



Advice To Coaches on: LEVEL 3 COACH TRAINING Inland / Sea / Canoe

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A resource for BCU Coaches....



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LEVEL 3 COACH TRAINING

Inland / Sea / Canoe

INTRODUCTION

Terms of Reference

The Level 3 Coach Training course is of two days duration. It is a compulsory step for a person wishing to be assessed for Level 3 Coach award. The terms of reference for the Level 3 Coach award must be clearly understood by training course staff.

Successful completion of the course gives the person Trainee Level 3 Coach status. This status may be withheld where a candidate is not up to 4 star level ability, or is unreliable, incompetent, or physically inept. Status is valid for three years from the date of completing the course. Status may not be withheld on the basis of unsatisfactory coaching.

Manual Handling

All Canoeists need to raise their awareness of Manual Handling and that damage can occur to joints and muscles, particularly when they are moving or lifting people or any equipment related to the sport of Canoeing. This could, of course, include a body, especially when performing rescues. In addition, Risk Assessments of how to prevent harm and injury to paddlers should be undertaken as a matter of routine.

In Civil Law there is a Duty of Care towards your students and others who paddle. This includes, loss, harm, damage and injury. Coaches are charged with the care of paddlers, and as such, Coaches need to identify where there is a risk of the 'duty' being neglected or abused.

The BCU has prepared an information leaflet which gives a brief outline of procedures to assess and evaluate Manual Handling operations. In addition, a one day Injury Prevention Course has been developed which should ensure that information in respect of lifting and carrying and all Manual Handling issues are being disseminated throughout the Coaching Service. (see section 5)

The Training course goals:

- 1 To provide the trainee with the necessary knowledge to advise and guide inexperienced paddlers on how to progress through the sport.
- 2 To provide the trainee with the necessary knowledge to coach paddlers' boat handling skills in the chosen field, kayak canoe, or sea.
- 3 To provide the trainee with the necessary knowledge to plan and lead journeys efficiently and safely in the chosen field, kayak, canoe, or sea.

Course pre-requirements

Central Registration (See Section 4)

Minimum age 18

Level 2 Coach Award

Appropriate 4 Star Test

Evidence of current comprehensive membership of the BCU

Current First Aid Certificate (minimum 8 hours) including CPR and EAV

Up to date Log Book

Originals of all certificates, C1 registration form and membership details must be taken to the course.

Canoeing Handbook.

BCU handbook on all aspects of the sport (available from BCU Headquarters)

BCU Members Yearbook

Addresses of all RCOs and Regional Chairpersons

Courses, competitions, events for the year

BCU Information Leaflets

Canoeists and the Swimming Pool

Canoeists and Wildlife

Access to Water

Checklist for the Guidance of Relevant Authorities

National Coaching Foundation Introductory Study Pack

Six booklets on coaching (not specific to canoeing). Up to date and readable

The following booklets are most relevant:

- 1 The Coach in Action
- 2 The Body in Action
- 4 Improving Techniques
- 5 Mind over Matter
- 6 Planning and Practice

Available from the National Coaching Foundation or BCU Supplies

Saving Life The official Royal Lifesaving Society guide to resuscitation and first aid.

Available through the RLSS.

Useful Addresses:

Royal Lifesaving Society, Mountbatten House, Studley, Warwickshire. B80 7NN Tel. 0152 785 3943

National Coaching Foundation , 114 Cardigan Road, Headingley, Leeds. LS6 3BJ Tel. 01132 744802

Duke of Edinburgh Award Headquarters, Gulliver House, Madeira Walk, Windsor, Berks. SL4 1EU 01753 810753

Chrisfilm, The Mill, Pateley Bridge, Harrogate, North Yorks. HG3 6QH Tel. 01423 711624

any special information on the contents. This is required so that the trainees can plan systematic background reading and also to help them to direct novice paddlers towards information.

Knowledge of the buoyancy aid and lifejacket, the differences, and the BCU recommendations:

It is recommended that buoyancy aids to BCU/BACH Standard BA83 (CEN 50N) are worn by novices for all canoeing activities, and for white water paddling at all levels. Lifejackets to BSI 3595/81 (CEN 50N) are normally suitable alternatives, but are not permitted for BCU ranking competitions. For canoe polo additional body protection may be required.

Knowledge of current affairs in the canoeing world, and, especially for inland trainees, awareness of the present access situation.

FURTHER COURSE INFORMATION

TRAINEE DEBRIEF

The trainees should leave the course with the following information about themselves:

What strengths they have in any aspect of the syllabus

Areas in which they need to practise and gain experience/knowledge, and a timetable to plan against

How close they are to being ready for assessment.

Training staff should be providing feedback information to candidates continuously throughout the period of the course. This information should be encouraging, corrective where necessary, and delivered in positive language. The trainees should never feel that they are being assessed in any way. At the end of the course each trainee should be given an individual summary focusing on *where to go from here*. This is the time to suggest further courses, recommend events, reading, training and pass on contacts with whom they can continue to receive guidance. Having provided this information the onus is very much upon the trainee to organise him/herself and get started.

A form C2 is available which allows the Course Director to give the trainee a written summary of this information.

The concept of a Coaching Continuum

It is helpful to encourage trainees to see the Level 3 Coach Award as a point on a line of progress (a coaching continuum). While the award is a clearly defined goal which helps people to measure their progress the total picture should remain in view. The next milestones are the Level 4 and Level 5 Coach Awards. Between Level 3 and Level 5 lies ground which covers an increasing depth of experience in working with paddlers at all levels. There is every good reason to continue to improve and widen personal performance, both in **coaching** and in **personal canoeing skills**. Canoeing coaches need to **set goals for themselves** as well as for their paddlers. The coaching continuum helps us to remember this.

Administrative procedure

All candidates will need to register with their National Association and have all pre-requisites before attending a training course.

Resource Material

The following material applies to both Sea and Inland training and should be obtained by course organisers.

Staffing

Each training course must be run by or overseen by a Contracted Provider. Where a Contracted Provider is not directly in charge of the training course a Course Director must be appointed. This must be an individual who has extensive experience at A4 level. The Contracted Provider is responsible for overall course management, staffing and administration. The Course Director is responsible for course delivery and programming.

One A4 assessor may train from two to five students. Where larger numbers are involved he or she should be assisted by an appropriate number of Level 3 Coaches who hold a minimum of A3 status, but who should have previously assisted with an assessment course.

General comments on course content

Because a Level 3 Coach cannot be fully trained in two days the approach is to point trainees in the right direction, so that they can gain experience effectively to prepare themselves for assessment.

The emphasis is on stimulating trainees to think for themselves. The course should outline the principles upon which decisions and plans should be based, and underline the need to relate those principles to real circumstances. The atmosphere during a course should be efficient and businesslike, and it is essential that students find it challenging and enjoyable.

Trainees are encouraged to be critical of their own performance. When qualified it is unlikely that there will be anyone but themselves to monitor their own performance.

Whilst the course should not be entirely geared to 'how to pass the assessment' students must obtain a very clear idea of what will be expected of them when they attend for assessment.

Apart from general lecture sessions, students should always be worked in small units to ensure maximum participation, and individual attention. This ensures optimum use of time and maximum benefit to each individual.

Course Introduction

The Course Director should:

Introduce the staff

Have the trainees introduce themselves

State the purpose and goals of the course

Outline and explain the course programme

Explain domestic arrangements

Complete outstanding paper work.

THE TRAINING COURSE PROGRAMME

The preparation of a Level 3 Coach can be divided into three main areas of equal importance:

1 Coaching

2 Leading Groups on Journeys

3 Knowledge of the whole sport of canoeing

This breakdown is for guidance and organisational convenience only. The three are, of course closely linked.

The first two areas are fundamentally practical, with a certain amount of knowledge and understanding associated. The third is virtually the reverse of this. For the purposes of the training course it is important to impress upon the trainees that the coaching service attaches equal importance to all three.

The training course is only the first step in the training of a Level 3 Coach. At the end of the course trainees should appreciate that some things will have to be learned and some things will have to be practised. It is essential that the course programme gives direction and guidance to their training since they will have to structure and monitor it for themselves.

SECTION 1 COACHING

This section covers:

- a Those topics which are common to the work of all Level 3's and which help the trainee to become a better coach: The Core Topics.
- b Those topics which a Level 3 Coach should be able to coach. These are specific to the area in which the Level 3 Coach is working. (Kayak, Canoe, or Sea). The list of topics is intended as a checklist for trainers and may be issued as guidance for trainees. It is not necessary to programme a session to cover each individual topic. There is more than one way to point out how something might be taught:
 - o By example. You, the trainer are coaching throughout the Level 3 Coach course and trainees will learn about your coaching methods.
 - o By discussion. During training sessions, (say Navigation or Reading Rivers) pause and ask the trainees, 'How would you coach this? Perhaps ask them to make a few quick notes on the order in which they would present the information, how they might involve the learners, and how they might adjust the content according to the experience of the group.
 - o By experimentation. Trainees can be given simple and brief coaching tasks selected from a main topic (Eddies for example). They need to cultivate a relaxed, supportive atmosphere to get the best from this kind of exercise.

Providing the trainees have a reasonable grasp of the concepts of a subject, thinking about how they might coach it and maybe even trying their ideas out, is an excellent way to increase their own understanding of that subject. The basic strokes provide perhaps the best example of this.

CORE TOPICS

Introducing and improving the basic strokes

A Level 3 Coach trainee should be able to perform all of the basic strokes. He or she should be striving towards efficiency and confidence in the strokes so that the movements look *smooth* and provide a good demonstration.

The training course should provide the trainees with feedback on their individual performance of the strokes. Remember that this is not an assessment, the aim is to help trainees to know exactly what (and how) they have to practise in order to become more effective paddlers and set good examples to learners.

Trainees should be familiar with the coaching points for the basic strokes listed in the Level 2 Award Guidance Notes. Level 3 Coach training should take the coaching of the basic strokes onto a new plane and focus much more on the Coaching Process and good coaching behaviour.

problem by improvisation and without endangering any of the individuals involved. (Using equipment, assistance, knowledge of rescue techniques, understanding of the elements and forces at work).

- 6 It is the responsibility of all canoeing leaders to understand and practice the actions required to minimize the impact of canoeing on the natural environment.

SECTION 3 KNOWLEDGE OF THE WHOLE SPORT OF CANOEING

The whole of this section applies to both Sea and Inland training.

Once again, it would be impracticable to cover every topic in this section during the short period of a training weekend, and once again it must be said that the main function of the course is to put trainees on the right road, to find things out for themselves. The process of researching and discovering is an important part of learning for trainees.

The course should:

Stimulate interest in the topics through discussion, slides, video etc.

Indicate sources of information: literature; film; coaches; specialist groups, clubs or organisations; individuals with special expertise.

Explain why a Level 3 Coach is expected to have an awareness of the sport as a whole.

Encourage trainees to think as individuals with personal opinions, but also to remain aware that they act as ambassadors of the BCU Coaching Service.

The topics in this section are:

The overall structure of the BCU (Its officers and committees)

The BCU Tests and Awards Scheme

Please make certain that Trainees are aware of the Coaching Directory

The canoeing requirements for the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme

The different disciplines in canoeing including:

Polo; Marathon, Sailing, Sea touring, Slalom; Sprint; White Water Racing; White water; Open Canoe; Surf; Rodeo

Trainees should look at the following aspects of each:

The main aim or goal of the activity and what might attract paddlers to it.

How to obtain information on rules and organisation, in the case of competitive activities.

The main characteristics of the specialised boats used, in terms of: construction materials, design/performance, fittings.

A general awareness of the particular paddling techniques which apply. This in no way implies that the Level 3 Coach should be proficient in all disciplines; it is awareness and the beginnings of understanding which is important.

The way in which a beginner might get the opportunity to have a go and then progress in the activity.

Canoeing literature. (Including BCU leaflets available).

Trainees will need to know what is available. Advice should be given on titles and

- o Know the area in which you intend to work very well. Try to see it in low water beforehand and look out for spikes, wire, sharp edges, etc.
 - o Allow trainees to swim sections only if you are happy that it is safe. Deep fast water with waves, running into a still pool with a tapering gravel bottom is ideal.
 - o If trainees are swimming, provide rescue cover from the bank and the water.
 - o These sessions should be short and trainees should wear wet suits or dry suits.
- Cold people make poor learners**
- o If you don't or can't have total control of the group throughout the session do not proceed
 - o Keep your own throw bag handy at all times
 - o Carry a knife at all times and insist that your helpers do as well. A snagged rope with a person's weight on it is impossible to untie.
 - o You and your assistants must be fully kitted out with helmets, buoyancy aids and clothing to allow you to get into the water to give assistance without delay.
 - o If you aren't completely familiar with what you intend to do in the session, don't do it. Contact the Director of Coaching who will see that you get help and advice.
 - o **Any practical Rescue session is a serious and potentially hazardous period. Create an atmosphere in which people can discuss points as they arise. Allow experimentation, but strictly under your control.**

Resources and Information

A wide range of books, publications and video's are available on all aspects of paddling technique, safety and coaching. These can be obtained from BCU Supplies, Canoeing Shops, National Coaching Foundation and specialist book shops.

SUMMARY NOTES ON TRAINING IN SECTION 2

- 1 To be a safe leader on a journey it is necessary to have a level of paddling skill (in the chosen conditions of the trip) which allows for total concentration on the safety of the group. In other words, to become a canoeing leader you must first become a canoeist.
- 2 A training course can only demonstrate systems, equipment, and techniques and coach facts. The real learning is achieved when the trainee gains practical experience in actively leading and making real decisions in the presence of other mature leaders. This experience is gained in the training period which follows the course (although in some cases trainees will have accumulated useful experience beforehand).
- 3 A vital part of the training course is to guide the trainees on their future training experience
- 4 Leadership in canoeing implies skills and knowledge specific to the sport, but it also involves practical skills which are not necessarily canoeing specific. These can be termed management skills and they relate to: awareness of peoples individual needs; ability to motivate and a willingness to take on responsibility. It is these latter skills which take most time to learn.
- 5 Two qualities of the Level 3 Coach stand out as essential to safety when leading on white water or sea. One is judgement, that is the ability to make decisions based on extensive knowledge and past, practical experience. An ability to anticipate problems and take avoiding action, in other words.
The other is effective problem solving. This is the ability to devise a solution to a

This should include:

- o A greater depth of understanding of the strokes and their coaching points. Some examples would be:
- o The three pressure phases in the sweep stroke; the use of wide strokes (for steering control) and narrow strokes (for power) in reverse paddling; the use of bow rudders for slow turns or fast turns.
- o The basic strokes chapter of the BCU *Canoeing Handbook*, provides the information to the level required for a Level 3 Coach.
- o Knowledge of refinements and variations in individual basic strokes eg the use of wrist rolling or tillering in the stern rudder; the bow pull form of the bow rudder.
- o The concept of stroke linking. The importance of rhythm, wrist mobility and slicing. The use of linking and paddle awareness exercises.
- o The use of flat water stroke practice to prepare paddlers for more advanced water (eddy turns, bracing etc).
- o An understanding of the importance of correctly adjusted equipment to efficient boat handling.
 - Correct seat and cockpit fit.
 - Footrest adjustment.
 - Paddle length and shaft grip or ovaling.
 - Properly fitting buoyancy aids and clothing.

Organising, preparing and planning a lecturette

Trainees should first understand why the idea of giving a lecturette exists at Level 3. A lecturette is a formal or semi-formal presentation of information to a group. Implied in the word lecturette is a situation in which a speaker mostly speaks and an 'audience' hopefully, listens. Understanding of what the speaker is saying is also implied but no other response from the audience is required.

The reason for having such a session at Level 3, is that demands are often made on the qualified Level 3 Coach to perform just this very task, ie to speak formally to a group about a specific topic which either the Level 3 Coach or the audience have chosen. The objective is sometimes educationally biased but often the sole purpose is simply entertainment. The lecturette is also good training for instructors in giving briefings to paddlers prior to practical sessions. The exercise needs to be treated with caution in this context, however, since it is quite clear that the most common coaching fault is *'too much talk'*.

The training course should treat the lecturette as it would any other skill. This means:

Trainees will arrive at the course with levels of expertise ranging from zero to outstanding.

Trainees should leave the course with a clear idea of how their individual expertise compares against the standard required for Level 3 Coach. (In other words - how much practice they need to get in).

Trainees should understand the elements which contribute to a good lecturette and know how to practice these

Trainees should understand that good lecturing can be learned but needs practice and guidance.

Trainees should recognise that individual flair and personality play an important part in the skill and must be actively encouraged. **Your way is not the only way.**

The topics to be covered are:

Basic rules of lecturing

- Know the subject
- Know what kind of audience will be present
- Plan the presentation in total. The less time available to speak; the more careful must be the planning
- Draw up notes of key points, to be used as reminders
- Calm nerves by expelling a long, deep breath.
- Illustrate technical points; don't just talk.
- Don't distract the audience with fidgeting, etc.
- DO NOT BORE THE AUDIENCE**

Simple guidelines on visual aid technology associated with lecturing.

- Overhead projector
- Slide projection
- Flip chart systems
- Blackboard/whiteboard/magnetboard
- Improvisation (Models, diagrams, charts)

Examples of topics which might be required to be delivered in a lecture

The training course is a good time for trainees to experiment with lecturing; for some, it might be a first. Topics could be agreed in advance of the course, or offered on the Friday evening. There are many ways of deciding on topics, including allowing the trainees to choose their own. The aim is to make it easy for the trainees, especially those who are inexperienced in public speaking.

Trainees should create a relaxed, supportive atmosphere which gives each trainee the floor for a short period. Build a session which leaves the trainees wanting to do more, aware of the satisfaction that comes from carrying out a successful lecture.

Introducing rolling

The following topics should be covered:

Organisation and general safety in swimming pool sessions of any kind.

- Conduct around the pool edge
- Hygiene of boats, equipment and paddlers
- Pool management, rules, insurance and supervision issues.
- Planning pool-training programmes
- Capsizing, water-confidence and orientation exercises
- Coaching the hip movement
- Positioning and using the paddle*
- Techniques for assisting and consolidating learning*
- Use of face mask or goggles and use of swim float*

- Using Paddle, stick or spanning rope as support
- Methods of recovering an abandoned kayak from mid-stream

The Throw bag

- Familiarity with handling the equipment; packing; throwing; re-throwing
- Positioning for swimmer recovery
- How to receive a throw line from the water
- Holding the load on the rope

Towing

- Trainees should be made aware of the potential danger of towing, especially from the waist.
- The use of other methods for towing in wide, open stretches of white water, such as deck-tow points should be discussed.

Entrapment

- Candidates should appreciate the possible positions in which a boat may become trapped ie vertically or horizontally at the ends or in the middle.
- The **emphasis** should be placed on prevention and the following points should be stressed:
 - The need for maximum floatation in order to reduce forces exerted on the boat by the current
 - The significance of a boats end profile in the danger of vertical pinning.
 - Features of cockpit design which facilitate escape. (Width and length of opening, low rear deck/cockpit rim, secure backstraps)
 - The importance of all paddlers learning the technique of raising the upstream edge before making contact in a broadside collision.
 - Simple principles for rescue procedure at entrapments should be mentioned:
 - Safety of rescuers must be uppermost
 - Can the victim breathe? If not, can the head be raised above the water?
 - Take care that efforts to dislodge the boat do not force it further underwater

Communication

A simple signaling system which allows the leader to control his group from the water or from the bank should be discussed.

RUNNING SAFETY AND RESCUE SESSIONS

Since most training courses are compressed in two days, the organiser may find that he can allow only a couple of hours for white water safety. In the case of the typical weekend course it would not be possible to cover all of the topics practically and some of them such as parts (a) and (b), could well be treated on a discussion basis with perhaps a few slides and pieces of equipment at hand. The section which should, if possible, be treated in a practical manner is the one which deals with throw bags and picking up and carrying swimmers using the boat.

Practical Sessions

These can easily cause a lot of time wasting, so it is important to structure the session to cover only a small number of topics. Allocate time to each and stick rigidly to the schedule. Even if everyone doesn't try everything, a great deal will have been learned. The following guide lines should help:

What makes suitable paddling clothing

Appreciation of the different levels of hypothermia, and the possible first aid action available to the river canoeist

Methods of Towing

Equipment and systems available

Although many white water situations preclude conventional towing on safety grounds, Level 3 Coaches should be aware of a range of towing methods and equipment.

WHITE WATER SAFETY AND RESCUE

The aim of Safety and Rescue training at this level is:

To help the trainees to understand the problems which can arise in simple white water so that they can become skilful at anticipating difficulties on different stretches of water and to introduce the basic techniques and equipment which can be used to tackle these problems.

The following topics should be covered:

Hazard Recognition

The movement of water within a stopper

The characteristics which contribute to a dangerous stopper including weirs and sluices

The danger to paddlers of trees overhanging the river or in the current

Features which might cause entrapment

including natural phenomena such as undercut boulders and man made hazards such as spikes, bridge piers and fences

The dangers which high spate conditions bring any river

Paddling Equipment

The importance of a correctly fitting buoyancy aid and the care of its floatation foam

The helmet

Importance of correct fit, position on the head and maintenance of the chin strap

The kayak

The importance of a safe cockpit area and maximum internal floatation. Attention should be drawn to safe footrest systems and the importance of strong grab handles or toggles. Also some reference should be made to the handling / reactive nature of varying boat shapes and volume.

Rescue

The principles of self-help in the event of a swim in a rapid.

Organising and setting up safety cover on a stretch of rapid using the most appropriate systems.

Picking up a free-floating and co-operative swimmer using a tow or carry from a rescuer's kayak

NB A bow support is safe only in deep stretches of white water, otherwise only the rear of the kayak should be used.

Wading in the current

Planning a training programme

This area covers the planning and tailoring of individual lessons to the needs of groups or individuals. Extended programmes of multiple lessons, taking paddlers from their present level through training to a more advanced standard, should also be included.

Planning should be individual-centred and should set goals.

A Level 3 Coach should be aware of, and practised in, different approaches to coaching. The reason for this is two fold:

- i People learn things in different ways. An explanation which makes something crystal clear to one person may be much less effective to another. The second person might require a totally different learning experience in order to understand.
- ii Repeating a point to a learner in a different way, or indeed in lots of different ways, helps it to stick and assists future learning.

Two approaches are:

Part-Whole where a technique is divided into practical parts, each of which is practised, the parts are gradually strung together until the whole technique emerges.

Holistic where the technique is learned and practised in its entirety.

Apart from individual learning preferences, some paddling skills lend themselves best to one or other approach. Forward paddling technique, for example, is best treated as a whole while rolling lends itself well to a part-whole approach.

The concept of **coaching style** is also included in this aspect. Some styles can be termed *authoritative* while at the other end of the scale would be *liberal* or *laissez faire*. Different groups, different circumstances demand different styles. The concepts of experiential, guided discovery, chaining and shaping should all be introduced.

INLAND TOPICS

Understanding and reading white water

Basic white water skills.

Safety on rivers

SEA TOPICS

Basic explanation of tidal movements around the British Coastline and the planning of simple journeys

Basic surfing technique

Deep water rescue methods

Safe and unsafe equipment for kayaking on the sea including emergency equipment.

SECTION 2 LEADING GROUPS ON JOURNEYS

There are essentially four parts to journeying which need to be dealt with on the training course.

This section covers those parts:

- 1 Planning and preparation of the journey
- 2 Organising, controlling and guiding the group of paddlers
- 3 Making use of the area and sustaining interest
- 4 Dealing with problems.

These elements apply equally to sea or inland trips.

The aim of the training course, in this section, is to demonstrate good leadership methods and systems and to draw attention to hazards.

As a trainer you create an image for trainees of what a good leader looks like. That image should be of an enthusiastic, imaginative, practical individual who is sympathetic to the needs and responses of his/her group.

Someone once described a Level 3 Coach as - 'a combination of the RAC and Batman'. There's probably some truth in this description, but in focusing on the ability to go anywhere and fix anything it forgets some of the other, man management aspects of the job. These include being a motivator, educator, enabler, negotiator and ambassador.

While the training course absolutely must cover the practical side of leading groups, the staff should also bear in mind these less tangible, but equally important elements. As in Section 1, there are several ways to pass on the messages you want to convey about leading groups. If possible use more than one method to make the same point. **We are in the business of getting people to remember and getting people to think.**

The options are:

- o By example. You take charge of a section of a journey which draws on leading skills. Never under estimate this approach, people like to learn by seeing experts at work.
- o By creating real opportunities for trainees to lead, and afterwards giving constructive feedback.
- o By defining the hard factual information required to lead effectively and stating clearly how the trainee can access this knowledge in the future months.
- o By pointing out the need to learn by experience and helping the individual trainees to organise themselves so that they can acquire this experience over the future months. Some of this experience should be served alongside established leaders.

The specific topics to be covered in this section are:

LEVEL 3 SEA COACH - TOPICS

1 Planning and preparation for the journey

Planning a journey from a chart and importance of matching route to group. To include:

Measurement of distance (but not laying of a course using vectors)

Basic chart symbols; Drying heights; Tide races and overfalls; type of coastline and foreshore.

Use of tidal diamond and tidal stream atlas.

Use of the Coastguard.

Recognition of buoys by day under IALA system 'A' lateral marks and cardinal marks.

Understanding cause and effects of tides and factors effecting tidal range including:

1/12's rule; tide time predictions; cause of tidal streams.

Understanding of causes of overfalls, races and eddies.

Understanding of types of waves including:

Deep water, shallow water surf waves.

Rip currents and dumping waves.

Reflected waves.

Effects of wind against tide.

Emergency food

Throw bags

Towing system

Notes on Emergency Equipment

Trainers should make it clear the selecting emergency equipment is a skill in itself, requiring knowledge of weather, season, the group and type of journey being undertaken. Long trips in wild country demand different emergency gear from a half day paddle on the local canal. Trainees should be left in no doubt about the essential items which form the basic kit which goes on all journeys.

First Aid Kit

This should contain the means to deal with:

Bleeding (Pre-packed wound dressings; 1 large, 1 medium)

Blisters (adhesive dressing strip, adhesive tape and scissors)

Support/immobilisation of a joint or limb (crepe bandage and triangular bandage)

Plus the following items:

Pair of scissors and tweezers

Pencil and notepad.

Repair Kit

The repair kit should make possible an effective temporary repair to a leaking boat. It must be effective on a polyethylene as well as a GRP boat. Flexible, non-hardening, mastic-impregnated tape offers a satisfactory, basic means of sealing a leak. Trainees should be given advice on performing temporary repairs.

Emergency Clothing

The minimum emergency clothing is a long-sleeved top, a warm hat and a pair of track suit bottoms. The carrying of garments made solely from cotton should be discouraged because of the poor insulation performance when wet. Quick drying, polyester-based 'Thermal' garments or wool should be used in preference.

Emergency Shelter

A Polythene survival bag is the minimum acceptable. The bag should be of durable quality and permit two persons to be completely enclosed by it. Larger shelters, constructed from lightweight nylon and designed to enclose a whole group of six persons are extremely valuable emergency shelters especially where paddlers are carrying individual sized survival bags in addition

Carrying the Emergency Equipment

Trainees should be encouraged to find a simple, compact storage system for their emergency gear. This is the only way to make it easy to carry, and therefore likely to be taken in 'real circumstance'. Weight and bulk should be kept to the minimum that the equipment permits.

Basic medical/first aid problems

Treatment of overuse injury of the wrist

Treatment of blistering to allow paddling to continue

Treatment and after care of head injuries

Knowledge and understanding of Hypothermia:

Causes of cooling: exhaustion, immersion, atmosphere

Use of large eddies where the main current is fast

Care and preservation of the river bank

Getting out at high banks.

Containing the group during the trip

Use of a reliable back marker, preferably an assistant

Position of the leader during the trip

Developing a sense of spacing in rapids

A simple signalling system

Running rapids

Importance of inspection by paddlers. Avoid the temptation to expect paddlers to route find on the basis of the leaders verbal description.

Protecting isolated danger spots (stakes, bridge piers)

Encouraging paddlers to read the water, not follow blindly.

3 Making use of the area during the journey

Ideas on activities, exercises and games which would add interest on long flat stretches of river or canal; Choosing a safe and suitable white water training area

Training paddlers to negotiate typical river features:

Overhanging trees and branches

Bends, and bends overhung by trees

Boulder fields

Bridge arches

Weirs where there is no danger to swimmers caused by stoppers.

Awareness of the natural environment and developing caring attitudes towards it

Potential for bank erosion which might be caused by canoeists and how to prevent it.

It is not necessary for trainees to learn names of plants and animals (although this is a good way to develop an interest).

They must, however be able to pass on the principles of good country behaviour and a sense of responsibility towards the preservation of wildlife.

Canoeists must uphold and take a pride in the fact, that our sport is non-polluting, and causes neither death nor suffering to any wild animals.

4 Dealing with problems

Most of the serious problems which an inland Level 3 Coach may be faced with come under *white water safety and rescue*. Detailed guidelines for the education and training of Level 3 Coaches and Level 3 Coach Trainees in this aspect follows in this section.

Other topics not specifically dealing with white water problems which should be covered are:

Leader's equipment, including emergency equipment

First aid kit

Emergency clothing and shelter

Repair kit

Waterproof container(s) to carry the equipment

Knife

Appreciation of weather forecasting including:

Sources of forecasts, including BT 'Marinecall'.

Interpretation of the BBC shipping forecast system and knowledge of trainee's designated sea areas.

The terms 'imminent', 'soon', 'later'.

The Beaufort wind scale.

(The interpretation of a synoptic chart, weather patterns and recognition of cloud types is **not** assessed at Level 3, but is part of 5 Star. Given the time, it would be useful to cover these briefly at training level).

2 Organising, controlling and leading the group of paddlers

The leader's personal paddling skills

A leader must be able to handle the boat to a level which allows him/her to paddle into any position during the trip without conscious effort and without diverting his/her attention from the group. The importance of an ability to recover from an accidental capsized by rolling should be stressed.

Launching and landing

Dealing with different beach conditions and shorelines

Getting off and onto a surf beach

Simple use of a compass to maintain a course

Systems for containing the group during a trip

Giving special attention to operating in adverse conditions of wind, sea and visibility.

Organisation of a simple surfing session

Involving the coaching of a paddle brace; forward runs, steering on a run and safety rules.

The process of continuously monitoring weather, sea and tide conditions during a trip.

An appreciation of the element of commitment; in crossing bays; operating near poor landing sites or areas of strong tidal streams.

3 Making use of the area and sustaining interest

Ideas on activities to add to the interest of a trip eg rock dodging

Trainees should appreciate the potential hazards of rock dodging, how to organise it and the importance of using helmets if there is the slightest swell or wave action present.

How to choose a safe and suitable introductory surfing site

Encouragement to develop awareness of the natural marine environment

Advice on behaviour of sea canoeists in the vicinity of nesting sea birds (especially Auks such as Guillemots)

4 Dealing with problems

Fast and effective deep water rescues to include:

Systems by which a leader may be assisted with seriously swamped or heavy boats.

Methods of securing the paddles during a rescue.

Possible methods for assisting a paddler who is disabled by cold or exhaustion, back

into his boat.

Rescue practice in conditions which are not flat calm (**providing there is absolutely no danger to the trainees**)

The use of an anchor boat to tow a deep water rescue away from danger or to windward.

Importance of training all members of the group in deep water rescue procedure before the trip.

The process of maintaining an overview of a rescue situation so that the safety and well-being of the whole group is never forgotten.

Multiple capsize situations and the leadership actions:

Stabilise the situation to prevent further capsizes

Prioritise immediate deep water rescue action and instruct assistants

When rescues are completed, make way to safety and landing.

Towing techniques:

The circumstances in which towing might be used.

Briefing the towed paddler

The use of short and long towing connections, including shunting and other connections based on the paddler holding on.

The towing of rafted canoes.

Sufficient real practise to appreciate the problems associated with towing.

Safe towing equipment, to include:

Types of quick-release towing anchors and the possible attachment points on body and boat.

Advice on suitable rope etc. for making towing connectors.

Types of clips etc for attaching the system to the boat to be towed. Must be usable with cold hands.

Other typical problems, and how they might be handled:

Leaking boat

Seasickness

Capsize in surf

Knowledge and understanding of Hypothermia

Causes of cooling; exhaustion, immersion and atmosphere

Functional paddling clothing, taking air temperature; wind; sea temperature and comfort into account.

Appreciation of the levels of Hypothermia, and the first aid action which is open to sea canoeists.

Emergency signalling

Appreciation of the use of flares, the limitations and the circumstances in which they might be used.

Familiarity with the range of commercial pyrotechnic distress devices; hand held flare; smoke; parachute, mini-flare.

Advice on selecting correct flares for various types of trip.

Other available signalling devices should be mentioned eg Dye, Radio beacons, VHF Radio

Leader's equipment including emergency equipment:

First aid kit

Repair kit

Split paddles

Tow system

Emergency clothing and shelter

Waterproof container(s)

Compass and torch

Flares

Trainees should see the essential components of these items and it should be emphasized that often the circumstances of a trip require much more to be taken by the leader. The point should also be made that as coaches we must strive towards making all paddlers self reliant in terms of equipment and the knowledge to use it.

The leader cannot carry all the equipment for a group. Apart from this being impracticable, it is a poor educational system that encourages its learners to be totally dependent on the Coach. (See also *Notes on Emergency Equipment* inland)

INLAND LEVEL 3 COACH TOPICS

1 Planning and preparation of the journey

The access situation and the BCU policy

Importance of matching route to group

Maps and Guides covering UK and the use of the OS Map

Local access officers

The international river grading system

Making transport arrangements and a shuttle system

Obtaining parental consent for paddlers and identifying any special medical conditions

Equipment checks in advance and then again before getting afloat

2 Organising, controlling and guiding the group

The initial briefing of the group

Describing the trip and its goal(s)

Outlining the organisation

Stating procedure on the water

Checking equipment

Methods for getting the group afloat safely.

Choosing large eddies

Avoiding dangerous trees immediately downstream

Making use of an assistant to help launch the paddlers while the leader gives safety cover from the water.

Dealing with different types of bank.

Getting the group off the water safely.

Leader off last, unless special conditions dictate he/she should be on the bank.

Use of an assistant to help paddlers out of boats