

Water Awareness and Charge Certificate Manual

Module 42: The Eskimo Roll

Current Document Revision Number: 1.1

Revision Date: 23 Mar 2010

Module Contents

1	THE ESKIMO ROLL	3
1.1	Use	3
1.2	Types of roll	3
1.2.1	C-to-C	3
1.2.2	Sweep Roll / Screw Roll	3
1.2.3	Back Deck Roll	4
1.3	Elements of a Sweep Roll	4
1.3.1	Initial or Setup Position	4
1.3.2	Sweep	4
1.3.3	Hip Flick or Hip Snap	4
1.3.4	Ending or Final position	4
1.3.5	Keeping the Head Low	4

Module Title	Comments	Rev No	Revision Date
Module 20: The Eskimo Roll	Initial Release	1.0	8 Jan 2010
Module 42: The Eskimo Roll	previous Module 20	1.1	23 Mar 2010
Module 42: The Eskimo Roll	Outcomes Added	1.2	12 Sep 2018

Outcomes

After completing this module, the certificate holder will:

- Be able to explain the purpose of an Eskimo roll.
- Be aware of the different types of roll and how to execute them.

1 THE ESKIMO ROLL

There are many ways to turn a kayak, but most are negative strokes and result in lost of The Eskimo roll is the act of righting a capsized kayak by use of body motion and paddle. Typically this is done by lifting the torso towards the surface, flicking the hips to right the kayak halfway up and applying a righting force by means of the paddle while tucking close to the front or back deck.

1.1 Use

Several styles of Kayak roll are in use including the Eskimo, C-to-C, Sweep, Screw, Extended Paddle (Pawlata), various hybrids, and hand roll. The roll styles in use vary both regionally and by type of kayak. In the USA, the C-to-C has traditionally been taught in the eastern half of the country while either the older screw or more modern sweep roll have been used in the western half.

Mastering the roll usually requires both instruction and practice and is best done in a pool. A reliable roll is key to improving both the fun and safety level of kayaking.

Failed rolls often allow the paddler enough time to grab a breath, so if they stay calm and don't panic, multiple attempts can be performed.

1.2 Types of roll

There are two general classifications of rolls - brace rolls and sweep rolls.[1] Brace rolls are those that primarily use bracing actions of the paddle, hand or other device to provide righting moments for the paddler. Sweep rolls primarily use sweeping motions with the paddle, hand or other device. An example of a brace roll is the C-to-C, as described below. The Screw roll is an example of a sweep roll.

1.2.1 C-to-C

The C-to-C Roll is a common type of brace roll taught to newcomers, particularly whitewater paddlers, to the sport of Kayaking. It involves an initial torso rotation along the side of the kayak, so that the paddle moves across the surface of the water to a position at a 90 degree (right) angle to the kayak. The paddle is then pulled across and a hip snap is applied. This simple efficient roll which gave birth to modern kayaking was invented by Ken Kastorff, current owner of Endless River Adventures in Nantahala, NC.

The disadvantage with this roll is it takes time to get the paddle and body into position and the paddler is in an exposed position while underwater.

1.2.2 Sweep Roll / Screw Roll

The kayaker holds the paddle in the normal position and places it alongside the kayak. It is then pushed "down" out of the water and swung out perpendicular to the kayak with one blade on top of the inverted kayak and the other out as far as possible. The paddle is less susceptible to interference from turbulence the further it is pushed out of the water. From this position, the outward end is brought "up" and across the boat. A strong hip flick is usually required to complete the roll.

The downsides to this roll are that there is less of a lever created by the paddle which can be a problem especially in turbulent and aerated water. However, as the kayaker's hands are not moved, there is less chance of losing the paddle, and it is fast so a failed roll can normally be re-attempted without running out of breath.

1.2.3 Back Deck Roll

A back deck roll is most often performed when the boater flips while leaning back. If rolling with the right hand, the right forearm is brought to the forehead, with the paddle blade flat to the water. The left hand is kept at the left hip. Then, the hip snap is performed, and the paddler uses a forward sweeping motion to right the boat. This roll is advantageous because it is very quick, and the ending position is sitting forward with the power hand blade in the water.

1.3 Elements of a Sweep Roll

1.3.1 Initial or Setup Position

The initial position places the paddle alongside the kayak. The active blade will be angled so as to glide on the surface of the water.

1.3.2 Sweep

The sweep of the paddle from the initial to final position provides the needed rotation.

1.3.3 Hip Flick or Hip Snap

The hip snap is a critical element in a roll. This action consists of rotating the lower body to one side so that the kayak begins to right itself. Different roll types require different kinds of hip action. Brace rolls tend to require a rapid hip snap while sweep rolls tend to require slower hip rotation. For many kayakers, once the kayak hull is rotated past its secondary stability point, it will tend to assist the paddler in righting themselves.

1.3.4 Ending or Final position

Each roll has a desired ending position. In a "layback" roll the torso will be lying on the back deck of the kayak at the end of the roll.

1.3.5 Keeping the Head Low

The paddler's head should remain in the water until the very end of the roll. Raising the head too early is a common reason for rolling failure.