



Journal of Paddlesport Education

A professional forum highlighting **Safety Education & Instruction**
for ACA Instructors, Clubs & Affiliates

May 2012

Welcome to the **Journal of Paddlesport Education**. The ACA is excited about this new resource for paddlesport safety, education and instruction.



IT RESOURCES

ICW POWERPOINT

The IT Resources page on the ACA website has an updated ICW PowerPoint about the ACA!

www.americancanoe.org/IT



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The Missing Piece in the Forward Stroke Puzzle: By Jim Tibensky

Most of us know that torso rotation is crucial to a good, efficient, powerful forward stroke. But not enough of us truly attain it. Using the whole body in the forward stroke provides more power, allows you to paddle longer with less effort and looks really, really good. Even though the forward stroke has always been the foundation of kayak paddling, there have not always been good ways of teaching torso rotation. At least, not until now. If you have good students, in fifteen minutes we can probably have their torso working hard on every stroke.

Students struggling to learn torso rotation the old-fashioned way, by paddling with their elbows locked in the straight-arm position look a lot like they are doing sweep strokes tilted sideways. The muscles we use in a torso-involved forward stroke are also those used more in the forward sweep stroke than in an “all arms” forward stroke. That is, the abdominal, latissimus, and obliques, all the important muscle groups in the middle and lower torso, get used a lot more in a forward sweep than in a typical forward stroke.

An example lesson outline begins with a the forward sweep. Be sure the students are getting their legs and lower body into the strokes. Try doing this without explaining that the goal is torso rotation so that there is the element of surprise when the students later realize the purpose of the forward sweep lesson.

Once everyone has a solid sweep, move on to the forward stroke. Explain the basic components of a good stroke, including using as many torso muscles and leg muscles as possible. Have the students practice, demonstrate and critique each other’s stroke.

Assuming none of the students are using good torso rotation, ask them to paddle for a minute or so using the forward stroke. This time ask them to pay close attention to what muscles they feel are working the most. After they have done this, they will probably say that they have used their arms the most, with waist and legs as possibilities as well.



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ESTORE

SUP PADDLE COVER

Do you have a brand new or very dear to your heart SUP paddle? If so, or if you are just looking for some cool ACA goodies. Check out the new ACA SUP Paddle Cover. This great cover will help protect that blade and keep it lookin' good. With the ACA logo on one side and a rad Hawaiian floral pattern on the other, you can't lose!



You can get this and more in the ACA eStore.

www.americancanoe.org/estore

Now have them go back to the forward sweep, again paying close attention to what muscles they feel are working the most. They should now say that they feel their legs, waist and back working more than in the forward stroke.

Introduce the final part as being the solution to using those sweep muscles in the forward stroke.

The Sweep Lesson

A good forward sweep has at least the following five characteristics:

- both hands are kept as low as possible
- the top arm scrapes across the front of the waist from one side of the boat to the other
- the lower arm stays straight
- the head and shoulders follow the blade in the water, which causes the torso to rotate
- the legs are pushed hard in the opposite direction to the blade in the water

Sit quietly in your boat. Relax. Clear your mind. Prepare to become one with the boat, to feel every subtle muscle movement that you will make. Prepare to feel which muscles are working the most and which are not. Now do four or five forward sweep strokes on each side. Pay attention to what muscles and muscle groups are being used. They should later be used in the forward stroke.

Putting it Together

Sit quietly in your boat and think about using those torso muscles. As you go through the following steps, keep those muscles working.

Start the boat moving through the water by doing perfect forward sweeps alternating on each side: left – right – left – right, etc. Be sure the head and torso are following the blade that is in the water. This really helps the rotation. The boat will S-turn its way along.

After five or six such sweeps, start bringing the lower hand (the one whose blade is in the water) closer to the hull on each successive stroke. Do this gradually, moving in a couple of inches at a time. Do not change anything else about the muscles you are using.

At the same time have the upper arm start to punch gradually higher above the hull instead of just crossing from gunnel to





SEI RESOURCES

“WHO CAN TEACH WHAT?”

Ever wonder what you as an ACA Instructor can teach? Ever tried to figure out what another Instructor or IT can teach? If so check out the updated version of the [“Who Can Teach What?”](#)



Want to become an ACA Instructor? Have a friend or colleague who is interested. Check out www.americancanoe.org

gunnel along the deck. Raise the top arm a few inches more on each stroke until the punch is at shoulder or eye level.

Have the head and shoulders continue to follow the blade in the water to encourage the rotation even more.

Once you are pulling the blade in the water close to the boat and the top arm is at normal forward stroke height, shorten the stroke in the water by taking the blade out at the hip.

After this sequence is complete, there should be a very torso-involved forward stroke. There will be almost no change in arm and body motion from the sweep to the forward stroke. It's mostly a matter of shaft angles and blade distance from the hull.

Helpful Hints

The legs must be involved. Without anchoring the body in the boat, a lot of energy is used to move the body around in the cockpit rather than the energy being transferred through the body to the boat. The knees should “bicycle” a bit on each stroke, with the right foot pushing on the foot brace during the right stroke and the left foot pushing on the left stroke.

The backband or seat back should allow some movement of the butt in the seat. A good, forceful leg push will cause the butt to lift off the back of the seat just a bit.

The shaft of the paddle should never cross the cockpit rim at any point if the torso is working. (This is the “paddler’s box.”) The shaft describes a semicircle around the front and sides of the rim. If one’s arms are a bit short, or if the cockpit is a bit large, there should at least be an attempt to maintain the paddler’s box by keeping the paddle shaft as far toward being outside the cockpit rim as is possible.

The top (“pushing”) arm will probably cross well over the center line of the boat. This is good! It will cross in front of the cockpit rim, so there should be no conflict between keeping the paddle shaft outside the rim while crossing over with the pushing arm.

The head should still move slightly side to side. Our neck is most comfortable when the head is kept perpendicular to the plane of the shoulders. Since the plane of the shoulders is moving, the head should too.

The paddler’s navel should be moving at least three or four inches from the centerline of the boat on each stroke. If the paddler looks down and nothing is happening at the level of the navel, there is no rotation. The shoulders are not the place to look for spotting torso rotation. It is easy to thrust a shoulder forward on the stroke without any middle and lower torso involvement. In fact, this is what many paddlers do, thinking that they are using their whole torso. But their waist looks as



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ACA TRAILER FLAGS

Tired of using marking tape tied onto the back of your expensive and beautiful kayak, canoe or SUP; now you can be safe and rep the ACA. Check out the new ACA Trailer Flags, this great new addition to the eStore will help keep that boat or board looking good and stay legal on the road!



You can get this and more in the ACA eStore.

www.americancanoe.org/estore

though it is set in concrete. If the paddler is wearing a centerline zipper pfd, the zipper will tell the tale – it should be moving side to side.

Remind the students to drop back into this sweep-blended-into-forward-stroke practice technique any time they want to work on torso rotation.

Tech Tips—SUP T’ed UP

If you have ever tried to transfer people between stand up paddleboards, set up a harness to tow a board and paddler, or just tried to help someone back onto their board; you know it can be tricky to do any of the above while on your board. This is why we want show you how to use two or more paddleboards to make a T platform.

In each of these photos the camera POV is the instructor. Below we see that the



Adapted from previous publication in the ACA “SEI Focus” newsletter.

Jim Tibensky is an ACA L5 Coastal Kayak Instructor and former age group national champion in both sprint and slalom racing. He teaches at the [Geneva Kayak Center](#) in Yorkville, Illinois.



instructor has pulled the participants board on theirs and is standing on the participants board to add stability. The photo above the instructor placed their nose on the participants board and had them sit down for stability. In either case the instructor can move around, affix a towing harness or use this stability to help someone remount their board. Try it out next time you are paddling around, and stay tuned for more tips from the Journal of Paddlesport Education.



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IT RESOURCES

INSTRUCTOR SEARCH

Looking for an ACA course, instructor or instructor trainer? The ACA website now has updated search capabilities for instructors and trainers. These updates include:

- [IT map](#)
- [IT lists](#)
- [Instructor lists](#)



James Baker-Jarvis

ACA Remembers Whitewater Canoe Instructor

The ACA is sad to announce that longtime Level 4: Whitewater Canoe Instructor James Baker-Jarvis of Colorado has passed away.

While driving home with his wife, Karen, high winds blew a tree branch through his windshield. Although severely injured, James was able to pull the car over and stop it safely, preventing any injury to Karen or other drivers.

When not teaching canoeing or paddling on his own, James was part of a team at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) working on technology that they hoped would eventually be used for early breast cancer detection.

In addition to whitewater canoeing, Jim was an avid mountaineer and cyclist.



To learn more about this amazing individual and outdoorsmen visit the [ACA Water Blog](#) or <http://jamesbakerjarvis.blogspot.com/>





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ACA RACK PADS

Tired of the cross bars on your Subaru looking plain and lacking, now you can rest at ease with the new ACA Rack Pads. These anti-fade pads will help protect boats and boards all while adding style to your paddling vehicle. Easy to install and rep the ACA while out on the go!



You can get this and more in the ACA eStore.

www.americancanoe.org/estore

SEI Department Update

2012 Instructor Manual CD

The 2012 Instructor Manual—CD Version is now available in the [ACA eStore](#). Be sure to check out all the additional information included in the CD version.

- ACA Course Curricula
- ACA PowerPoints
- ACA Paddlesport Education Brochures
- SEI Forms
- And More!

SEIC Recap

In last months final edition of the SEI Focus, the SEI Dept. recapped the previous SEIC meeting that took place March 9th, 2012. At this meeting there were several changes, additions and revisions to Curriculum and Bylaws. The curriculum that was changed or added was:

- Level 1: Introduction to SUP – [Skills Course](#) / [Instructor Criteria](#)
- Level 2: Essentials of SUP – [Skills Course](#) / [Instructor Criteria](#)
- Level 3: River SUP – [Skills Course](#) / [Instructor Criteria](#)

Other revised curricula will be posted in the near future also include:

- Level 1: Introduction to Canoeing – Tandem & Solo
- 2 Day Adaptive Paddling Workshop
- Level 3: Sit-on-Top Kayaking Instructor Certification Course



ACA Staff hard at work with course reports and curriculum!



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INSTRUCTOR PRO DEALS

Looking for some paddling gear for the 2012 season, remember your ACA Instructor Pro Deals! Be prepared like Mr. Potato Head and sneak on over to the ACA website.

www.americancanoe.org/prodeals

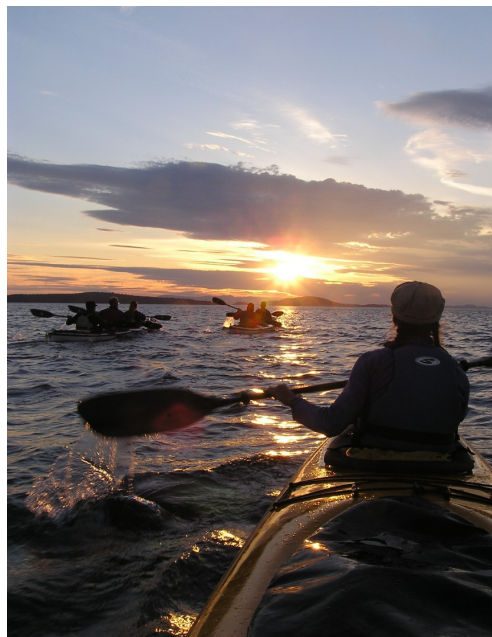
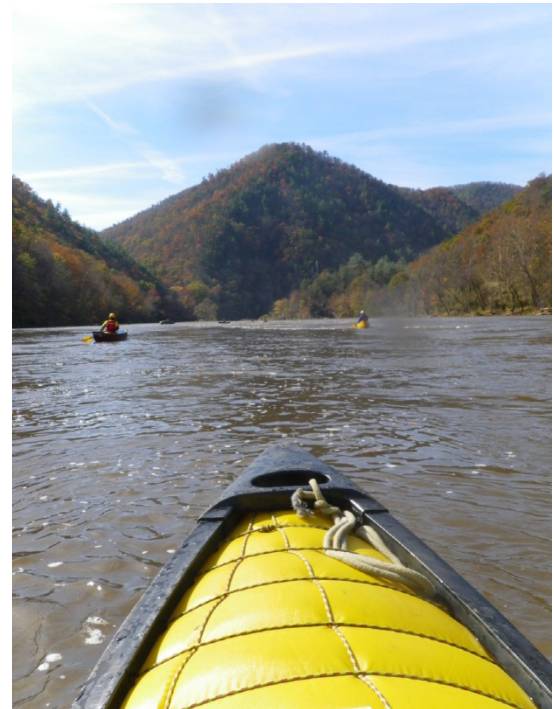


SEI Department Spotlight

Day Trip Leader Assessments

It is now May and the paddling season is underway. No matter where you work, teach, guide or instruct you are probably leading people on the water paddling; consider taking an ACA Day Trip Leader Assessment. These courses are designed to help participants prepare, manage and lead paddling trips. By successfully completing the ACA Day Trip Leading Assessment you get an Assessment Card from the ACA National Office. You can take the day trip leader assessment for:

- [River Canoe](#)
- [River Kayak](#)
- [Coastal Kayak](#)



To find an assessment course near you or to find an instructor to teach one, visit the ACA website and head to the “Find Instruction” section.

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SEI RESOURCES

SMARTPHONE COURSE REPORT

You can now report your skills courses on your smartphone right from the waterway. The ACA mobile website now has the EZ Skills Course Report Form available for you. Just one more way we are working hard to make things as seamless as we can!

www.americancanoe.org/m or check out the [ACA Android App!](#)



Upcoming Outreach Events

This section of the Journal of Paddlesport Education will bring to you outreach events that include conferences, festivals, symposiums and more. Check out these great events that may be in your area and consider attending. For more great events and goings on check out the [ACA Paddlesports Event Calendar!](#)

Rocky Mountain Surf Festival—Glenwood Springs, CO

The ACA is proud to announce that it will be a partner for the [2012 Rocky Mountain Surf Festival](#) and the [C4 Waterman Whitewater SUP Championship](#). The 2012 Rocky Mountain Surf Festival will once again be held at the world famous Glenwood Springs Whitewater Park in Colorado.

This one of a kind Polynesian themed extravaganza will feature surfing contests, music, food and product vendors, costumes, a hula contest, limbo events, a Goof Board competition, a floating parade of rafts punching the monster wave/hole and the world's best river stand up paddlers displaying their paddling prowess on the snowmelt swollen Colorado River.

The Rocky Mountain Surf Festival will feature competitions for:

- Downriver SUP
- SUPcross
- SUP Surf Contest
- River Surf Championship



The Rocky Mountain Surf Festival will also host the ACA Regional SUP Summit.

For more information on the 2012 Rocky Mountain Surf Festival visit the [ACA YouTube Channel](#) or <http://www.rockymountainsurffestival.com>





SEI RESOURCES

YOUTUBE VIDEOS



The [ACA YouTube Channel](#) is a great resource that we are working to improve every day. New videos for using the website and course reporting have just been added recently. There are also great informational and promotional videos for course, events and clubs! Ever wonder how to request insurance as an instructor, club or affiliate? Let ACA Insurance Coordinator, Candy Patten walk you through the process via YouTube. For all this and more view and subscribe to the [ACA YouTube Channel!](#)

Rocky Mountain SUP Summit—Glenwood Springs, CO

Come join the ACA for a Stand Up Paddleboarding (SUP) Summit. The purpose of this summit is to bring together all aspects of the discipline including the manufacturers, retailers, liveries, competitors, and instructors.

There will be discussions on:

- Best Practices
- Course Curriculum Development
- Tips & Techniques
- Expansion of the sport

Rocky Mountain Regional SUP Summit [Agenda](#)

The Rocky Mountain Regional SUP Summit will take place at the Glenwood Springs Whitewater Park during the [Rocky Mountain Surf Festival](#).

The summit will take place after the SUPCross event .

There is no cost or registration other than that associated with the festival.

The Summit will be held at the ACA tent next to the Primo Beer Garden.

Ohio Riverway Paddlefest—Cincinnati, OH

The 11th Annual Ohio River Way Paddlefest is exactly two months from today - Saturday, June 23.

Get all the basic info at: <http://www.ohioriverway.org/paddlefest/general-info/>

Some of the events this year:

Dragon Boat Races on Lake Como during the "Roots on the River" Music & Outdoor Festival at Coney Island on Friday, June 22.

Stand Up Paddle Board (SUP) races on the Ohio on Saturday, June 23.

Still time to register as a vendor or volunteer for one of America's largest paddling events!





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IMPORTANT DATES

Upcoming Important Dates to add to your Calendar!

June 9: [ACA Rocky Mountain SUP Summit](#) (Glenwood Springs, CO)

June 9-10: ACA Board of Directors Meeting (Fredericksburg, VA)

June 9: [Celebrate the Rapp—ACA Paddle Green Event](#) (Fredericksburg, VA)

July 20-22: [Love the Lake—ACA Paddle Green Event](#) (Lake George, NY)

November 1: SEIC Meeting (Charleston, SC)

November 2-4: [National Paddlesports Conference](#) (Charleston, SC)

FIBArk—Salida, CO



2012 marks the 64th anniversary of FIBArk, the nation's oldest whitewater festival and Salida's signature event. Since 1949, every June during the Spring snow runoff, Salida has hosted FIBArk, "First in Boating on the Arkansas."

Located in Salida's historic downtown, Riverside Park is the center of FIBArk activity and entertainment. Food, arts and crafts, and industry vendors are available, as well as a beer tent, a carnival, and a state-of-the art amphitheater for this year's extraordinary musical line-up. <http://www.fibark.net/>



Eppie's Great Race—Sacramento, CA

Eppie's Great Race® is known as "*The World's Oldest Triathlon*" and the "No Swim" Triathlon and is one of the largest paddling events in the United States!

The race features a **5.82-mile run**, a **12.5-mile bike** and a **6.35-mile paddle** held along the scenic American River Parkway in Rancho Cordova and Sacramento.

<http://www.eppiesgreatrace.org/>



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