MEETING PLANS & IDEAS: PADDLE SPORTS

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OBJECTIVES

This month’s activities should:

- Provide Scouts an understanding of basic paddle sport safety practices.
- Teach Scouts the key components of a canoe, kayak, and/or stand up paddle board.
- Let Scouts learn and practice proper paddling behavior.
- Encourage Scouts to work as a team to plan an on-water outing.
- Emphasize the use of outdoor ethics to help protect the environment.
- Foster a sense of communion with nature and God.
- Build self-confidence by learning and demonstrating skills.

LEADERSHIP PLANNING

As a leadership team, you may want to discuss the following items when choosing paddle sports as your program feature during your planning meetings.

- What is your unit’s current skill level?
- Do we know a canoeing expert or a certified instructor?
- What equipment will we need? Where will we get it?
- What will we do for the main event?
- Do we know anyone who is Safety Afloat trained?
- What additional subtopics would fit well with this feature?
- How will we get access to canoes, kayaks, and/or SUPs?
- How can we involve parents?
- How can we incorporate Scout skills and advancement into the main event?
- To meet our needs, what should we change in the sample meeting plans?

PREOPENING IDEAS

Preopening Ideas on Troop Program Resources

- As Scouts arrive, show Internet videos of Olympic canoeing competitions.
- Demonstrate commercial and/or homemade versions of containers for keeping supplies dry in canoes.

OPENING IDEAS

Opening Ideas on Troop Program Resources

GROUP INSTRUCTION IDEAS
Paddling Basics

- Provide an overview of how wind, weather, and waves affect paddlers.
- Review hazards while paddling on rivers and in the ocean.
- Describe basic on-water navigation rules.

Emergency and Rescues

- Discuss the most common injuries that occur while paddling and how to treat them.

Transportation and Logistics

- Explain and demonstrate the proper way to load a canoe, kayak, and stand up paddleboard on a cartop and trailer. From the How-To Video Series, show the videos for: **Bowline and Rope Tackle (a.k.a. Trucker’s Hitch)**.

SKILLS INSTRUCTION IDEAS

**Safety Afloat and Equipment**

- Review the buddy system.
- Learn the purpose of a life jacket.
- Learn the part of a canoe, kayak, or stand up paddle board.

**Basic Skills**

- Identify parts of a canoe paddle.
- Learn proper sizing of canoe paddles.
- Learn proper hand positioning.
- Learn basic paddle stroke concepts.
- Blade angle and position
- Shaft angle and position
- Learn basic paddle strokes: forward stroke, backstroke, draw stroke, pry stroke.
Review the above skills.

- Compare the effects of strokes when paddling solo vs. tandem.

**Emergencies and Rescues**

- Review the parts of a canoe.
- Learn the proper technique for entering and exiting a canoe. Learn the proper technique for loading a canoe.

- Review the above skills.
- Learn the proper technique for re-entry into a canoe in deep water.

- Review the above skills.
- Learn the proper technique for completing an assisted rescue.

**Transportation and Logistics**

- Learn the basic knots used for transporting a canoe: (bowline and trucker’s hitch)
- proper canoe-carrying techniques.

- Review the above skills.
- Learn how to properly load and unload paddlecraft on a vehicle.
- Learn what equipment is needed for an overnight paddling trip.
- Learn other safety considerations required for an overnight paddling trip.

- Review the above skills.
- Learn what equipment is needed for a high-adventure paddling trip.
- Learn about the safety considerations required for a high-adventure paddling trip.

**BREAKOUT GROUP IDEAS**

**Getting Ready for the Main Event**

- Discuss what each Scout needs to bring on the outing. *(Refer to information page.)*
- Menu Planning
- Duty Roster Planning

**Preparation for the meeting’s game or challenge**

**GAME AND CHALLENGE IDEAS**

*Library of Games and Challenges on Troop Program Resources*

- **Paddlecraft Parts**
  - *Materials:* for each patrol, cards labeled with a paddlecraft part, a large picture of the paddlecraft featured during the main event.
  - *Method:* Depending on the type of paddlecraft used during the main event, prepare a large picture of a canoe, kayak, or paddle board, like the diagram on the information page, but without the labels. Also prepare cards with the names of each part of the particular paddlecraft the Scouts will be using. The large picture for each patrol can be hanging on a wall or on a table. On signal, one member in turn takes a card and places it on the picture where he thinks it belongs, and tags off the next Scout.
– Scoring: The first patrol to correctly label all the parts wins.

* Dress for Success
  – Materials: Duffel bag for each team, full of proper paddling apparel (including life jackets, footwear, etc.) and apparel not suitable for a paddling outing (flip flops, cutoff jeans, cotton hoodies, etc.); four cards identifying the type of paddling (coldwater, spring/fall, summer) and the worst outfit.
  – Method: A card is drawn, and each team has 60 seconds to find the best outfit for that type of paddling and have one member put it on. Have the group debrief as to what they chose and why.
  – Scoring: A judge determines which group chose the best outfit.
  – Note: A modification of this game puts all the equipment in one big pile at the far end of the room; each member races up to get one piece of clothing.

* Mobile Boat
  – Materials: One canoe and one dolly for each team, cones for the course
  – Method: Fasten a canoe on a roller dolly. Position one team member at the bow and one at the stern, each holding on to an end line. A path is set up using cones. One or more paddlers in the canoe execute strokes that will move the boat through the course. Scouts at the bow and stern move the canoe in the direction of the strokes the paddler executes.
  – Scoring: This is a timed race. Five-second penalties are given for hitting cones or going off track, or when the motion of the canoe does not match the motion of the paddlers.
  – Note: This game also can be played with inflatable kayaks, but you should avoid fiberglass boats. This is not a good exercise to do with stand up paddleboards.

CLOSING IDEAS

* Leader’s Minutes
* Closing Ceremonies

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TROOP LEADER RESOURCE LINKS

Advancement Resources
Awards Central
Boy Scouts
Guide to Safe Scouting