

## Risk Assessment – Kayak Polo

<b>Date:</b>	26.5.24	<b>Doc No</b>	SOUCC-H&S-RA002 Rev 04 23.6.25 (RM)
<b>Assessors Name:</b>	Katherine Midwinter	<b>Review Date:</b>	June 2026
<b>Description of assessment</b>	<p><b>Club Risk Assessment for Canoe Polo</b></p> <p>This RA covers kayak polo session at Woodmill Outdoor Centre</p> <p>Risk assessment to be read in conjunction with the Standard Operating Procedures &amp; Code of Conduct, First Aid policy &amp; Health and Safety policy.</p> <p>SOUCC does not currently have any certified Polo kayak coaches. As such, Polo training sessions at SOUCC fall under the Paddle UK (PUK) definition of a “<i>Collaborative Club Activity</i>”—where a competent group of adult paddlers share collective responsibility for managing safety, adhering to rules, and making informed decisions in response to changing conditions or emergencies. Participation in Polo training is restricted to experienced adult paddlers only. Novice and junior members are not permitted to take part.</p>		
<b>Location Details</b>	Woodmill Activity Centre, Woodmill Lane Southampton. Pond and river Itchen from Woodmill to University Steps.		

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing to control the risks?	What further action do you need to take to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?	Done
Drowning	Paddlers  Referees  Others	Wearing of buoyancy aid. Instruction in capsize procedures Relevant supervision for novices Players will not obstruct capsized players, (as per the rules) Wear buoyancy aid whilst refereeing both for wet and dry referees Advised to keep away from the bank	Buoyancy aids tested annually Ensure beginners know how to wear one, and supervise to ensure correctly fitted  Regular checks during the season			
Hypothermia	Paddlers	Advised on the correct clothing to wear Adjustment to clothing as required Warm showers available on site	Continuous dynamic RA			
Heat Exhaustion	Paddlers	Ensure appropriate clothing is worn when playing canoe polo. Team Captains and coaches will ensure all players drink enough water.	Continuous dynamic RA			
Sunburn and Dehydration	Paddlers, Coaches & Others	Shoulders should always be covered (which is also a BC Polo rule) Team Captains to ensure players apply sun cream regularly Team captains to ensure plenty of water is drunk				

Slips Trips and Falls	Paddlers, Coaches & Others	Don't leave loose equipment on the pontoon, leave neatly to one side	Appropriate cleaning/maintenance Make venue aware of issues so that they can be fixed promptly			
Sprains, Strains and Soft Tissue Injuries	Paddlers, Coaches & Others	Encourage correct paddling technique Don't push way beyond capabilities Trained to lift boats and get in and out correctly	Ongoing training and regular checks of procedures			
Head/facial injuries	Paddlers	Helmets must be worn at all times during any ball work All helmets must be fitted with a legal face guard Referees to visually check all players are wearing helmets	Regular maintenance/checks			
Cuts and grazes	Paddlers	Ensure all equipment adheres to scrutineering guidelines	Have a first-aid kit on site			
Shoulder dislocation	Paddlers	All players should warm-up at the beginning of a session/competition prior to doing any contact work Games are constantly under the observation of a referee All players are trained in safe paddling techniques	Appropriate training in the safe techniques behind bracing for support			
Boat to Body Contact	Paddlers	All boats must have the appropriate bumpers (foam ends) in line with BC rules Polo explicitly forbid boat to body contact	Buoyancy aids tested annually Check beginners are aware of the rule before playing			

		All players are to wear a polo specific BA (one with padding all around the body)				
Finger Injuries	Paddlers	No paddles to be put anywhere near other players hands when playing (in line with BC rules) Ensure no jewellery, wrist bands, ear rings, bracelets etc are worn				
Pollution and Water Quality	Paddlers	Wash equipment after paddling somewhere other than base location	Avoid intentional capsizes in poor conditions			
Water related diseases	Paddlers	Leaders/instructors remind participants of the symptoms of water related diseases, in particular Leptospirosis, and that all open cuts, grazes or wounds are suitably covered Wash hands before putting near face or eating				
Other lake users	Paddlers and other users	Paddlers instructed to be aware of other lake users and how to take appropriate/avoiding action. Avoid throwing a ball near to other users Stay in the designated locations for games and contact drills	Informed as to possible locations of other lake users Informed as to the courses other lake users are doing, so that we are informed if people are likely to be in the water/noises associated with rescuing people (FSRT)			
Man-made features and obstructions	Paddlers and Coaches	Set the pitch 2m away from the pontoon to avoid large rocks Set the pitch at least 2m away from the stakes on Eastern side of the lake Helmets to be worn when practicing rolling and during contact play	Appropriate awareness training			

Over-hanging tree	Paddlers, Coaches	Paddlers advised to negotiate around trees, both overhanging and floating. Advised as to correct action in event of entanglement Appropriate tree management on site.	Regular checks as part of on-site maintenance Make venue aware of issues so that they can be fixed promptly			
Injury from Traffic	Paddlers, Coaches & Others	Low Volume of Traffic Small Parking Area with limited speed	If parking further away from the venue (car park down the road) use the pedestrian crossing			
Injury from Manual Handling	Paddlers, Coaches	Only those trained to manoeuvre the goals should do so Leave on the water, just tucked to one side of the lake	Appropriate training if goals need to be removed from the lake, ensure a minimum of three people lifting per goal, who have all been trained in appropriate lifting technique			
Spectators	Members of the Public	Ensure the venue maintains the paths so they are easily distinguishable from the undergrowth				
Property & Facilities	All participants & others	Ensure changing rooms are maintained Ensure pathways and parking areas are well maintained	Regular checks as part of on-site maintenance Make the venue aware of any issues so they can be fixed promptly			
Goal Attachment pegs	All participants & others	Set the pegs way off of the path and as close to trees/infrastructure as possible Spray paint the pegs very bright orange	Regular checks as part of on-site maintenance			
Weather & Environmental Conditions	All participants	Be aware of the weather forecast prior to the session If high winds train without the goals	Continuous dynamic RA			

Lightning Strike	All participants	No one is permitted to be out on the water during a lightning storm				
Verbal abuse or physical attack	Referees  All participants	No verbal or physical abuse will be tolerated and should be immediately controlled by the officials All incidents to be reported to an official, with further action taken by the committee if necessary				
Fire or other serious incidents	All on site	Meet at the designated fire congregation point Responsibility for evacuation will remain with venue staff	Ensure all participants are aware of the venue fire protocols			
Collaborative club activity – competent groups	Group members .	<p>Paddlers in groups of competent adults operating without a formal leader or coach. Group members must be competent and are responsible for their own actions and making their own safety related judgements.</p> <p>Groups must be three or more.</p> <p>All individuals must be competent to make their own safety judgements and decisions regarding changing conditions and emergencies. Typically, competent paddlers will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PUK “Paddle Explorer standard”</li> <li>• Regularly paddling in division 1 or 2 polo competitions.</li> </ul> <p><u>Juniors and adult novice paddlers cannot paddle as part of collaborative club activities</u></p>	<p>Rankings are not definitive, but give a guide as to the likely ability and experience of paddlers.</p> <p>If any individuals are in doubt of their competence / ability should seek guidance from a coach with the credentials to lead within the relevant discipline and on the types of water.</p>	Group members	As required	

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Office use only (to be completed by a risk assessment checker if selected for sampling)

<b>Checked by:</b>		<b>Position:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	
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