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**MANUAL OVERVIEW**

This Manual provides essential information for anyone taking on the responsibility of steering a dragon boat in practice and in competition. Reading the manual carefully will give a steersperson an understanding of the boating rules and WASABI PADDLING CLUB safety guidelines.

**WHO IS WASABI PADDLING CLUB?**

WASABI PADDLING CLUB is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to the participation in, and promotion of, the national and international amateur sport of Dragon Boat and Outrigger Canoe racing. Founded in Portland, Oregon in 1993 as one crew, Wasabi has grown to a membership of over 400 regular members of all ages. Additional information can be found on the club website www.wasabiusa.org

**STEERSPERSON**

Overview of Safety Procedures and Responsibilities -

SAFEY FIRST! - Who Is in Charge?

You may hear many people give commands, but did you know that the ultimate person to listen to is the steersperson? If you are the steersperson, you're in charge of the boat – not the caller, the coach, nor the captain, unless they are steering the boat.

While on the water, the steersperson is responsible not only for steering the boat in the right direction but also for the safe operation of the dragon boat and for the safety of everyone onboard. This requires knowledge of boating safety, safe boating practices and the rules of navigation for the Willamette River or for a given race site.

Prior to leaving the dock, you need to be aware of any non-swimmers on your crew and assign a buddy to the non-swimmer in case of boat swamping or capsizing. Typically this would be his/her bench mate. You need to be notified of any crewmember that has a medical condition of which you should be aware. You must ensure your team members have learned docking and loading procedures and unloading...
procedures when the boat is docked. Your team must recognize the importance of following all your instructions quickly. You are the eyes and ears of your crew while on the water; your instructions must be followed for its safety. You may want to carry a cell phone for emergencies, but do not accept any incoming calls!

A STEERSPERSON ALWAYS NEEDS TO BE OBSERVANT OF THE SURROUNDINGS!

Responsibilities – Steersperson Is Responsible for -
- The safety of the crew.
- The safety of the boat.
- The safety of others on or in the water.
- The image of dragon boating and Wasabi Paddling Club to the Portland community.
- The image of your club/crew to the public when traveling.

Assume nothing! -
- Do not assume your crewmembers know what they are doing.
- Do not assume others on the water know what they are doing.
- Do not ASSUME anything.

Management – Steersperson Must -
- Know how many people are on his/her boat.
- Know who is on the boat. Make a list if you need.
- Know who knows how to swim and who doesn't.
- Know if anyone has a pre-existing medical condition (pacemaker, severe asthma, diabetes, etc.).

Before Leaving the Dock (or the beach at some race venues) -
- Check the condition of steering oar, oar bracket and boat in general; do not use faulty or unsafe equipment.
- If paddling during a low light situation or at night, make sure lights are functioning and placed in the proper position (stern light is white – fore port light is red and fore starboard light is green).
- Verify that a throwable PFD is present at the front of the boat.
- Make sure there are bailers throughout the boat.
- It is a good idea for the steersperson to have a whistle.
- When standing in back of boat make sure the area in the back of the boat where you will stand is clear of debris.
- Verify that everyone on board is properly wearing an approved PFD or has one in the boat depending on the club rules in place.
at the time.
• Brief the crew on safe behavior and what to do in the event of swamping/capsize.
• Be sure that the boat is loaded properly (max persons not exceeded, weight distributed evenly).
• Be aware of non-swimmers, people with significant medical conditions and novice paddlers.
• Cancel the session if inclement weather or water conditions create an unsafe level of risk. Do not exceed your crew’s strength capacity to correct an unsafe condition.
  The most common conditions in the Portland area are:
  o High winds
  o High river levels with a high level of debris flow
  o Cold temperatures
  o Though less frequent, thunderstorms are an automatic reason to cancel
• Take command of the boat – both departing from the dock and re-docking. Do not back away from the dock until you determine it is safe, then signal the drummer/caller to proceed with practice.

When Returning to the Dock -
• Be prompt; other teams may be waiting for your boat.
• Do not cut across heavy traffic to return to the dock.
• Hold your boat at least two (2) boat lengths from the dock to reduce speed and coast in. Apply power; draw strokes as needed to safely dock the boat.
• Unload from the middle then forward and backward bench by bench.
• As a courtesy to the next crew it is always helpful to remove all water bottles and bail the boat if there is excess water.
• Remember to use sponges as necessary.
• Remove lights & bailers and return them to the mesh bag.
• Make sure the throwable PFD is returned to the boathouse.

Physical Skills – Steersperson Must Be Able to -
• Load into the boat from the dock or the beach at some venues.
• Maintain a straight course at full racing speed with a full crew of 18-20 paddlers plus the drummer.
• A good steersperson should be able to steer a figure eight course around two buoys at normal speed with a full crew, in both directions, or in the absence of buoys, steer a set course which includes both left and right angled turns.
• Execute sideways maneuvers without going forward.
• Turn the boat through 360° in both directions without the use of paddlers.
• Maintain forward course in a straight line without the use of paddlers.
• Propel the boat in reverse for 50m with the use of paddlers.
• Execute an emergency stop (from racing speed to full stop).
• Execute safe approaches to a dock or to a beach in both calm and windy conditions.
• Manage the unloading of team members.
• Secure the boat and ensure all gear is put away correctly.
• Be able to back into a dock.

Tip – A Cell phone is required to be on the boat at all practices.

- Always stand while steering; this gives the steersperson a better view of the area around the boat. Keep your knees slightly bent with one foot forward. Do not bounce or lunge with the boat.
- If you crouch to reduce wind resistance or raise the oar to decrease drag, be sure to practice these maneuvers at racing speed. Practice in a safe area until you master the technique and only use it when SAFE.
- To balance the boat, instruct all paddlers to sit with their outside hips to the gunwales. Weight affects the boat more in the middle, so swap a heavy paddler for a lighter one if necessary. An unbalanced boat is an unsafe boat.
- In high side wind, move heavier paddlers to the back to help reduce crabbing sideways.
- Water shoes or other shoes with good gripping soles are recommended, but being barefoot is okay during the summer. NO flip-flops or slipper type shoes are allowed, as they are slippery when wet.

**WASABI PADDLING CLUB STEERING CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**

How to Become a Certified Steersperson For Wasabi -

- Have at least 6 practice sessions of steering experience supervised by a certified Wasabi steersperson.
- Have at least 3 solo practice sessions signed off by a coach or certified Wasabi steersperson.
- Signed off on having reviewed all written material regarding steering as provided by the WASABI PADDLING CLUB (including this manual).
- Taken and passed the oral steering test
• Taken and passed the on-the-water portion check ride with safety officer or designated certifier.
• Attain a Oregon Boater Education card.

Meet the Minimum Qualifications -
• Sixteen years or older
• Clearly see with both eyes
• Clearly hear with both ears
• Unrestricted use of arms and legs
• Ability to stand for one hour and physically capable of steering a dragon boat for one hour
• Ability to speak and read English
• Demonstrated ability to command & control up to 20 adult paddlers under stressful conditions and adverse weather
• Knowledge of USCG rules of navigation on inland waterways

THE STEERSPERSON IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MAKING SURE ALL NAVIGATION AND SAFETY RULES ARE FOLLOWED

Knowing Your Boats

Wasabi owns six dragon boats with two (2) basic hull designs. Four of our boats, the Six-Sixteen’s and the Big Macs, share a common hull design. The major difference is that the Big Macs are a modified Six-Sixteen. These boats are very stable. They also have 11 or 12 benches and are able to accommodate more than 20 paddlers. If benches 11 and 12 are seated extra care should be taken to insure the boat is not overloaded. The extra length of these boats provides better stability and buoyancy. The other two boats are Rain Forests. They are copies of BUK style boats. The Rain Forests, BUK’s, Champions and Gemini boats all have the same characteristic of being less stable than the larger and heavier Six-Sixteen’s.

All six of our boats have a parabolic hull shape when viewed from the top down and have two keels running the length of the boat formed by a concave bottom to the hull.

Regardless of the differences all Hong Kong style dragon boats are steered the same way. (The reason calling them Hong Kong style boats at this point is because the Taiwanese dragon boats used by PKSCA do steer differently. This is relatively unique to the Portland area). See diagram 1 on the following page.
**Learning How to Steer**

The steersperson is responsible for crew safety on the water, and is important to the success of a winning team. A good helmsman (steersperson) will have knowledge of boat commands and will understand the effects of wind and water conditions. The steersperson has the responsibility to make sure all navigation and safety rules are followed. With practice, this person will develop instincts of boat balance and create an environment of confidence within the boat. Written information regarding steering is helpful but nothing replaces hours of steering a boat in various weather and water conditions. Be sure to conduct steering training and tests in a calm area away from traffic. A certified steersperson must be next to the student and be able to take over the helm if necessary. Use 20-man boats for training steerspersons; the more stable the better.

**Basic Turns**

RIGHT Turn - To make a RIGHT Turn. Push the oar away from you or your chest and/or push the oar handle away from the boat.

LEFT Turn - To make a LEFT Turn. Pull the oar into you or
Lesson 1 – Body Positioning, Going in a Straight Line -

**Stance**: Feet should be at least shoulder-width apart to give stability both fore (front) and aft (back) and side-to-side. Keep one foot forward; typically, keep your other foot as far aft as possible. Knees should be slightly bent and flexible, back straight, hips and shoulders square, except when turning the boat. To steer well you must learn to establish a stable stance so you can withstand front- and back- as well as side-forces. This helps you to utilize the whole steering platform to maximize the range of motion you have with the steering oar.

**Hands and Arms**: Hold the "tee" with the right hand as a paddle, left hand on shaft near your left hip. The blade should be vertical and at least halfway below the waterline. Right hand should be near chest height but will depend on the oar and other factors. Another quick measure is that the U-bolt be positioned one-third of the way up the steering oar from the blade. This will maintain proper leverage on the oar required to steer without force and exertion of the steersperson.

**Stand Up**: Many first time steerspersons tend to crouch down because they are worried about losing balance or falling out. To see where you are going, what your paddlers are doing and to have complete control of your boat, it is best to remain standing; **do not sit** down to steer – you will not have the visibility to see ahead and or around you.

**Balancing the boat**: With paddlers in the "sit ready" position, place your (right) foot slightly forward. Keep your left foot aft and against the left side of the boat. Work with the drummer/coach to balance the boat.

With the boat not moving, sweep (pull) the oar handle towards the boat to spin left, (push) away from the boat to turn right. You need to be able to spin boat while visually checking the bow and stern/oar, as well as looking out for traffic and other obstacles.

To stop the turning of the boat you use the oar in the opposite direction. Do not shift weight and unbalance the boat.

Next start the boat moving forward. Maintain a straight course while 10-12 of the paddlers move the boat forward at normal speed. Make sure you use the push/pull method and keep the oar blade properly submerged while maintaining the correct footing and hand position. Make small corrections to maintain a straight course. Pick a landmark in the distance to align the bow to maintain your orientation along a straight line. Once you get a feel for keeping the boat straight, the rest of the crew can join in paddling.
Lesson 2 – Turning -

When you can maintain a straight-line course and safely stop the boat, it is time to begin making turns. Execute a left turn at moderate to slow speed. When turning under power it is important to make wide turns, this prevents the boat from rocking. Make sure you stop the turn and avoid over steering. After executing a couple of left turns, execute a couple of right turns.

Next you will use the handle rotation method of steering. It is a gentler method than the push/pull method. The top of oar handle (right hand thumb) points in the direction of the turn. You basically twist or rotate the oar rather than pushing or pulling it. Learn to combine push/pull and rotation method to make turns and corrections.

Instructor Tip:
Reinforce to the student that they will develop a "feel" for the boat's heading and the input and feedback of the oar to maintain a desired course. Much like driving a car.

Key points to remember: for a counter-clockwise spin, the steering oar blade starts close to the tail of the boat and sweeps out away from the boat. For a clockwise spin, the steering oar blade starts away from the boat and should pull water towards the boat. For this maneuver, the steering oar needs to be pushed down through the U-bolt; otherwise the handle of the oar will hit the last paddler on the left. The deeper the steering oar is in the water, the more resistance on the blade.

To make sharp turns have your paddlers stop paddling. This is when you have to work – for a left turn, the steering oar blade starts close to the tail of the boat and sweeps out away from the boat with the handle of the steering oar coming towards you. For a right turn, the steering oar blade starts away from the boat and pulls water towards the boat the handle of the steering oar pulls away from you. To aid in making a tighter turn, you can also have your paddlers help by having them draw water, or by making one side paddle forward while the other paddles backwards. Remember this may make your team more tired but it will help you as a helmsman (steersperson) as well.
Lesson 3 – Steering Backwards -

Hold the boat. If it is moving forward have the paddlers stop the boat. Check for clearance and point the stern in the direction desired. Call for back paddling. Keep the speed low and make small corrections. Keep the oar blade partially submerged in the water and have a secure grip on the oar and stable footing. Stop the boat if you lose control. Be aware of the oar blade hitting the bottom or dock. Hold the boat before it collides with the dock or other object.

Instructor Tip:
Be sure to demonstrate to the student that when steering backwards and moving the aft of the boat to the left, (the most frequent backwards maneuver from the Wasabi dock) that they be careful not to let the steering oar get caught under the stern of the boat.

When you approach the dock or beach it is safest to fully hold the boat a short distance from the dock or beach and then call for the minimum strokes to slowly approach them.

Lesson 4 – Fine Tuning -

Learn to point the bow into the wind or water current to maintain the boat's position. Use flags, trees, (sail) boats and the water surface to help determine wind direction. Allow for drift when positioning a boat for a race. Point the bow or stern perpendicular to wakes and waves to minimize impact and disturbing the boat.

Practicing making increasingly sharp left and right turns at regular speed.

Instructor Tip:
Show the student how to move forward to allow the oar to pass behind the student to make sharp left turn.

Remember that wind and boat wake can cause you to feel unsteady. The best way to handle an oncoming boat wake is to turn the front of the boat at a 45 to 60 degree angle into the wake, so that the front end hits the wake first and the boat rolls easily through the wave or wake. Running parallel or head on at 90 degrees to a series of waves is a situation the helmsman should attempt to avoid. The closer to 45 degrees that the boat meets these waves the better. Alert the crew with a “high set up” command. For maximum control you should have
the crew continue to paddle if possible.

To Perfect Your Technique do these 3 things: practice, practice, practice!

Executing Commands and Commanding the Boat -

SAFETY IS YOUR FIRST PRIORITY.

- Scan the area in all directions to look for other water traffic or obstacles.
- Be aware of regular traffic patterns:
  - Rowers like to be close to the shore to have a reference since they face backwards.
  - Swimmers are hardest to see and are usually close to shore.
  - Sailboats have right of way and it's harder to predict their motion so give them lots of room.
- When approaching boats head on and it's difficult to determine which direction they will go, point the bow in the direction you want to go to signal your intentions.
- Project your voice with authority to the front of the boat. Physically point your mouth towards the front of the boat. If you give a command while your head is turned away from the front of the boat most paddlers won't hear you.
- You can use the mid-boat paddlers to relay your commands if conditions (high head wind) make being heard at the front of the boat difficult.
- Use the commands and wording consistently.
- Don't wait too long to give a command; paddlers may not be ready and may delay executing the command.
- If time permits, give a short explanation of your intention to the boat: "Let's move away from the dock..." "We're drifting towards shore..." followed by your command.
- Remember to smile, wave and be friendly to all other people on the water. Better to establish goodwill than to make up for a poor reputation.

Steering Commands -

- “Sit ready” All paddlers sit solid in their seats and prepared to receive next command.
- “Prepare to take it back” Paddlers prepare to back paddle.
- “Take it back” All paddlers back paddle.
• “Paddles up” All paddlers put paddles in the front position.
• “Take it away” All paddlers start paddling.
• “Ease off” Paddlers refrain from paddling with full power, but continue to paddle.
• “Bumpers in/out” Paddlers near the dock bumpers move them in or out.
• “Let it run” All paddlers stop paddling.
• “High set” Paddlers prepare for wake.
• “Debris port/starboard” Paddlers watch for debris in water.
• “Watch your blades port/starboard” Paddlers move blades out of danger when approaching another boat, dock, etc.
• “Hold” or “soft hold” All paddlers place paddles in the water with the blade face perpendicular to the boat.
• “Hold hard” All paddlers drive blade doing a backstroke then hold firm vertically.
• “Hold for drift” All paddlers place paddles in the water with the blade face parallel to the boat.
• “Brace the boat” All paddlers place the blade shaft on the gunwale perpendicular to the boat and the face of the blade flat just under the surface of the water.
• “Draw (port or starboard)” Named paddlers draw water towards the boat.
• “Pry” The opposite of draw. Push water away from the boat.

Steering in Races -

Steersperson’s Job During Races

• Know the course and water conditions before going out to race. Get the paddlers together and positioned at the starting line in quick, orderly fashion.
• Read the Rules & Regulations for the festival in advance of the race.
• Pay strict attention to the starting officials and make sure the crew is listening to you not them.
• Get to the starting line quickly, but stop the boat as the racing teams go by (to reduce wake for nearby competing lanes).
• Maneuver the boat as requested by officials prior to the start.
• Once the race has started, steer the boat in the straightest possible course to the finish line. Use a stationary object past the finish line, not the buoys, as an aiming point.
• Try to minimize use of the steering oar during races as it creates drag and can reduce overall boat speed, but only do this if you
have mastered the skill during regular practice times. A race is not a good time to try something new!

**OUR WATER – THE WILLAMETTE RIVER – RULES AND INFORMATION**

Wasabi is located in the Portland Boathouse at 1515 SE Water Avenue. Our boats are docked at the Portland Boathouse dock on the east side of the Willamette River.

Our primary practice route is south from the dock through the Holgate Channel, which runs on the east side of Ross and Hardtack Islands. In addition, practice includes the Ross Island lagoon and a route north from the dock to the Fremont Bridge.

**Things to be aware of –**

- Commercial shipping boats. You are required to give them right of way.
- Ross Island Sand and Gravel. A commercial group located in the lagoon. They run tugs that tow barges from the lagoon to the gravel fill station next to OMSI. Listen for their directional horns.
- Large tour boats, such as the Portland Spirit.
- The construction area of the new Tri-Met bridge.
- Rocky shallows. Upriver end of Ross Island and near Toe Island. To avoid these shallows if going around the island, do not cross the channel until reaching the south end near the floating homes.
- Rock shoals. Rock shoals extend out 200 feet left side from the west bank of the main channel at Stevens’ Point, upriver from Willamette Park. These are marked by unlighted Buoy 4.
- Channel between East Island and Hardtack Island. This is very shallow most of the year and should be avoided.
- Channel between Toe Island and Hardtack Island. This can be very shallow – proceed with caution.
• Bridge pilings. Strong eddies and current shear are often present near bridge pilings. Especially during the winter and spring months after heavy rains when the river is high and running fast. The waters around the pilings of the Hawthorne Bridge, especially on the north side, are very treacherous and should be avoided.

The ocean tides have an effect along the entire Willamette River below the falls at Oregon City and the lower Columbia River below Cascade Locks. Rising and lowering water levels have an effect on the speed of the river current.

See page 19 for a link to the hydrograph on the NOAA website. This graph will show projected river level changes caused by tidal influence and river discharge changes upstream.

Diagram 2 (following page) shows map of our general practice area.
Rules of the Road -

The steersperson must be aware of the “Rules of the Road” for safe navigation of the dragon boat. These rules apply to all vessels in navigable waters. All dragon boat steerspersons must adhere to these rules. While all
who use watercraft should know and use the rules of the road, never assume that all will.

The steersperson is required to be aware of other boat traffic at all times. Listen and look constantly. You must be aware of what is to the bow, the stern, and both the port and starboard sides. You must determine if there is a collision risk and take all action necessary to avoid any such collision. Always check over your shoulder to see that your course is clear before you turn or change to a new course heading. Indicate your course of action to the other boat if possible. Drive defensively.

It is essential that steerspersons review the Oregon Boaters Handbook. Pay special attention to the “Aids to Navigation” section – these are the “traffic signs” of the river. This publication is available online at – http://www.oregon.gov/OSMB/library/docs/2011boatershandbook.pdf

In addition, steerspersons are required to have an Oregon Boaters Education Card. The course and test are both open book and can be taken online for free. There is a one-time $10.00 fee for the Oregon Boaters Education Card after passing the exam. See this website - http://www.oregon.gov/OSMB/BoatEd/Pages/index.aspx

Other publications of interest to Oregon boaters can be found here – http://www.oregon.gov/OSMB/Pages/library/library.aspx

The Coast Guard also produces many useful pamphlets – http://www.uscgboating.org/default.aspx

Weather and water condition rules and guidelines:

Our major concerns in the Portland area on the Willamette river are:

- Wind Speed
  - At wind speeds above 30 miles per hour all on-water activities in club owned equipment is canceled.
  - At wind speeds above 20 miles per hour is cause to seriously consider cancelation of activity.
- Water rate for flow or speed
  - A rate of flow at or above 4 feet per second all on-water activities in club owned equipment is canceled.
  - A rate of flow at or above 3 feet per second is cause to seriously consider cancelation of activity.
- Water temperature
o Water temperatures below 40 degrees F in combination with elevated winds or elevated river velocity is a reason to consider cancellation.

- Lightning in the area or on the horizon is an automatic reason to cancel activities.

It can be very hard to make “black and white” rules around what are safe conditions and what are not. We have all been given the ability to use sound judgment. Combined with the sections on cold water immersion and hypothermia below the above guidelines and rules all play an integrated part in making a decision and need to be applied using sound judgment and the knowledge possessed by the steersperson and the coach of crew strengths and weaknesses.

Water conditions are available at;

a) USGS Hydrograph at the Morrison Bridge  
   https://waterdata.usgs.gov/or/nwis/uv?site_no=14211720 (you may need to copy and paste this link into your browser).

Safe boating practices -

b) Establish a comfortable, steady and well-balanced steering position. Remain standing.

c) Wear shoes with a good grip. Wear sunglasses for glare and/or a hat with a brim. Wear appropriate headwear to allow for visibility in rain and wind.

d) Be aware of weather, winds, tides, currents and wakes. Check the skies, scan for lightning, listen for thunder, and watch for squalls. Although the tidal differential in the downtown area is never much more than a foot, there is tidal difference.

e) If a situation becomes hazardous and you are far from the dock, head to the safety of shore.

f) Stay to the right hand side when moving up and down the channels. Hold your course direction and make gradual changes. Do not weave back and forth in the practice areas. Make sure other boats know your intentions.

g) Do not stop in the center of the channel.

h) Note the two large white signs with vertical red stripes on the east side of Ross Island. If the red lines of the two signs match up, you are in the shipping lane (in the way of barges and cruise ships).

i) Hold a steady course by picking a spot on the horizon and steering toward it.

j) Do not assume other boats see you. Look and listen for other craft.

k) The Gross Tonnage rule applies – if the other craft is larger than your craft be prepared to give way.
l) Develop knowledge of our practice area; know waterways, dead head locations, shallow areas and busy traffic areas.
m) Make sure to keep your practice route in areas where shore access is possible.
n) Stay clear of anchored boats.
o) Respect rowing crews and their course lines.
p) Respect fishing boats and their fishing lines.
q) Yield right of way
r) Five short whistle blasts alert other boats to a dangerous situation.
s) Beware of wakes - and the ricochet of wakes.
t) Try to orient the boat to take waves at a 45 to 60 degree angle. Slow the paddling and if need be, stop the boat and/or brace the boat.
u) When crossing the path of another vessel the boat on the right is the stand on vessel (which means they have the right of way). The other vessel is the give way vessel.
v) When overtaking another vessel you must give the other vessel the right of way and stay clear.

SAFETY

The unexpected/disaster -

If the unexpected/disaster occur, it is the steersperson’s responsibility to take charge and manage the situation.

a) Steering Oar/Oar Housing Breaks
   1) Immediately call “Hold the boat”
   2) Pull the steering oar into the boat
   3) Steer the dragon boat in OC-6/standard canoe fashion with a standard dragon boat blade. You will need to use the paddlers to provide additional directional control. Do this through a series of starboard and port draw and pry strokes. (If there is an OC-6 steersperson on board, enlist their help).
   4) Immediately return to dock.
   5) Report damage to maintenance chairperson.

b) Rescuing a swimmer (crew member fallen out of boat)
   1) If a paddler/caller falls out of the boat, maneuver alongside them and have crewmembers brace the boat. If you (the steersperson) fall out, you will need to instruct members to take these actions.
   2) Have a crewmember grab the swimmer firmly by the front of the PFD. After warning them, count to 3, push down on the swimmer to below the water line and use the momentum of them being pushed up by the water to pull them into the boat.
   3) Check for injuries.
4) While bracing the boat during a rescue the crew needs to maintain boat balance to the degree possible, to avoid swamping or capsizing during the rescue.

c) Swamping
1) Providing that the in rush of water is not too great or fast, it is possible to bail a boat while it’s being swamped, and if not fully swamped, to continue the bailing and either continue practice or return to shore (depending on weather conditions).

d) Capsize – boat sinks
1) Ascertain that there are no injuries and have crewmembers check for bench mates. Take a head count. Ensure that non-swimmers are paired with a buddy – if needed provide non-swimmers with additional buoyancy. Have crew confirm that their PFDs are properly fastened.
2) Reassure crew and remind them to listen for instructions and to stay with the boat unless otherwise instructed.
3) Have crewmembers get out of the boat, and let the boat rise.
4) Once boat is raised, have crewmembers hold the gunwale.
5) If needed to prevent loss of body heat, have crew members hold still and huddle. Collect as many floating items – PFDs, paddles, bailers as safely possible.
6) Have crewmembers bail. Careful not to force the gunnels back under while bailing.
7) Board crewmembers one or two (non-swimmers and injured members first) at a time as boat continues to rise.
8) Return to the dock after all crew members are on board.

e) Capsize – boat flips
1) In the event of capsize with the boat flipping have everyone release their paddles put their hands on top of their heads - this will help to lessen the risk of head injury. They may recover paddles after (if it is safe to do so).
2) Ascertain that there are no injuries and have crewmembers check for bench mates. Take a head count. Ensure that non-swimmers are paired with a buddy – if needed provide non-swimmers with additional buoyancy. Have crew confirm that their PFDs are properly fastened.
3) Reassure crew and remind them to listen for instructions and to stay with the boat unless otherwise instructed.
4) Once out of the boat, have crew members hold still and huddle to prevent loss of body heat if needed. Collect as many floating items – PFDs, paddles, bailers as safely possible.
5) Have crew position the boat at a 45 degree angle to the waves and aligned with the current if possible.
6) Have the weaker swimmers positioned at the bow of the boat, Non-swimmers hold on to the boat for support and the stronger swimmers at the aft of the boat.
7) On command, start pushing/pulling the boat towards the nearest shore.
8) Once ashore the boat can be righted and bailed.
9) In the event that prolonged exposure presents a risk for hypothermia abandon the boat and get all members ashore as quickly as possible.

We are a Cold Water Area – Some Critical Information

Cold Water Immersion Shock -

"Cold water immersion shock" occurs when a person falls into very cold water. What occurs is a gasp reflex response or the involuntary inhaling of the lungs. If your head is in the water you could take water into your lungs and drown.

Water temperature can very quickly follow air temperature in our area. Sometimes as little as two days especially if precipitation has accompanied the air temperature change.

Wasabi Paddling Club closely monitors the water temperature as well as imminent weather conditions. Water temperature is taken at the Morrison Bridge and is recorded every 6 hours. The following link is for the USGS temperature gauge at the Morrison Bridge.
http://or.water.usgs.gov/will_morrison/monitors/will_morrison_t_7.html

Conditions Leading to Hypothermia -

• Cold temperatures
• Improper clothing and equipment
• Wetness
• Fatigue, exhaustion
• Dehydration
• No knowledge of hypothermia
• Alcohol intake - causes vasodilatation leading to increased heat loss

Signs and Symptoms of Hypothermia -

Watch for the "-Umbles" - stumbles, mumbles, fumbles, and grumbles, which show changes in motor coordination and levels of consciousness

Hypothermia Defined (Mayo Clinic) -
Hypothermia occurs when more heat escapes from your body than your body can produce. Prolonged exposure to cold air or cold water temperatures are common causes. Signs and symptoms of hypothermia may include gradual loss of mental and physical abilities. Severe hypothermia can lead to death.

**Treating Hypothermia**

The basic principles of warming a hypothermic victim are to conserve the heat they have and replace the body fuel they are burning to generate that heat. If a person is shivering, they have the ability to rewarm themselves at a rate of 2 degrees C per hour.

It is important that the hypothermic victim be re-heated from the core/head out. Do not re-heat from the extremities first.

**Reduce Heat Loss**

- Additional layers of clothing
- Dry clothing
- Shelter

**Add Fuel & Fluids**

It is essential to keep a hypothermic person adequately hydrated and fueled. Give them hot liquids to drink, and some sugars for energy. Avoid giving liquids with alcohol or caffeine.

**Add Heat**

- Hot water bottles or heat packs applied under the arms and between the legs.
- Body to body contact
- Get into dry clothing
- Cuddle with a normothermic person in lightweight dry clothing

**Incident Reporting**

(Blank copies of the incident report form are kept in the boathouse near the waivers and payment box.)

**Incident Reporting Procedure**

**Purpose:**

The purpose of the incident report is to provide documentation of incidents involving Wasabi owned equipment and/or members and non-club craft or personnel that have occurred. The documentation of such incidents has been deemed prudent by the Board of Directors and can be of great assistance in improving the overall safety for the membership of the club.

**What is a reportable incident? The following are guidelines and by no means are they a complete list:**
• Collision with another boat.
• Collision with an object such as a submerged log.
• Near miss with another craft.
• A medical emergency while paddling.
• An incident involving a club member and another party.
• Any violation of the law or of club rules by a club member while participating in a club event.

Procedure:

Fill out an incident report as soon after the incident occurs as practical. Forms will be available in the same set of holders as the waivers and payment envelopes. Upon completion, place them in an envelope marked to the attention of the Safety Officer and place them in the Grand Masters drawer.

Reporting nuisance boaters -

Motorized boaters that are creating unsafe situations should be reported to the Multnomah County Sheriff’s River Patrol. Make sure to get the hull ID. The form to file is here –

The non-emergency number to call (if you have a phone with you and it is safe to do so) is – 503-243-7952.

Always be familiar with the law concerning on water incidents and accidents. If notification of the authorities is required or is prudent, be sure to do so noting such action on the report. If an accident report needs to be filled out insure that this is done also, noting such and attaching a copy to the incident report.
This is a controlled document. Revision control is tracked below;

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