



# CANOE SPRINT AND PARACANOE CREW BOAT SKILLS & TECHNIQUE





# Introduction

## Key Principles:

- Buy in from individuals to the team boat effort is essential.
- Communication and teamwork are keys to success. Having trust and belief in the team is essential.
- Athletes should have experience of the different seats to understand the roles and responsibilities of each position.

## Roles of paddlers:

Each seat has specific tasks that are important to ensure the boat comes together. As part of this, paddlers will need to adapt themselves in order to meet the needs of the boat and the seat position. By taking the ownership of these roles, crews can develop the rapport, trust and belief in one another in order to support the common goals of the boat.

## What's different:

- Higher boat speeds affect ability to find connection, this requires a ballistic stroke with a fast catch and quick exit.
- Water surface varies along the boat, in particular at seats 3&4 the water is disturbed. This requires paddlers in the back to be able to find lock quickly and effectively.
- Higher Stroke Rates: K2/C2 10 Strokes/min above K1/C1; K4/C4 10 stroke/min above K2/C2.
- Working effectively with 1-3 other people in a boat.
- Boat movement and seating positions will feel different to singles - In Kayak seats 3&4 can 'feel' higher. The movement of the boat in seat 4 is more exaggerated than the front for yaw/steering.
- K4/C4 require high forces to accelerate and high power to maintain speed. These characteristics in physicality and technique need to be trained and developed.





## K2/K4

### Key technique factors

- Leg drive and power application are key to coordination for boat stability which supports the connection and power application.
- Dynamic and ballistic strokes to support higher boat speeds. Paddlers with similar stroke profiles will combine better as a crew.
- Exit of blades together - A quick exit is required to match the increased stroke rate and boat speed to avoid a braking effect at the back of the stroke.
- Staying “tall” in the boat and maintaining posture.

### Seat responsibilities

**Stroke/Seat 1** - Deliver the rhythm of the boat; the athlete should have a good sense of rhythm and consistently deliver the right stroke rate for the boat throughout the race. Strong tactical knowledge or race smarts are advantageous.

**Seat 2** – Transfer the rhythm from stroke to the rear of the boat. The ability to follow the stroke and adjust for changes in stroke rate quickly are important skills. In K4 can call the delivery of the race plan.

**Seat 3/4** – Engine Room. Paddlers in the rear of the boat provide the firepower to drive the boat. They need to be able to find the “lock” and deliver a powerful stroke quickly. Paddlers may need to extend their paddles to facilitate a better stroke characteristic, where appropriate for the paddler.



## C2/C4

### Key Technical factors

- Individuals must have very good delivery of C1 technical skills in order to maximise efficiency and overcome the constraints of crew boat paddling in Canoe.
- Good understanding of physical requirements and technical knowledge of all the different racing distances needed to be able to perform in the different discipline aspects of individual and crew boat racing in Canoe.
- Requires a smoother exit which affects the rhythm reducing drag in the water and boat speed.
- Greater emphasis on catch and locking the blade early.
- Crews of differing size will need attention to the trim and size of boats used. Keep bodies as close to each other, and the middle of boat as possible to maximise the trim of boat.
- Ability to be able to paddle in more than one position, e.g. front or back of boat.
- Paddler in back of boat (C2) must try to enter water just fractionally in front of the stroke, to take the weight in order to help front paddler keep the stroke dynamic.

### C2

#### Stroke – Deliver the rhythm of boat

- Lock the blade early.
- Good sense of rhythm and pacing.
- Quick exit without “J-Stroke”.
- Hold form and coordination under fatigue.

#### Back - Able to adapt technique to match rhythm of boats and steering

- Powerful Catch.
- Lock the blade early.
- Controls Steering - effective steering with minimal impact on run of the boat.

#### C4 Middle Positions - Able to adapt technique to match rhythm of boats and steering

- Powerful Catch.
- Lock the blade early.
- Can do the above in “moving water” creates strong connections.
- Quick exit without “J-Stroke”.



## C2/C4 (Cont)

### Same side set up specifics

- Different feel and rhythm for same side paddling, coaches and athletes should spend time creating opportunities to develop this skill by paddling with other paddlers in different positions in the boat.
- C2s with paddlers on same side will require extra attention on fittings to adjust for boat roll and steering from the front becomes important.
- Back paddler must be confident steering at speed in a smooth action.
- Front paddler must have greater awareness and ability to deliver a C stroke to control and help back paddler steer boat.
- Same side crew boat paddlers must have good fundamental skills sets to be able to drive and steer the boats in difficult conditions, cross winds, etc. have greater effect on boat control when running the boat at speed.
- Ability and skill to accelerate the boat from standing to racing speed.
- Ability to start at a counter angle to compensate for same side paddling and enable back paddler to apply power without too much correction stroke to keep boat in a straight line.
- Good understanding and delivery of edging skills.
- Ability to support boat on one side, same side from capsize on opposite side.
- Position of feet and knees closer to central line, as in left right crews both paddlers need to be as close together in the middle to reduce yaw and pitch and enable crews to pivot around central axis point.
- Mixed crew boats, physicality and body weight mass of male and female will need to be accounted for. Thought and time needed to set up and trim, and which paddler, male or female, goes to the front or back and who drives and who steers.

### Traditional set up specifics

- Less steering required, position of paddlers as close as possible without interfering with stroke supports straight line movement.
- Position of feet and knee can be offset to allow for straighter entry of blade along line of the boat.