

# Polo

## Polo Explore Award

### Award Description

This award is designed to develop your ability to apply appropriate decision making to underpin your skills for participating in the game of Polo.

### Extended Award Description

Your Polo Explore Award will give you the ability to apply your choices to an enjoyable paddling session on the water. You will be confident when looking at the factors which affect our decisions, developing a deeper understanding of Polo; thereby increasing your enjoyment of the discipline. When playing Polo, you will enable a proficient use of skills and equipment to be in control throughout the paddling session and game. Your award should be seen as a sound basis for building the experience and knowledge associated with Polo Perform Award holders.

### Award Content

#### 1. External Factors

To have an enjoyable paddling session we should have an understanding of how external factors will affect us. Some key factors we may consider are:

**Factor:** Environment – where are we training or playing, inside with heat and humidity or outside with variable weather conditions including temperature, wind, variable water depth and quality, etc.

**What we might observe:** What is the temperature? Are any changes expected during the time we are training/playing?

**Factor:** Complementary paddling

**What we might consider:** How might participating in other paddlesport disciplines complement our polo skills? Is there a local club or team we can join to gain experience? How else could we improve our communication, teamwork and problem solving skills?

## 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? Are we confident in the use of our chosen personal safety equipment? What are the legal requirements when competing nationally?

### **What will we use?**

What are the different equipment and boat options available and why might we choose one over the other? How might we set our boats up to get the best from our session?

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

What additional equipment might be useful to have with us? What safety kit would it be useful to have with us or available on the bank? What drink and nutrition might we need for our paddling session?

## 3. At the Venue

Once ready for our paddling session we must get our boat to the water's edge without damage to it or ourselves. Some craft for polo are relatively light and fragile, others are heavier but more robust. We must also be aware of any safety considerations for our time on the water and look at our aims for the session.

**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?

**Consideration:** Safety

**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 cold water cause? How can we help prevent this becoming an issue? How can we protect ourselves from collision and impact injury? What potential injuries might we need to treat? How might we do this?

**Consideration:** Team planning

**We may need to decide:** Do we have clear aims and focus for the session? Are there any challenging areas we could work on?

#### 4. Rules and Tactics

**Factor:** To fully enjoy the game of polo, an understanding of the rules is useful as well as formations used in attack and defence.

**We may need to consider:** What are the basic rules of the polo game? Where is the next referee's course near me? The first part of a grade 4 course covers all the basic rules. Do we understand and are we able to demonstrate one of the attack plays and defensive zones?

#### 5. Polo Skills

When paddling a polo kayak we should be in control. Key features of being in control include us staying relaxed, balanced and understanding the application of the fundamentals.

**Skill:** Preparing for the game

**We may need to consider:** How can we ensure we are mentally and physically ready for our time on the water?

**Skill:** Forward and reverse paddling

**We may need to know:** Why are these skills important in polo? How can we effectively accelerate over a short distance? How best can we engage our leg muscles to create effective forward paddling? What advantages will this have?

**Skill:** Steering and controlling the boat

**We may need to consider:** What techniques and tactics can we use to steer our boat? What different strokes can we use to steer our boat? How can we use these most effectively so as not to lose speed? How can we use edge and trim to turn the boat whilst maintaining stability and speed? How would we dip our boat underneath the ball?

**Skill:** Passing, catching and shooting

**We may need to know:** Are we able to pass from a static position, front on and sideways? Are we able to catch from a pass or intercept from an opponent? Can we catch from a static position, front on and sideways with one and two hands? Are we able to accurately shoot the ball into different parts of the net? What techniques can we use to improve all of these skills?

**Skill:** Paddle skills

**We may need to consider:** How would we bring the ball under control and into our hands using the paddle? How can we block, control and then pass? If we are in goal, how can we position our kayak and paddle to its most effectiveness?

**Skill:** Dribbling

**We may need to know:** How can we pass, catch and paddle? How can we hand dribble without losing the ball?

**Skill:** Tackling

**We may need to know:** What can we do legally when tackling opponents? Are we allowed to use our hands? Are we allowed to turn an opposition team player's boat?

**Skill:** Supporting

**We may need to consider:** How would we support on both sides?

## 6. Tactics

**Factor:** To fully enjoy the game of polo, an understanding of the basic tactics is useful, for example formations used in attack and defence.

**We may need to consider:** Do we understand and able to demonstrate one of the attack plays and defensive zones? Examples of attacking play include; draw, split, overload or centre player. Examples of defensive zones: 3&1, 2&2, flat 4, chasing 2&2 or chasing 3 or chasing 4 or five out.

## 7. Team Work

**Factor:** Canoe polo is a team sport, therefore it is essential for team mates to be able to work together.

**We may need to consider:** What is good team work? How are my communication skills? How do we work together with others? What are problem solving skills and when are they needed in canoe polo?

## 8. After the Paddling Session

Every game/training session is an opportunity for learning and improving. We can create a positive impact on our future experiences by performing a good post-paddling assessment.

**Watching what others do:** It might be useful to spend some time watching others. How are they paddling? How were they positioning themselves in attack and defence?

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

## 9. Future Development

Each day we spend playing polo further expands our skills and knowledge, creating a more enjoyable experience on the water. With no two paddling sessions or games ever the same, we never stop learning.

Continually evaluating the choices we make creates a natural evolution of decision making ability helping us to link paddling to the game. When we reach a certain point in this, it may be worth considering moving onto the Polo Perform Award or take part in a competition.

