



Level 3: Fundamentals of Open Water Surfski

(Skills Assessment)

Assessment Overview: This ACA Assessment Course is designed to evaluate a participant's ability to perform all of the skills listed along with demonstrating an appropriate level of knowledge. This assessment course provides the participant with the opportunity to receive documentation of having achieved a certain level of paddling ability.

Essential Eligibility Criteria (EEC):

ACA courses are open to all individuals who acknowledge the ability to perform the following essential eligibility criteria.

1. Breathe independently (i.e., not require medical devices to sustain breathing)
2. Independently maintain sealed airway passages while under water
3. Independently hold head upright without neck / head support
4. Manage personal care independently or with assistance of a companion
5. Manage personal mobility independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance
6. Follow instructions and effectively communicate independently or with assistance of a companion
7. Independently turn from face-down to face-up and remain floating face up while wearing a properly fitted life jacket*
8. Get on / off or in / out of a paddlecraft independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance*
9. Independently get out and from under a capsized paddlecraft*
10. Remount or reenter the paddlecraft following deep water capsize independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance*
11. Maintain a safe body position while attempting skills, activities and rescues listed in the appropriate Course Outline, and have the ability to recognize and identify to others when such efforts would be unsafe given your personal situation*

** To participate in adaptive programs, participants must acknowledge only the first six EEC listed above. Entry-level adaptive programs will involve teaching and practicing EEC #7-11.*

Course Prerequisites: Must be an ACA Member

Course Duration: 4-6 hours

Course Location / Venue: Open water with potential areas of exposure to conditions:

- Winds between 9-13 knots (10-16 miles/hr or 16-24 km/hr)
- Waves between 1-3 foot (0.3-1 meters)
- Current between 1-2 knot



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Class Ratio: 5 students : 1 Instructor; with an additional instructor or qualified assistant the ratio can be 10 : 2

Assessor: Level 3: Fundamentals of Open Water Surfski Instructor (or higher)

Succeeding courses:

Level 4: Downwind Surfski

Level 5: *Advanced Open Water and Downwind Surfski Paddling (under development)*

The sequence of assessment should be adjusted to best fit the participant's needs, class location and time allowance.

Course Content

Introduction, Expectations, and Logistics:

- Welcome, introductions, paperwork
- Student and instructor course expectations and limitations
- Explain assessment procedure
- Course itinerary and site logistics
- Review waiver, assumption of risk, challenge by choice, medical disclosure
- About the ACA
- Personal Flotation Device (PFD) policy (always wear on water)
- Appropriate personal behavior
- No alcohol / substance abuse
- Proper etiquette on and off the water
- Respect private property
- Practice Leave No Trace ethics

Conclusion and Wrap Up:

- Group debrief / Individual feedback
- Course limitations
- Importance of First Aid and CPR
- Importance of additional instruction, practice, experience
- Importance of appropriate level of safety and rescue training
- Life sport / Paddling options
- Local paddling groups / Clubs
- Handouts / Reference materials
- ACA Membership (online)
- Course evaluation (online)



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Participant: _____ **ACA #** _____ **Date:** _____

Location and venue: _____

Rating: ✓ - *Passing* N - *Needs more practice.*

Participant must be able to perform all strokes, maneuvers, rescues, and skills in the appropriate venue. In addition the participant must demonstrate the appropriate level of knowledge for this skill assessment level.

STROKES and MANEUVERS	P / N	COMMENTS
Lifting and carrying: safe technique		
Launching: low dock, bank, or ramp for entering boat in a safe manner		
Rafting up		
Efficient forward stroke		
Reverse stroke and stopping		
Forward and reverse sweep strokes		
Draw strokes (In and Out of Water)		
Static Low and high Brace		
Slap Brace and Recovery		
Capsize and exit surfski		
Paddling and turning in wind, swell, and waves		
Basic wave riding theory		
Landing: return to dock, bank, or ramp and exit boat in a safe manner		



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Beach launching and landing (not required to pass)		
Developing skill — Pivot Turns, Edging, boat tilt (not required to pass)		

RESCUE/SAFETY	P / N	COMMENTS
Rescue a swimmer (pushing/pulling)		
Rescue a surfski		
Deep water re-entry solo (straddle and/or side-saddle)		
Deep water re-entry (assisted/assisting)		
Signaling		
Rescue sequence: Reach, Throw, Row, Go, (RETHROG)		

TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE	P / N	COMMENTS
Equipment: working knowledge of paddling equipment		
Safety: understand the dangers of surf ski paddling and avoiding them		
Cold Water Shock		
Hypo / Hyperthermia		
Environmental issues, understanding environmental conditions and interpreting weather reports		



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Trip Planning and filing a float plan		
Group awareness-emergency procedures, rules of the road, etc		
Securing boats to rack		

FINAL ASSESSMENT		COMMENTS
PASS	NEEDS MORE WORK	
ASSESSOR		
<i>Assessor must be a currently certified ACA Instructor at or above this level.</i>		
IT or Instructor: _____		
Signature: _____		
ACA #: _____ Date: _____		
Assisting IT or Instructor: _____		
ACA #: _____		