

Risk Assessment – White Water

Date:	9.12.24	Doc No	SOUCC-H&S-RA008 Rev 01
--------------	---------	---------------	---------------------------

Assessors Name:	Russell Meyer	Review Date:	Dec 2025
------------------------	---------------	---------------------	----------

Description of assessment	<p>Club Risk Assessment for white water.</p> <p>This RA covers the Wild Water Sprint event Run by Southampton Canoe Club at Woodmill outdoor Centre.</p>
----------------------------------	---

Location & Details	<p>The race involves paddling first through flat but moving, sometimes turbulent (grade 1) water in the Salmon pool, then through a weir, down a small grade 1 rapid followed by a flat section to the finish at the University boat yard.</p> <p>Weir – The biggest obstacle to be negotiated is the weir at the back of the outdoor centre. The weir is a 6m wide artificial weir under a road bridge. The weir is on a tidal stretch of the Itchen and manifest about 2 hours before and through to 2 hours after low water. The weir can be safely shot at any point in its width but the most straightforward route is through centre.</p> <p>The weir was refurbished in 2004/2005 and does not have any fixed major underwater hazards that could pin a boat or entrap a person. In conditions in which the race will be run there is a good flow and no significant stopper wave / hydraulic that could hold a boat or person.</p> <p>There is public access to the weir and river Itchen down river of the weir. There is no public access to the Salmon pool. Generally, recreational canoeist using the weir are known to the club and will respect the race and keep clear during the event.</p> <p>At very low tides the weir is quite boily. This won't pose any risk given low tide is relatively "high" and after the race is finished.</p>
-------------------------------	---

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
Boat or body Pin or entrapment	Paddlers & rescuers	<p>Weirs at Woodmill do not have any significant underwater obstacles that are likely to entrap boats or paddlers.</p> <p>Safety cover below the weir provided by an individual holding Paddle UK White Water training such as WWSR, Level 3 inland Coach or assessed as competent against a defined role descriptor by a Paddle UK WWR Coach Assessor.</p> <p>Paddlers should not have any loose lanyards, shoelaces, straps that may become entangled in the kayak.</p> <p>Any Spray decks to be correctly fitting and have suitable release strap. Paddlers should have practiced capsize drill and spray deck release prior to the event.</p>	<p>Weir under Woodmill road bridge to be monitored particularly when the tide drops as a stopper can form. This is not particularly strong and is designed not to retain but organiser to be aware.</p> <p>If there is sufficient water to cover the concrete blocks at low tide the hydraulic hole becomes too big to safely run the event and the race would be cancelled. However, this only occurs rarely and only after persistent heavy rain.</p>	Race organiser.	Day of race	
Head Injury resulting from capsize.	Paddlers	<p>All paddlers must wear correctly fitting helmet suitable for white water use with chin strap. Paddlers / team leaders to check helmets before paddlers get on to the water.</p> <p>Paddle UK guidance (Paddlesafer 2024) does not endorse the use of SUP on weirs, therefore there is no entry class for weirs.</p>	Visual check by race starter.	Race Starter.	Day of race	

Drowning	Paddlers	<p>Safety cover below weir to be provided by two kayaks, with qualifications as described above. They will be positioned on the down river side of weir to assist / rescue in the event of a person capsizing in the weir.</p> <p>All paddlers to wear correctly fitting buoyancy aids to Paddle UK recommendations. Team leaders & paddlers to ensure BA's fit paddlers correctly.</p> <p>WWR Committee entry system to ensure that all participants have the necessary competence to take part in the event.</p> <p>Boats must have sufficient buoyancy to keep them afloat and support the paddler in the event of a capsize. Check by Team Leaders / Paddlers</p> <p>All paddlers to be competent paddlers in the craft they are racing in. Whilst this is a "novice" wild water race, participants are required to have a good skill level. Ie they are to be very competent flat water paddlers, very stable on flat water, have practiced capsize drill and strong swimmers in canoe clothing.</p>	Visual BA check by race starter.	Race Starter		

Multiple swimmers.	Paddlers	Starts will be individual. Competitors will be stated after the preceding competitor has safely navigated the weir. The rescue boat will signal to give clearance to start competitor's.				
Injury – soft tissue, strains, dislocation.	Paddlers	<p>Paddlers to warm up before undertaking white water activities.</p> <p>Participants to be competent paddlers in the craft they are using. As a minimum they would be good flat-water paddlers.</p> <p>Paddlers to be briefed on capsize drill.</p> <p>Do not participate in white water paddling activities with and preexisting injury that could be affected.</p>				
Uncontrolled competitors on the water.	Competitor's.	<p>Briefings to take place on land before getting onto the water.</p> <p>Team leaders responsibilities</p> <p>Course description.</p> <p>Use of PFD, Helmets and boat buoyancy.</p> <p>If any competitor capsizes, is in distress or requires any other safety related assistance during the race any other competitor that can help must do so. Competitors aiding others will receive a time allowance or a rerun.</p> <p>All boats must have enough buoyancy to keep the boat and paddler afloat in the event of a capsize and swamping of the</p>				

		<p>boat. It is the responsibility of the paddler to ensure that their boat is not put into danger.</p> <p>Any race withdrawal to notify the time keeper.</p> <p>Paddlers briefed that organisers responsibility only extends to racing and practice</p>				
<p>Adverse weather that could lead to cold and or hypothermia. Due to cold weather, wind chill, cold water immersion.</p>	<p>Competitors</p>	<p>Appropriate clothing and equipment are to be always worn both on and off the water.</p> <p>Competitors & Team leaders to be aware of signs and symptoms of hypothermia.</p> <p>When athletes start showing signs of being cold, they will be taken off the water to shelter away from the elements.</p> <p>Safety blanket / Foil sheets available form first aiders.</p>	<p>Race Organiser, Paddlers and team leaders to monitor weather forecast prior to event. Come with necessary warm clothing applicable to the conditions. Team Leaders may enforce the use of spray decks, cags, and hats in cold conditions.</p> <p>Close monitoring of individuals throughout sessions</p> <p>Dynamic RA`s during event. Race organiser, Team Leaders and paddlers monitor themselves and others for signs of cold and hyperthermia.</p>	<p>Race Organiser</p> <p>Race organiser, Team Leaders and paddlers.</p>		
<p>Slips, Trips and Falls</p>	<p>Members Non-member participants</p>	<p>Non-slip floors in changing rooms. Mop any puddles form floor. Leave changing rooms clean and tidy after use.</p>				

	<p>Volunteers Spectators</p>	<p>SOU CC to clean pontoon as required. All boats and paddles to be taken clear of river access and egress points as soon as practical.</p> <p>All paddlers are recommended to wear suitable nonslip footwear at all times.</p> <p>Store kayaks, paddles and other equipment safely away from pedestrian routes.</p> <p>Suitable footwear to be worn when moving around the activity site.</p> <p>First aid provision to be provided by SOU CC</p> <p>Pontoons, slipways and Launch points to be cleaned as required</p> <p>Paddlers and Spectators briefed about the drop from the Salmon Pool Wall and to stay away from the edge.</p>				
<p>Manual Handling of paddling related equipment</p>	<p>Competitors & Helpers Non-member participants Volunteers</p>	<p>Correct lifting, emptying techniques to be always used. Team leaders to instructed on the best way to lift and carry boats.</p> <p>Competitors to be briefed to consider asking for help.</p> <p>Where suitable nonslip footwear.</p> <p>Heavier boats to be lifted in pairs.</p> <p>Stronger paddlers / Adults to assist weaker paddlers when carrying boats.</p>	<p>Kayak trollies provided for use where needed.</p> <p>Keep pontoons clean so they do not become slippery.</p> <p>Lookout for people who maybe struggling and help.</p>	<p>Organisers, team leaders, paddlers, parents & volunteers</p>	<p>Race day</p>	
<p>Allergies and asthma.</p>	<p>Competitors</p>	<p>All relevant allergies and asthma are to be declared to the event organiser. People should make the team leader & event organiser aware of their condition and any medication that they have.</p>				

		<p>Medication including inhalers and adrenaline auto-injector pens should be carried by the paddler. First aiders should familiarise themselves with any medicine and how and when it is to be administered.</p> <p>First aiders should not administer medicines and auto-injector adrenalin unless trained to do so or instructed to by the emergency services. Paddlers will normally administer their own medication if needed.</p> <p>Avoid contact with allergens.</p> <p>Organiser to be able to access emergency contact information for all competitor's.</p>	<p>If anyone is having an anaphylactic reaction Call 999 / 112 immediately. Always call 999/112 after the administration of adrenaline even if the person appears well.</p>	All	As required	
<p>Water borne illness. – weill's disease / leptospirosis.</p> <p>Gastro-intestinal illness</p>	<p>Members</p> <p>Non-member participants</p> <p>Volunteers</p>	<p>Shower after paddling.</p> <p>No deliberate splashing or swimming activities.</p> <p>Avoid paddling with open wounds.</p> <p>Wash hands prior to consuming food.</p> <p>Wash kit after use.</p> <p>Avoid swallowing water.</p> <p>Cover cuts, grazes broken skin with water proof dressing.</p>	<p>Be aware of leptospirosis / weils disease symptoms. These include high temperature, headache, body aches and pain, tummy ache, feeling sick or being sick, diarrhoea, redness in the white part of your eyes, yellowing of the skin. Inform your doctor that you have undertaken outdoor water activities. Request a check for leptospirosis.</p>	Paddlers, parents & volunteers	As required	
<p>Foot Injury. Debris underwater including glass, sharp objects etc.</p>	Competitors.	<p>All paddlers to wear suitable kayaking non sip foot wear with sole that will prevent injury.</p>				

<p>Crossing Woodmill lane with and without boats. Pedestrians in car parks. Risk to traffic accident.</p>	<p>Competitors Non-member participants Volunteers</p>	<p>Use "green cross code" when crossing road. Pedestrians to congregate away from car park areas where vehicles move. Warning to all paddlers to be cautious of moving vehicles. Adults to supervise juniors when moving boats.</p>				
<p>Electric shock.</p>	<p>Race stewards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Any electrical equipment used outside will be limited to battery operated items such as laptops and cameras. - Mains powered (230V) items may only be used inside a building and must be used within the limits of the venue's safety requirements. - No trailing leads will be in accessible areas. - The race manager shall check the condition of all electrical equipment before use. 	<p>In the event of rainfall, all equipment being used outside will be covered by a suitable cover such as a gazebo. Any item which is deemed to be unsafe by any race official will be removed from use.</p>	<p>Race Manager, Race Stewards.</p>	<p>Day of Race</p>	
<p>Fire/ explosion</p>	<p>All users of site.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Woodmill Fire risk assessment is to be always followed. - In the event of a fire all race stewards will ask all spectators/ competitors to leave the building immediately in a calm manor and leave any belongings behind. 	<p>Race stewards and Safety marshals will have access to a means of communication to contact emergency services at any time.</p>	<p>Race Manager, Race Stewards, and Safety Marshals</p>	<p>Day of Race</p>	
<p>Injury</p>	<p>All people</p>	<p>Safety boat to have trained first aider & FA kit. & First aider with FA kit to be land based close to race control.</p>	<p>Race stewards and Safety marshals will have access to a means of communication to contact emergency services at any time.</p>	<p>Race Manager, Race Stewards, and Safety Marshals</p>	<p>Day of Race</p>	

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

Checked by:		Position:		Date:	
--------------------	--	------------------	--	--------------	--

Notes:
