
PO Box 104
Morgan SA 5320