

Club Orientation



Welcome to Sandgate Canoe Club

This booklet aims to give you information about the Club and its procedures so that you can enjoy your experience with us.

If you haven't already joined, visit sandgate.canoe.org.au

Keep up to date with our Facebook page Sandgate Canoe Club Inc.

Club Activities

Bay Paddles:

- Ratified paddles are scheduled for Tuesday and Saturday mornings.
- These paddles usually begin at 8am although this may change at different times of the year. **CHECK YOUR NEWSLETTER, OUR FACEBOOK PAGE and READ YOUR GOOGLE GROUP EMAILS** to stay up to date with changes.
- These are generally away paddles other than the first Saturday of each month (see below). **READ YOUR NEWSLETTER** to check the paddle calendar. Make sure that you phone the trip leader the night before to confirm details and to let them know you intend to participate. Weather may force last minute changes and our leaders need to know who to contact.
- Before participating, consider your current level of ability. The Club relies on you to self-assess to ensure that your skills are sufficient for safe participation. Paddle grading information is included in this booklet. If you are unsure, speak to the trip leader who should be able to give you information about the expected conditions on the paddle. All members' contact details are issued on a regular basis by the membership registrar.
- Sunday morning paddles from Yundah St are also ratified. Ratification means that members are covered by AC insurance. However, Sunday paddles are not usually organised by the paddle committee. These tend to occur more informally amongst members. So, it pays to participate in our social events so you can meet potential Sunday morning paddle partners. If you want to organise your own Sunday morning paddle from Yundah St, you can contact members via **phone or email**.

Creek Paddles:

- The recreational group within the Club (The Creekies) paddle on most weekends, either a Saturday or Sunday. These paddles are arranged on the SCC Creekies Google Group email during the week.
- The Creekies usually meet at the VMR boat shed by 6.30am and are on the water by approximately 6.50am.

- A few times a year an away river or creek paddle is arranged, these are generally held on the upper reaches of the Brisbane River and the North Pine River. These are shown on the paddle calendar.

Flatwater Racing Paddling:

- SCC has an enthusiastic racing group with an accredited coach. Members are welcome to try a Club racing boat and learn a different skill set.
- Organised flat-water paddling sessions on Nundah and Cabbage Tree Creek for those interested in building fitness and racing leave from Yundah Street (conditions permitting) on Tuesdays and Thursday mornings, at times that suit those who work (5-5.30am) and those who don't (7.00am). Leaving from the same place, the group is on the water by 7am on Saturdays and Sundays for club paddles that develop paddling technique, boat skills, and fitness, and for race training. These sessions are structured to cater for different levels of fitness and ability.
- The flat-water racing group (the Propellers) organises regular club races (7.00am start on the 2nd and 3rd Saturday of each month) that are based on a handicap system that means anyone can win. It also supports members to participate in inter club race events and state and nations events that are scheduled throughout each year. Racing can be in single craft or with a partner in a double. It can be a serious pursuit or just for a bit of fun!

Skill Development:

- If you have joined the Club as a beginner, you must participate in basic skills training as soon as possible and your initial membership fee includes the cost of the Australian Canoeing (AC) Basic Skills course. Sandgate Canoe Club (SCC) has accredited instructors who run the course on the first Saturday of each month except for winter. Written and practical skills assessment is included in the course and you will be awarded an AC certificate.
- The first Saturday of the month is Club day which means the paddle committee does not usually schedule an away paddle. This is an opportunity for newer members to paddle with more experienced members and expand their skills. There may be a short bay trip for those who wish to get experience outside the creek. Also, experienced paddlers and/or instructors may offer rescue training on these days. Beginners should undertake an assisted rescue before participating in bay paddles and the training days are always enjoyable.

- Periodically, the paddle committee will schedule a training day away from Yundah St. Many of these are held along the Redcliffe peninsular and are very useful. Also on occasion, an outside instructor is arranged to run training on higher level skills. These events will appear *in the newsletter* and you are strongly encouraged to take advantage of them.
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Club Clothing:

- SCC has a clothing officer who arranges the purchase of Club paddling gear and whose contact details can be found *in the newsletter*.
- You are certainly not obliged to purchase Club clothing, however, many members choose to use Club paddling shirts. The shirts offer UV protection and are distinctive on the water, making it easier to stay with your pod.
- Items available for order include sea kayaking shirts, racing singlets, polo shirts, fleeces, spray jackets, caps and padded winter coats.

Events:

- The annual SE QLD marathon racing series is overseen by Queensland Canoeing and SCC usually hosts one race each year in May or June. Our event, the Wetland Wander, attracts between 90 and 150 paddlers each year. Race fees, a raffle and a sausage sizzle means that it is usually a good fund raiser for the Club. This is co-ordinated by our volunteer marathon officials and new members are encouraged to participate in the race or to volunteer on the day.
- Socially, SCC has a Christmas party in November or December which includes our annual awards ceremony. The awards recognise our members for their paddling exploits throughout the previous year.
- The Club holds numerous camps during the year and regular venues include the Maroochy River, the Upper Noosa River, Peel Island and Elanda Point and all members are welcome to participate.

Boat Booking Guidelines:

Club kayaks, paddles and PFDs are available for use on most Saturday and Sunday mornings for Club members who are yet to equip themselves. All members can access the Club equipment by pre-booking and paying a maintenance fee set by the Club before use. If you wish to use the Club equipment, please remember the following:

Making a booking:

- Please call the boat booking officer (*see newsletter*) **at least a day before you intend to paddle.**
- It's better to call earlier in the week, particularly if you want a tidemark or Sequel, as numbers are limited.
- If you decide not to paddle, ***please*** call to cancel before **6.30am** in the morning. Don't assume that because it is raining the boat booking officer won't be waiting for you. Club paddles occur in all weather and are only cancelled if there are dangerous conditions.
- We try to make equipment available every Saturday and Sunday except when basic skills training is scheduled. Please understand that there may be times when boats are not available for other reasons.

Before your paddle:

- **Creekie paddles** - Please arrive at the VMR boat shed by **6.30am**. This is to allow you time to pay your maintenance fee, select and unload your boat, adjust your seat, and choose your paddle and PFD. Paddlers set off by **6.50am** and you will miss the start if you are late.
- **Sea kayak paddles** – The Club now has boats that can be taken out onto the bay for ratified Club paddles from Shorncliffe and for training days. Please contact the Trip Leader in advance if you are planning to participate in one of these paddles and then contact the boat booking officer to book your kayak. Boats can be collected from the shed at VMR. Most people then quickly paddle up to the Yundah St boat ramp to join the other Club members. Please ensure you are at Yundah Street no later than 7.30am for the 8am start.
- The boat booking officer and other members can give you a hand with loading and unloading equipment if you ask. However, do remember that they need time to prepare for their own paddle, so you do need to learn to set up your own boat so that you are comfortable.

- Double check with the boat booking officer if you want to do a longer paddle that would get you back **after 10.30 am**. It may not always be possible for someone to wait for you.
- Don't forget the maintenance fee noting that the correct money is requested. The maintenance fee is very reasonable and the boat booking officer is a volunteer who isn't expected to carry large amounts of change or keep track of IOUs.

After your paddle:

- Don't forget your bucket and sponge! You need to wash down your boat and load it back into the shed. Don't be afraid to ask for help lifting your boat.

Some particular reminders:

- SCC is happy to make boats available to members who haven't been able to equip themselves yet. However, keep in mind that *the boat booking officer is a volunteer who gives up his/her own time to make this possible. No-shows and late-shows can throw out his/her paddle plans.*

Club Management, Committees and Volunteers:

- SCC has a **management committee** consisting of a president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer and membership registrar. This committee meets monthly to oversee Club operations.
- The **paddle committee** organises the paddle calendar which appears in the Club newsletter. They endeavour to ensure that the Club has an interesting range of paddles for all to participate on and they welcome suggestions from members.
- The **Club newsletter** is produced 11 or 12 times per year, usually ready for the 1st Saturday of each month. The newsletter editor is a volunteer who puts the newsletter together and arranges for it to be distributed by email. Hard copies for members without internet access are organised through the office of our local member and distributed by another volunteer. We welcome reports on paddles you have attended.
- The **Club librarian** has a collection of books and DVDs that you are welcome to borrow.
- SCC has a number of accredited **instructors**, and a **volunteer basic skills co-ordinator** who run our training courses.
- Other volunteers include our **social committee** which plans our off water events, our **boat booking officer** who makes equipment available, **QC delegate** who represents our interests at Queensland Canoeing

meetings, ***grievance officer*** and ***communications manager*** who maintains our website.

Grading System for Paddling Trips:

| Grade | Description & Paddler Pre-requisite Skills and Ability | Weather/ Sea limits |
|--------------|---|------------------------------|
| 0 | All members can attend. No previous experience required. Closed or protected waters. This is usually a Basic Skills instruction session. | 5 knots wind or 0 m seas |
| 1 | For beginners with some paddling experience or who have completed the basic skills award requirements: Able to paddle up to 15 km per day on estuaries, lakes, rivers, waters designated as smooth by Maritime Safety Queensland or other protected waters. | 10 knots wind or 0.5 m sea |
| 2 | Paddlers with some skills including assisted rescues, bracing, towing and entry or exits through small surf. Able to paddle up to 30 km per day in waters for Grade 1 paddlers, plus water designated as partially smooth by Maritime Safety Queensland. Trips may include sections along open coastline. | 15 knots wind or 1 metre sea |
| 3 | For Proficient Paddlers holding AC Sea Skills award or equivalent. Capable of sustaining speeds of 4 – 6 km per hour. Up to 45 km per day along open coastlines. Refer to ACI Sea Skills award requirements for formal requirements. | 20 knots wind or 2 metre sea |
| 4 | For Advanced Paddlers who are able to self rescue in all situations. Be very reliable at rolling and surfing, and to have rescue skills in severe conditions. Able to paddle up to 60 km per day at speeds about 6 km per hour with long open crossing or stretches where landings are not possible. | Paddlers know their limits |

Equipment:

Paddlers attending a Club paddle should possess as a minimum the following equipment.

Grade 1 Paddlers:

- A well maintained kayak or canoe with positive buoyancy.
- Paddle.
- Sponge, bailer or pump system.
- Australian or NZ Standard Personal Flotation Device (PFD).
- Footwear suitable for paddling, swimming and walking on rocks or coral.
- Dry containers.
- Sunscreen, protective clothing.
- Food and water.
- Throw or tow rope.
- Repair kit (at least a roll of duct tape).
- Relevant personal items (e.g. medication).

There should be with the group:

- First Aid kit.
- Trip details left with a responsible person.
- Knowledge of and contact details for the local rescue authority.
- Pre-trip weather check.
- Spare paddle.

In addition for Grade 2 paddlers:

- Kayak to have 2 bulkheads or fitted with a sea-sock or secondary (inflatable or fixed) buoyancy.
- Fitted deck lines, paddle leash, and spray skirt.
- Paddle jacket.

In addition for Grade 3 and above:

- Hands free bailing pump system (electric or foot operated).
- Your own spare paddle.
- Personal first aid kit.
- Compass and charts.
- Flares or other signalling devices to meet boating regulations

Recommended:

- Mobile phone with pre-set Marine Rescue numbers.
- Instantly accessible knife.
- Further warm clothing, waterproof clothing, food, water, footwear and day pack secured in dry storage in the kayak.
- Emergency shelter and survival equipment.
- Helmet if landing in surf.

Your Responsibilities as a SCC member:

Kayaking is a sport that has inherent dangers and the safety of our members is very important. For that reason, we require all members to:

- Have a realistic awareness of their skills and abilities and to self-assess accordingly when selecting paddles. Enforcement of the grading system is not the responsibility of a trip leader. However, leaders may ask members not to participate on paddles that seem beyond their skill level because the whole group may be put at risk.
- Develop their paddling skills and to become proficient at wet exits and rescue techniques in order to provide assistance in the event of injury, illness or capsize.
- Follow instructions from the group leader, stay with the pod, and carry safety gear suitable for the paddle grade. Trip leaders can advise you.

SCC is a Club that is heavily reliant on the good will of its volunteers. For that reason, we ask you to:

- Treat all volunteers with respect and be patient if volunteers can't respond immediately to enquiries or requests.
- Help out as much as you can. Volunteering for a position or helping out at Club events is a good way to meet other paddlers and makes things easier for everyone.

Finally, we would like all members to:

- Keep your details up to date on the AC database. When you receive your AC membership card, it will include a logon and password so that you can do this. Let the membership registrar and newsletter editor know you have done this.
- Read the newsletter and emails so that you are aware of any changes that may occur to scheduled events.
- Treat SCC craft and equipment with respect and report any breakages to the management committee so they can be dealt with quickly.

Enjoy your paddles!