

Polo

Polo Perform Award

Award Description

This award is designed to progress your skills and ability to apply appropriate decisions for participating in the game of Polo.

Extended Award Description

Your Polo Perform Award will progress your ability to apply your choices to an enjoyable training session and game on the water. You will develop competent skills to be in control throughout the training session and game to ensure a detailed understanding of Polo; thereby increasing your enjoyment of the discipline. Your award should be seen as a sound basis for independently building the experience and expertise associated with Polo Excel Award holders.

Award Content

1. External Factors

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

Factor: Temperature - this can have a big impact on us as paddlers, whether inside or out.

What we might observe: How can the temperature affect our performance/play? What is the temperature? How might the wind affect this if we are outside? Are any changes expected during the time we are training/playing?

Factor: Fitness

What we might consider: Why is our fitness level important? How can our fitness levels affect our ability to keep active within a highly active game or training session? What are the key fitness components required for playing polo and how can these be improved/developed? What are the benefits of using different sports and cross training to improve our fitness?

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? What protective equipment will we wear? Are we confident in the use and fitting of our chosen personal safety equipment? Are our kayak and helmet legal for our sport? How would we find this information?

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 training session?

3. At the Venue

Once ready for our training 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? How do our plans for the session fit into our longer term training plans? Are there any challenging areas we could work on? What methods might we use to get into the right frame of mind before a session or game?

4. **Rules and Tactics**

Factor: A deeper understanding of polo and its rules is useful. Knowledge of formations used in attack and defence is essential.

We may need to consider: Are we able to referee a training session game and apply the basic rules of the polo game? Do we understand and able to demonstrate two 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: Sprint starts

We may need to know: How can we use appropriate stroke combinations for an effective sprint start?

Skill: Changing direction

We may need to consider: What techniques and tactics can we use to steer our boat during a game? What different strokes can we use to steer our boat? These include use of differing paddle strokes, sometimes we need to maintain our momentum and sometimes we need to lose momentum, for example when blocking. How can we use these most effectively? How can we use edge and trim to turn the boat whilst maintaining speed? Which stroke contribution to use at certain points in the game.

Skill: Passing, catching and shooting

We may need to know: Are we able to pass accurately from a static position and whilst moving? Can we do this from a variety of angle and distances? Are we able to catch from a pass or interject from an opponent? Can we catch from a static position and whilst moving? Can we do this from a variety of angle and distances? Are we able to accurately shoot the ball into different parts of the net from a variety of positions and angles on the pitch? What techniques can we use to improve all of these skills?

Skill: Paddle skills

We may need to consider: How do we pick up the ball using our paddle? How can we flick the ball with control? Are we able to block and control the ball into our hands from a range of positions? If we are in goal, how can we effectively position our body, kayak and paddle to stop shots?

Skill: Dribbling

We may need to know: How can we dribble using the paddle? Are we able to efficiently hand dribble on both sides?

Skill: Tackling

We may need to know: What can we do legally when tackling opponents?

Can we use our boat to tackle the opponent's boat or use our bow to control the ball?

Skill: Jostling

We may need to consider: How does the trim of our kayak effect our ability to defend and attack in the zone? How does edging our kayak effect our ability to defend and attack in the zone?

Skill: Supporting

We may need to consider: Can we support on both sides off the ball? How would we hand roll our kayak?

6. Tactics

Factor: To improve performance, a deeper understanding of tactics is essential, for example a good understanding of formations used in attack and defence and making decisions on which to use to complement the strengths within your team.

We may need to consider: Do we understand and able to demonstrate two 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: Can you demonstrate positive team work skills such as communication, working with others and problem solving skills?

8. During and After the Training Session/Game

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 in action and post-training assessment.

Watching what others do: It might be useful to spend some time watching others. How did others prepare themselves? How are the opposition positioning themselves in attack plays and defence zones? How can we use tactics which will play to the strengths of our team?

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 training 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 training to the game. When we reach a certain point in this, it may be worth considering moving on to the Polo Excel Award.