

Out Rigger Paddling and Certification

Before getting started, it is necessary to understand what is required to use the TRRA Out-Rigger Canoes, or O-C for short, and the appropriate paperwork that may be necessary to complete in various circumstances.

To use the OCs you must be a TRRA member or a guest of a member.

TRRA Waiver Form - As a member, you signed a waiver as a condition of membership. That is on file with TRRA. Any guests, must also sign a TRRA waiver <http://www.threeriversrowing.org/TRRA%20Waiver.pdf>.

Use of PFDs and the TRRA Swim Test – The Coast Guard requires that each person on an OC have a PFD on the boat. TRRA require the every person that has not passed the TRRA Swim Test, must wear a PFD when on the water. The TRRA Swim Test Form is on the TRRA website: <http://www.threeriversrowing.org/SwimTest.pdf>

The TRRA Rules and Regulations and the TRRA Paddling Safety Matrix – The TRRA Rules and Regulations govern all the paddling and rowing being done at TRRA. Take a little time to familiarize yourself with these.

<http://www.threeriversrowing.org/TRRARulesandReg.htm> The TRRA Paddling Safety Matrix is covered on pages 1 and 3. <http://www.threeriversrowing.org/SafetyMatrix.pdf> This matrix sets rules based on the water temperature and water flow rate for when it is considered safe to paddle on the water. Based on your skill level and other water and weather conditions, YOU have to consider if you feel safe paddling in these conditions, especially if paddling without a launch and if cold water conditions exist.

It is important that you know how to go to the website and determine the present water temperature and the water flow rate to determine if the Paddling Safety Matrix permits paddling. The water temperature and flow rate are also displayed on the boathouse window.

Reserving an OC using Regatta Central – The OC website for reserving an OC is done through Regatta Central. You must be signed up as a member of TRRA to reserve an OC. The reservation process is not very straight forward the first time using it, so don't be afraid to ask for help if needed. <https://www.regattacentral.com/> Typical sign up times are for 1 ½ to 2 hours.

Sign Out/In at the Boat House – Before going on the water, everyone (private or TRRA boats) you must Sign Out on the clip board at the boat house. Sign In again upon return. The Sign Out/In is for safety purposes. Information includes the date, time out and in, boat, your name, and the area in which you will be paddling.

Typically these are the only forms you will need to fill out. Occasionally other forms are required.

Incident Report Form – The incident report form is used to report all abnormal circumstances including all minor and major injuries, collisions, safety infractions and the like. The incident form is on the website <http://www.threeriversrowing.org/forms/IncidentReports.pdf>. When considering an OC, a huli is not the same as flipping a boat, it is akin to falling off a Stand Up Paddle Board. However, if the conditions before or after a huli was from, or created an unsafe condition, this must be reported on the Incident Report Form. Use common sense.

Equipment Maintenance and Damage Report Form – This form is required to report all problems with the equipment. Please include a copy of the form to the Paddlefish Equipment Committee. The PF equipment committee performs most of the minor maintenance.

<http://www.threeriversrowing.org/Rules8EquipmentDamageForm.pdf>

Assembling and Carrying the OCs

Assembling the OC

A couple of definitions: The ama is the small pod on the side of the canoe held in place by two iako, or light pipes.

Rigging the ama

- Look at the iako, they are labeled as FRONT and REAR and each ama has a boat side label.
- Insert the rear iako into the rear of the boat by depressing the detent ball and slowly pushing. Next insert the front iako into the front of the boat and slowly push it in.
- Insert the front iako into the front of the ama. Insert the rear iako into the rear of the ama.
- Check to make sure the drain plugs are securely inserted in both the canoe and ama.
- Check the rudder wing nut to make sure it is not loose.

Unrigging the ama

Remove the rear iako from the rear ama by depressing the detent ball and lifting it out.

- Remove the front iako from the front ama.
- Remove the front and rear iako's from the boat.

Carrying the OC (2 people, 1 person)

Assembling and carrying the boat is partly dependent on the traffic in the launch area. Many persons cannot handle an OC-1 independently therefore 2 persons always must carry the boat. Some find it easier and more efficient to assemble and disassemble the OC on the dock. This is an option if it is not at a busy dock time. Most OC users are paddling at non-busy dock time. For those that paddle during busy times, use the method that promotes the most efficient use of the dock.

- 2 Persons carrying an assembled OC-2 - Person 1 takes the front of the boat and positions it in the right arm. Person 2 grabs the rear ama with the right hand beside the boat. The boat is carried to the water. The rudder end is positioned in the water first.
- 2 Persons carrying an assembled OC-1 - Person 1 takes the front of the boat and lifts it overhead. Person 2 (the paddler of the boat) takes the rear of the boat and lifts it overhead. The ama then swings down between them. The persons carrying the OC can lower the OC so that it is in a comfortable carrying position and the ama does not touch the ground. The rudder end is positioned in the water first and the paddler collects the paddle and items while the boat is being positioned in the water.
- One person carrying an assembled OC-1 – Carry the canoe on one shoulder with the iako's extending across your body and the ama alongside the opposite leg. With the bike traffic and distance involved, two trips may be necessary to get your paddle and other items to the dock.

Setting the OC into Water

The rudder of the OC is fragile and should not be set on the ground or dock. If the OC is to be set on the dock, the rudder should be in or above the water. When putting the boat into the water, put the stern (rudder side) in first with the ama towards the water. Lift the boat around so the seat is next to the dock and set it in the water.

Adjusting the seat the properly.

The seat is easier to adjust without a load. Once you have positioned the seat properly, remember your seat position.

Using a leash

Use a Leash and carry an extra paddle if the water is more robust than your comfort zone and if you are paddling alone. Put the leash on the front ama before putting the boat in the water and connect to your ankle later.

Getting in and out of the OC This takes a little practice. The boat is stable but is prone to huli if the center of gravity moves beyond the right gunwale of the boat. When getting in and out, the objective is to maintain a downward force on the ama and to keep the boat from pushing away from the dock. Caution, a huli at the dock can be dangerous as the current can push you under the dock.

Getting into an OC-1 at the Millvale dock.

- Sit on the dock next to the seat and alongside the boat.
- Place your paddle handle behind your seat and extend the paddle over the dock.
- Reach back and place your left hand to hold the paddle handle firmly onto the OC and your right hand on the paddle handle and the dock. This, in effect, locks the OC and the dock together.
- Put your weight on the left hand while holding the right on the dock and lift your backside and shift it onto the OC seat. As you are shifting your backside, don't let the OC separate from the dock and keep weight on the ama.
- Lift your feet into the boat

Getting out of the OC at the dock is very similar to getting in.

- Place your paddle handle behind your seat and extend the paddle over the dock.
- Reach back and place your left hand to hold the paddle handle firmly onto the OC and your right hand on the paddle handle and the dock.
- Put your weight on your left hand while holding your right hand on the dock and lift your backside and shift it from the seat to that dock. Keep weight on the ama by maintaining weight on your left hand.
- Place your feet onto the dock.

Paddling on left and right side With the ama on the left side it provides a very stable side for left paddling. The basic stroke is accomplished with your chin looking forward and your top and bottom arms extended forming an open frame. To take a stroke, the hip is rotated forward and the bottom arm extended. The paddle enters at about a 60 degree angle to the water. When the paddle enters the water the paddle is firmly held and your body weight pushes down on the paddle. With both arms held straight, the stroke is accomplished through rotation of the upper body. Pressure is held on the paddle until it is at 90 degrees and ready to exit. The paddle is lifted by the top arm and the stroke exits in front of the hip and the hip rotates forward to begin the next catch. On the side you are paddling, that hip will lead the body both in the stroke and the return portion. As the stroke is taken, the leg on the opposite side is pushed down, adding power to the stroke. Breathing exhales are taken with the stroke and inhales occur during the return. Strokes are typically alternated equally between left side and right at 15-20 or more stroke intervals but will be adjusted according to conditions.

- **Left side paddling** can be very aggressive as the OC cannot huli on the left side.
- **Right side paddling** requires that you maintain the center of gravity over the center of the OC. The stroke mechanics are the same for both sides, you just need to be more conscious that you are not leaning right. For beginners, a small weight can be attached to the ama to counterbalance any lean. This weight can be as simple as a water bottle or a PFD attached with bungee cords to the iako near the ama. As you gain confidence, this can be removed or it can be used as an aid in rougher water conditions.

Steering reminders Steering is done primarily with the foot pedals that control the rudder movement.

- Steering is effective with the boat moving.
- Steering movements tend to slow the boat.
- Paddle with your toes rather than with your whole feet. This will give you a finer touch on the rudder.
- To go in a straight line, focus on an object at a distance and make small corrections.

- Paddle and turn with a focus on what effect the water will have on the ama. As the water lifts the ama, the boat becomes more unstable and must be counteracted by lean and paddling on the ama side. If possible, turn so that the ama is opposite of the wake and wind. To make tighter turns, you can use your paddle to assist, but you always have to be aware of the center of gravity of the boat. One must begin paddling in calm water and as confidence builds, practice with more wake and chop. At first this should be done with a more experienced paddler.

Passing the Paddle from Side to Side - At the start of the stroke, the water side hand moves up about 6" and lifts the paddle as the top hand moves just below the other hand. As the lower hand moves the paddle to finish the stroke the new top hand slides to the top and the stroke is finished on the opposite side. Look at the video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UgRS32BoZA4>

Spinning in Place/Turning Reminders Spinning in place can be assisted using wide arcs with the paddle to assist the circular motion. Arcs can be forward or backward depending on the direction and side of paddling. Be aware of balance with the paddle extended on the right.

Traffic Patterns Be knowledgeable of the traffic patterns in the channel and on the Allegheny/Ohio River. These should be adhered to at all times but the channel patterns especially so during busy channel times. The TRRA Traffic pattern video can be viewed at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T0eNklweT4o&feature=youtu.be>

Docking at the Millvale Dock Docking occurs going downstream. If you are coming up channel, go beyond the end of the dock, turn around and slowly approach your docking spot at a slight angle. Turn the rudder at a time so that you bow does not touch the dock but momentum carries your seat to gently slide to the dock.

The Huli A huli is capsizing the OC. This occurs frequently, especially if conditions are less than ideal. These occur very quickly. If you sense the ama lifting, shift your hip and weight toward the ama, Paddle on the left side and paddle strongly. A fast moving boat is less likely to huli. Once the boat is past midpoint, there is no way it can be stopped. As a huli is occurring, you will know it. Keep your composure and hold onto your paddle. After the huli, the first thing to do is to hold onto the OC. This is for your protection, as whatever caused the huli will tend to carry the OC with it. Are you and the boat in a safe position relative to boat traffic? Can you easily move to a safe place?

- Up-righting the OC- If wind is a factor, move so that the ama is into the wind. It can be hard to pull the ama over against the wind.
- Method 1. Move to the non ama side of the OC, reach your arm(s) over the boat and grab the gunwale. (do a slight flutter kick to keep your feet up, they will tend to go under the boat.) Slowly lean back and pull the canoe over. Be careful to have the ama fall lightly onto the water.
- Alternate Method 2. Move inside the rear ama by the OC lift the ama up until it falls to the other side. Go around and get between the ama and the canoe..
- Put your paddle in the bungee cords. Position yourself by the rear iako with your right arm along the canoe and your left arm on top of the iako; then push down with your arms and lift yourself up onto the canoe. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ZOCmzihk> An alternate method:
- With your left hand on the front iako and your right hand atop the boat raise yourself up swinging your right leg over the boat. This may require a little maneuvering.
- Recovering from a huli should take just a couple of minutes unless water or weather conditions prevail.

Checking Over the Boat & Wiping it Off Before putting the boat away, it should be wiped down with water and towels, especially along the waterline. Wipe dry the seat area and around the pedal base. If you had a huli or had any occurrences, check for any damage and report it.

Summary The above brief descriptions cover the items that are required for OC Certification. Certification also requires that you paddle with an experienced paddler for four hours so that you can practice paddling through boat wakes, paddling in various water conditions and so that you feel comfortable with the items covered above. After that, paddle and log another 12 hours and you will be considered an experienced paddler. The more you paddle that more confident you become. Have Fun!!!

