

Brenin Adventures

Improvised Rafting – (Barrel Rafting)



Operational procedures

Staffing & Ratios

Appropriate qualifications:

- In house trained by experienced senior / lead instructor, plus assessment on initial sessions.
- Appropriate qualification for method of safety support utilised.

Ratio 1 instructor : 12 clients, operating with 2 rafts.

Instructors working alone must have an effective way of communicating with the centre base.

Weather limitations

Low temperatures will lower the acceptable duration of immersion. With junior groups, when air and water temperatures are below 10C instructors should ensure that rafts are 'sea-worthy' to reduce the likelihood of participants entering the water.

Wherever possible rafts should be operated in sheltered water with winds below F4.

In winds of F4 the session should be structured so that rafts are used on downwind stretches, ending on a suitable egress point. This may require rafts to be towed to their start point. When towing any distance rafts should be empty. In offshore winds, consideration should be given to tethering rafts to the shoreline.

Safety cover / support will normally be provided by a powerboat.

Safety cover / support can be provided from an open canoe when operating in the creek with an onshore / low breeze, where anyone entering the water can be quickly taken to the shore.

Venues

Any appropriate body of water.

Participant equipment

- Buoyancy aid correctly fitted
- Swim wear
- Wetsuits must be worn if either the air or the water temperature is below 12C [15C for novices].
- Canoe cag [weather appropriate]
- Suitable footwear [wetsuits boots / trainers / wet shoes] must always be worn. Wellies, walking boots & flip flops are not acceptable].
- Helmets are mandatory

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Instructor equipment

Instructors should be equipped with:

- Buoyancy aid with knife & whistle attached
- First aid kit
- Throwline
- Two way radio [where more than one group is operating at the same venue]
- Mobile phone / phone in accessible location
- Spare clothing [i.e. spare hat, warm jacket, survival blanket] appropriate to the conditions & venue

General Procedures

Before the start of any session, instructors must be fully aware of any medical conditions that may affect participation, and any specific requirements of the group.

Ensure you brief the group fully. Your briefing must include;

- Activity description / goals
- Safety rules on and off the water
- Wind awareness
- Capsize / man overboard scenarios
- Launching & recovering rafts, including lifting techniques

Particular care must be taken when participants are lifting / moving equipment / rafts.

All rafts must be checked for potential risks [entrapment etc.] prior to launch. Inspection of the raft will prepare the instructor for the probable outcome [break-up] and allow remedial work to be completed if appropriate [with junior groups / in cold conditions].

Buoyancy aids and helmets must be checked immediately before the group embarks on the water.

Group control is important. Where more than one raft is being supervised groups must be kept in the same area of the lake so the powerboat can reach all craft within 30 seconds.

The group must be monitored throughout the activity and the session adapted as required [i.e. early return to shore if group members are tired / cold].

The risk assessment must be reviewed on arrival on site to take into account prevailing conditions and recent changes, and monitored throughout the activity session.

Risk factor	Control
Drowning	Properly fitting buoyancy aids / lifejackets Identify non-swimmers Appropriate supervision
Entrapment	All sections of the raft must float independently, barrels to be drained and 'sea-worthy'

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	<p>Thorough checking of rafts prior to launch</p> <p>Appropriate footwear</p> <p>Instructors carry knife at all times</p> <p>Towing restricted to short distances & low speeds. Only empty rafts to be towed in excess of 50m</p> <p>Use spacers under beams when building to reduce finger entrapment</p>
Hypothermia	<p>Appropriate clothing</p> <p>Inspection of raft prior to launch, and if appropriate remedial action to reduce changes of immersion with junior groups / cold conditions</p> <p>Spare clothing, hot drinks to re-warm</p> <p>Monitor participants</p>
Heat stroke	<p>Appropriate clothing, sun screen & hats</p> <p>Drinks available</p> <p>Monitor participants</p>
Impact injuries	<p>Helmets mandatory on the water</p> <p>Care when moving equipment</p> <p>Inspection of raft prior to launch</p> <p>Briefing on paddle use</p> <p>Care when handling rafts</p> <p>No flipping of rafts once constructed</p>
Strains & sprains	<p>Warming up</p> <p>Care when moving boats & equipment</p> <p>Teaching of appropriate lifting techniques</p> <p>No flipping of rafts once constructed</p>
Rafts being blown away from shoreline	<p>Monitoring of wind conditions</p> <p>Downwind legs used</p> <p>Appropriate safety cover / support</p> <p>Tethering of rafts if appropriate</p>
Rafts being separated	<p>Appropriate course used</p> <p>Group briefing and control</p> <p>Ability to tow boats if required</p>
Sharp stones / rocks on shore	<p>Appropriate footwear</p> <p>Launch & recover on slipways / safe shoreline</p> <p>Keep clear of shoreline when sailing</p>
Water borne pollution /	<p>Monitor water quality / consult Environment Agency data</p>

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diseases	Wash hands before eating
Conflict with other users	Keep clear of other water users Communication Abide by local rules / guidelines
Loss of group control	Effective briefing Monitor participants both on & off the water