

# White Water

## Progressive Stadium White Water Award

### Award Description

This award is designed to progress your ability in appropriate decision making and personal paddling skills on man-made, white water venues.

### Extended Award Description

Your Progressive Stadium White Water Award endorses your judgment, decision making and expertise and requires a good understanding of paddling on man-made, white water venues. You should be confident in undertaking sessions on a variety of man-made, white water venues. Your confidence should be based upon both proficiency in skills and a broad appreciation of surroundings and environmental context. Your award should be seen as a sound basis for independently building the experience and expertise.

### Award Content

#### 1. Location

White water paddling is a dynamic and demanding activity which brings high rewards. To have an enjoyable session we need to make some key decisions.

Key factors influencing our decisions include the water levels, the grade of water, the weather, our fellow paddlers and features of the location we choose. We can take each of these factors into consideration and ask ourselves some questions to ensure the correct decisions are made:

**Factor:** Water conditions

**We may need to know:** What is the current water release? Is this level safe for our ability? What could affect this? How might we find out this information?

What is the grade of the water we are going to be paddling on? How



challenging will this make our day and is that what we want? Does the grade change at any point? Is this the correct grade for our ability? Are there any hazards along our way that we need to be aware of? Is the course configuration as expected or have there been any changes made?

**Factor:** Weather conditions

**We may need to know:** What is the forecast for the day? How will this impact our paddle? Will the forecast change our clothing decisions? Will the forecast impact on the safety precautions we take?

**Factor:** Access and environment

**We may need to determine:** Where will we access/egress the water? What environmental factors might affect this decision? How would we direct support to us in an emergency situation? How can we reduce our impact on the environment?

## 2. **Getting Ready**

Before getting to the water we must choose suitable kit and equipment and have the correct knowledge to use it. Key points we may consider are:

**What will we wear?**

What are the clothing options available to us? Why might we choose one over another? How will the demands of the venue impact on our choice of personal safety equipment? Are we confident in the use of our chosen personal safety equipment and considered the venue rules for the use of slings/ropes?

**What will we use?**

What are the different equipment and boat options available and why might we choose one over the other? How might different hull design/type impact our paddling? Have we chosen equipment suitable for our day?





### **What will we take?**

What additional equipment might be useful to carry on the water with us? What safety kit would it be useful to have with us? Does the venue allow us to leave kit on the bank? Do we want to take any spare equipment? How and where will we store this equipment so that we can access it if required?

**Consideration:** Getting to the water

**We may need to determine:** What is the best way to carry, load and secure our craft to protect ourselves or others from injury and prevent unnecessary damage? How will we get our craft and additional equipment to the water? Are the water and weather as expected? What other factors do we need to take into consideration before we get on?

### **3. At the Venue**

Before we get on the water we need to be confident in our ability to deal with the complications it might bring. A man-made venue is usually a shared space; we must also be aware of other users and consider how we will safely get on the water.

**Consideration:** Do we need to sign in or hold a membership for the venue? Other users - we sometimes paddle at busy times. We may need to share the water with kayakers and rafters. To do this safely, an 'etiquette' amongst these users has developed to minimise conflict and help everyone enjoy the venue. Does the venue have specific 'etiquette' requirements? It is also important to know and take into consideration about other sessions taking place – such as rafting, freestyle and slalom.

**We may need to consider:** What is the etiquette here? Where can we park and change considerably to other users? Who else is paddling with us? What is their current ability? Are we aware of their motivations?

**Consideration:** Safety and rescue



**We may need to know:** How can we protect ourselves and others from any potential hazards? What damage to our health might repeated immersion in the water cause? How can we help prevent this becoming an issue? What would we do if someone we are paddling with gets really cold or overheats? What potential injuries might we need to treat? How might we do this? What additional safety equipment might be useful to carry and have access to?

#### **4. White Water Skills**

When white water paddling at this level we must bring together our positive attitude and range of skills to attack the water with flair and creativity. Meeting each demand of the venue with situational awareness and responsiveness. Blending planned activity and our recovery abilities to create a successful session. Skills we may call upon for this could be:

**Skill:** Paddling the venue

**We may need to consider:** How can we best choose our route down venue and identify features that we want to use that aid us? What features do we need to avoid? How can we use our forward paddling to drive our boat effectively to where we want to be?

**Skill:** Tactical Awareness

**We may need to consider:** What tactics might we need to paddle the venue? How would we use these to position and control our craft? When would we employ these tactics? Which tactics are we likely to need today?

**Skill:** Assessing and adjusting to our environment

**We may need to consider:** What elements of the venue do we need to be aware of during our session? How can we use our knowledge of the venue to aid our session?

**Skill:** Crossing flow

**We may need to consider:** When might we need to stop or cross flows? What types of flow might we need to cross? How can our speed, angle, edge, timing





and use of body position impact the outcome? How can we look to future water to make our crossing successful?

**Skill:** Maintaining direction

**We may need to consider:** What factors will we need to consider to keep our craft tracking? How will we effectively use linked strokes to maintain direction? How can we use the water to help us maintain direction?

**Skill:** Changing direction

**We may need to consider:** Which features can we use to assist us in changing direction? How will we spot and use them? Which strokes might we use to change direction? How else can we aid a change of direction?

**Skill:** Working as a team

**We may need to consider:** How can we work as a team to create a successful session? How can we provide safety for each other? What equipment might we require for this? How can we use positioning and environmental awareness to work well as a team?

**Skill:** Dealing with mishaps

**We may need to consider:** What is our strategy to get back on course and in control? How do we maintain balance? We need to be able to relocate and re-focus after a roll in a rapid/feature. How would we safely get ourselves or others back to the bank and with their craft? How would we retrieve loose kit, equipment or boats? What factors might affect our decisions on how we retrieve these? If a mishap does occur, do we have mental strategies which will help us to stay focused and resilient?

## **5. After the Session**

Every paddle session is an opportunity for learning and improving. We can use every session to aid us in our development by reflecting on our session.



**Look around:** Have conditions changed whilst we were out on the water? Was that expected? Did anything else occur which was not expected during our session? How did we deal with that?

**Watching what others do:** How was our session in relation to others? Why did we/they have good lines at the venue? Are we able to relate their skills to ours?

**Consider what you will take away:** What have we learnt today? What can we focus on next time?

## **6. Future Development**

Each day we spend paddling we further expand our skills and knowledge, creating a more enjoyable experience on the water. With no two experiences ever the same, we never stop learning.

Continually evaluating the choices we make creates a natural evolution of decision making ability and skills.