

NUIM SPORTS AND SOCIETIES RISK ASSESSMENT FOR KAYAKING AND  
CANOEING (MUCK).  
September 2012

## **Name of Club: Maynooth University Canoe and Kayak (MUCK)**

**President:** Sean MacNamara

**Vice-President:** Conor McMarrow

**Secretary:** Orla McNally

**Treasurer:** Sharon Rourke

**Equipments Officer:** Shane Walsh

**Safety Officer:** Conor Finegan

### Hazards: Indoor (pool)

- \* Irresponsible or dangerous horse play could lead to accidents.
- \* Failing to listen to the instructor or lifeguard on duty.
- \* Failing to exercise caution when swimming (not in a kayak) or when in close proximity to paddles or other kayaks while the lesson is in session.
- \* Slips, trips, and falls.

### Hazards: Outdoor (river, lake, sea)

- \* General river hazards in a kayak: strainers, hydraulic holes, rocks and siphons.
- \* General river hazards while swimming: foot entrapment, strainers, hydraulic holes, rocks and siphons
- \* General surf hazards: rip tides, dangerous waves, rocks, other surfers and weather.
- \* Failing to understand or properly wear or use equipment: buoyancy aid, spraydeck, paddles, helmet.
- \* Failing to follow instructions of trip leaders/guides.
- \* Failing to inform trip leaders/guides of health conditions or risks.
- \* Failing to properly outfit oneself, resulting in extreme cold or hypothermia.
- \* Failing to recognize the limits of one's own ability.

### **Risks: Very High**

#### Management Controls

- \* Club leaders or trip leaders are competent and qualified by an external recognized body (ICU/AWA) on and off the water to assist in emergency situations.
- \* Observe and comply by the recommended 6 to 1 instructor ratio laid out by the ICU.
- \* No member of the club can attempt anything on the water without instruction from and approval by an instructor.
- \* No member of the club shall get onto moving water without first attending at least two training sessions in the pool.
- \* All members must understand and be able to respond to hand, whistle, and paddle signals while on the water.
- \* All members must be trained in the use of a throw rope before getting on a river.
- \* All members must understand and be able to properly fit and adjust all safety gear: helmet, buoyancy aid, spraydeck.
- \* All members must be aware of the specific requirements of outdoor water sports and keeping

warm in sometimes-freezing conditions.

- \* All members must be informed of the risks inherent to kayaking and given as much instruction or information as they request.
- \* Club instructors must be confident and able to communicate to those around them. They must also exercise awareness of the abilities of the members and the dangers of the location of the trip.

### **Equipment**

- \* It is the responsibility of the Equipments Officer with the rest of the club Committee to ensure that the equipment used on and off the water is of acceptable standard and condition.
- \* Faulty equipment must be removed from use immediately until it is repaired or replaced.
- \* It is the responsibility of the individual club member to ensure that his or her gear is maintained for the duration of a trip, cleaned, and returned to the container.
- \* It is the responsibility of the individual club member to ensure that he or she is properly outfitted for an outdoor, all-weather sport; however, the instructors are expected to convey the requirements specific to outdoor water sports – thermals, synthetic clothing, etc.

### **Helmets**

- \* All helmets must have functional adjustments both horizontally and vertically around the head; they must fasten securely.
- \* All helmets must pass a visual inspection by the Equipments Officer or member of the Committee before being used by a member.

### **Buoyancy Aids (BAs)**

- \* All BAs must have functional adjustable straps and must fasten securely.
- \* All BAs must be monitored regularly by the Equipments Officer or a member of the Committee for adequate buoyancy; any BAs that do not float adequately must be removed immediately.
- \* All BAs must be cleaned after every use under the supervision of the Equipments Officer or a member of the Committee.

### **Spraydecks**

- \* Spraydecks must be routinely checked for holes or wear by the Equipments Officer or member of the Committee.
- \* Spraydecks must be cleaned after every use under the supervision of the Equipments Officer or member of the Committee.

### **Cags**

- \* Cags must be routinely checked for water and wind proof abilities as well as for holes or wear by the Equipments Officer or member of the Committee.
- \* Cags must be cleaned after every use under the supervision of the Equipments Officer or member of the Committee.

### **Boats**

- \* Boats must be routinely checked for wear or stress by a the Equipments Officer or member of the Committee.
- \* Boats must be outfitted as snugly as possible for each individual paddler under the supervision

of the Equipments Officer or member of the Committee

\* The Equipments Officer or a member of the Committee should ensure that members do not paddle boats that are not suited for their body type or skill level.

### **Paddles**

\* Paddles must be maintained by the Equipments Officer or member of the Committee and checked regularly for signs of wear or cracking.

\* All members must be cautious of their immediate vicinity when using paddles.