

BELLBOAT HELM AWARD

INTRODUCTION

The Bellboat is a twin hulled open canoe seating up to 14 children or 8 adults plus the helm. It is a standard class boat. Bellboating is a rewarding and enjoyable sport or recreation and can be used in outdoor education, expeditions and competition.

PURPOSE OF THE AWARD

The Bellboat Helm award is aimed at coaches, youth leaders and others who wish to introduce and develop paddlers on Bellboats for recreation, and sport based on Placid Water. The Bellboat helm, when acting as such, will be permitted to take responsibility for the crew and boat within the guidelines and conditions attached to the award. The main priority of the Helm for themselves and their crew is SAFETY with ENJOYMENT. The award is relevant for use throughout the year, within the provisions listed.

PRE-REQUISITES

Candidates must attend a two day course of instruction and assessment or take part in a modular course of similar duration. The course can provide a lead-in to the Placid Water Awards with an extra day course covering personal skills, group control and rescue in canoe and kayak.

For existing Placid Water Awards holders a one day 'Helm' course or modular equivalent should cover aspects of the course specific to the Bellboat.

To qualify the candidate must:

- 1 Have a basic knowledge of first aid and resuscitation
- 2 Must have a working knowledge of safety and rescue using the Bellboat
- 3 Must be over eighteen years of age (Candidates may attend the course when over sixteen and be called Trainee Helms)
- 4 Must be competent in the practical assessment
- 5 Be a member or of the BCU or National Association, or pay the Registration fee for the first year. Bell Boat Helms must join as a Basic member (minimum) in subsequent years. Membership includes Family and Youth categories. Also 'Junior Club' membership which includes full individual membership rights for the named leader within the fee paid by the Junior club.

AREAS OF OPERATION

Bellboat helms may operate on water outlined as suitable for Level 1 Placid Water Coaches. On Very Sheltered Water only, to include slow moving rivers and canals, small lakes or small areas of larger lakes – waters designated C or B1 by the Scout Association. Applicable anywhere throughout the year.

SYLLABUS

- 1 Philosophy, Bellboat and Placid Water
- 2 Safety - Equipment
Boat, Paddles, Safety Equipment, The Crew, Man Overboard
Awareness of paddling environment - Current, Weirs, Procedure at Locks, Weather, First Aid, Leptospirosis
For events/expeditions
- 3 Coaching Group Control
Coaching of techniques - Paddling, Steering, Manoeuvring,
Negotiating a Lock, Lining
- 4 General Information
The next step, The BCU, Access to water, The environment

EQUIPMENT

All relevant paddling equipment will be supplied. The course organiser must provide a range of open cockpit canoes and kayaks for the course.

REGISTRATION

Candidates will be judged on their response to the course. Status may be withheld in cases where the course tutors have doubts about the individuals attitude or competence. Candidates who successfully complete the course will receive a certificate and a letter from BCU office outlining their terms of reference, and providing them with further information to assist their work.

BELLBOAT PADDLING / HELMING - ASSESSMENT

The award will be assessed over a weekend course, candidate s will be expected to demonstrate the following skills with a Bellboat and crew successfully and safely.

1 Safety routine, checking equipment and screening the crew

2 Load a boat and give safety information to the crew

3 Move away from the bank

4 Basic paddling technique

5 An emergency stop.

6 Steering the boat over a straight course

7 Steering through a figure of eight course

8 The procedure for negotiating a lock

9 An approach to the landing stage and disembark the crew and secure the boat

10 The procedure for lining the Bellboat round a rapid or weir.

The Bellboat Helm will have attended a weekend course and be conversant with the Helm syllabus and be

able to answer questions on basic first aid, safety, access and the BCU.

SAFETY WHEN USING LOCKS WITH BELLBOATS

The Bellboats should only be taken through the locks if there is a trained Helm in charge.

The Helm should ensure that there are enough competent adults on board to be able to position the boat.

The crew should be trained in handling the boats before using the locks.

The Helm should be wary of other pleasure boats as they approach and leave the locks. The crews are often unskilled, having just picked up the boat. The Bell Boats must be kept clear of the pleasure craft.

Do not go through locks with other pleasure craft except when under the supervision of the lock keeper.

The Helm should operate the locks - with assistance. It is best to have just one other adult helping. If children are helping they must be trained to keep well clear of the edge of the lock and trained not to run.

There must be an adult on the boat going through the lock who must be trained to keep hold of chains or use ropes and keep the boats well clear of the lock gates. This is particularly important when going up.

All the crew must remain seated whilst going through the lock.

The Helm is in charge of the operation and must watch the crews constantly.

Watch out for:

People standing up and fooling around

The boats taking in water because of turbulence

The boats catching on the side walls

Ropes snagging

People running or going close to the edge of the lock

The water must be let in and out in a controlled way. Particularly, do not let the flow in to be excessive.

Use only one paddle and let the lock fill slowly until the paddle is covered.

The Helm should be ready to quickly close the paddle if needed.

Do not use locks unless you are sure of your competence.