



**STRENGTH, ENDURANCE, FEARLESSNESS**

**ATHLETE AND PADDLER MANUAL**

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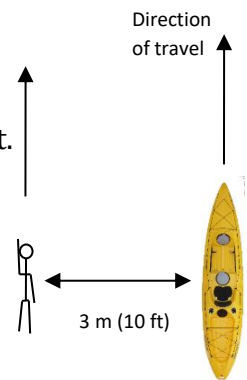
## Introduction

We'd like to make some suggestions that will help make your Skaha Lake Ultra Swim as straight, "short", and as relaxed as possible. This manual addresses the concerns most swimmers have with regard to the swim leg of the event.

### Goal of the Paddler and Athlete

All Skaha Lake Ultra Swim athletes have a paddler that is assigned to them (and only them). This paddler is the most important link between the athlete and a successful swim. The paddler can provide the athlete with their nutrition needs, but the **MOST IMPORTANT** role of the paddler is to paddle at the proper "speed" in a line that is as straight as possible. The role of the Athlete is to swim and sight off the paddler.

Try to swim with the paddler directly to the right approximately 3 meters Or 10 feet away. Every time you breathe to your right side, sight your paddler and adjust your line to mimic theirs. If you prefer, the paddler can be to your left. Some athletes choose to swim behind the paddler; this method, however, requires that you lift your head to sight.



### Responsibilities (in order of importance)

#### Swimmer

Swim  
TRUST that your paddler knows where to go  
Swim in a direction that keeps you close to your paddler  
Ingest nutrition/calories  
Relax and enjoy the swim

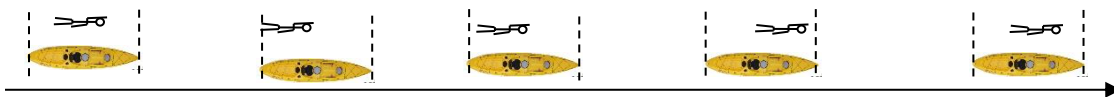
#### Paddler

Paddle in as straight a line as possible.  
TRUST that your swimmer will follow you  
Paddle at the proper speed\*  
Carry nutrition/calories  
Relax and enjoy the swim

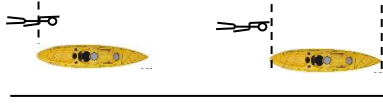
### Boat Speed

Boat speed is the responsibility of the paddler. It is adjusted based on the speed of the swimmer: paddle so that your boat speed matches your swimmers speed.

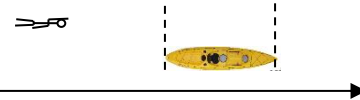
Perfect speed control– swimmer stays within the fore and aft shadow of the boat



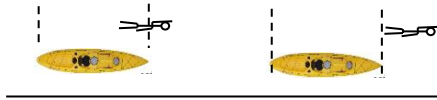
**Too fast**  
 (Swimmer might start to feel pressure to swim faster)



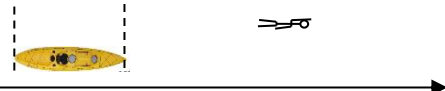
**Way too fast**  
 (Swimmer might feel they are chasing the boat)



**Too slow**  
 Swimmer might start to feel pressure to swim slower  
 Or to start to sight for themselves



**Way too slow**  
 control is in jeopardy: who's leading who?



**Direction**

The paddler is in charge of the direction that both the boat and swimmer travel. The paddler should always be in control, and must never relinquish control.

**Scenario One: The paddler maintains directional control for the entire swim**

**Best case**

The swimmer sights off the paddler; and swims straight.

**Result**

Shortest possible straight swim.

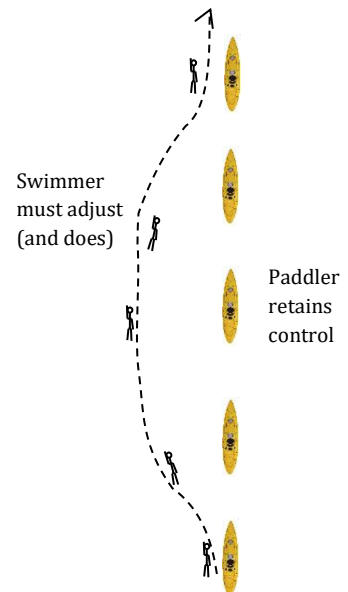


**Typical case**

The swimmer sights off the paddler; swims off line slightly (paddler retains control) and adjusts back to the paddler.

**Result**

Swim is a little longer.



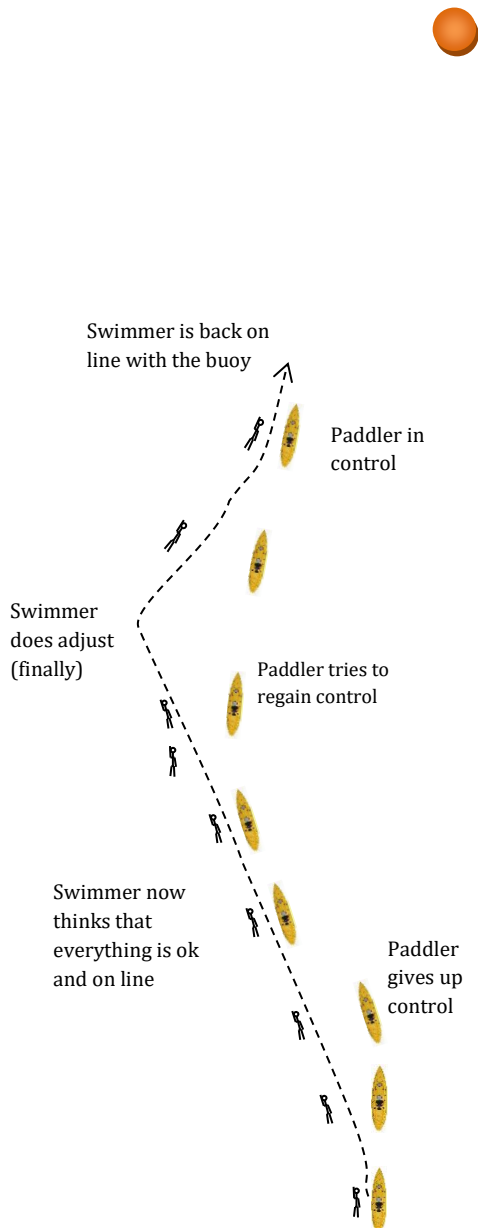
## Scenario Two: The paddler relinquishes directional control (NOT good)

### Bad case

The swimmer sights for himself initially , and then gives in to reason.

### Result

A long swim!

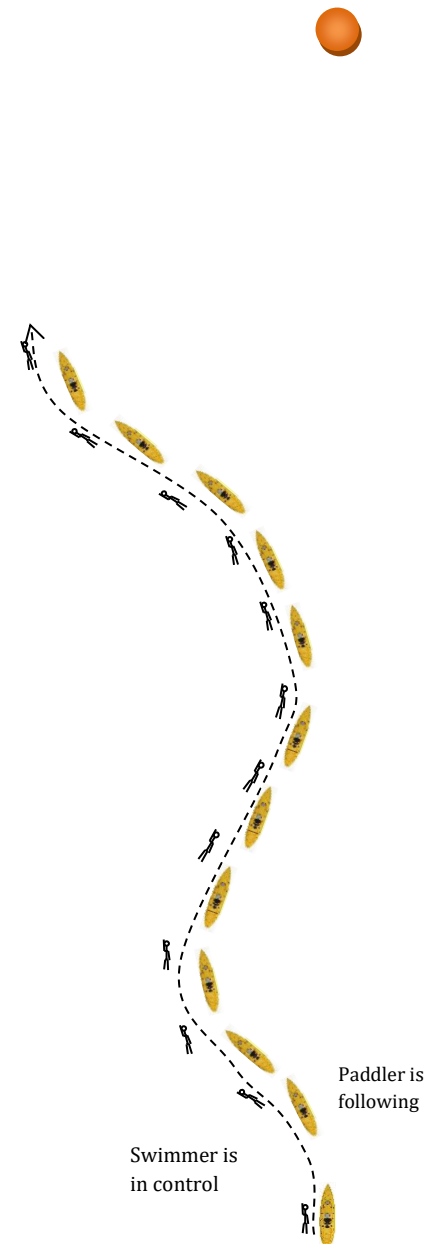


### Worst case

The swimmer sights for himself for the entire swim.

### Result

The swimmer risks missing the cutoff!



## **Nutrition**

Nutrition is initially the responsibility of the swimmer. Athlete should organize the calories ahead of time, planning on being in the water for 6.5 hours (it's always better to carry extra). Athlete needs to discuss with the paddler as to the timing of the nutrition breaks, and the expectations they have.

### **Other hints or tips for the Swimmer**

1. Be prepared for a long swim down the lake, which means anywhere from 2 hours 30 minutes to 6 hours 30 minutes.
2. Don't forget your extra goggles, anti chafe products, wet suit, towel, foot wear and dry warm clothes to change into (Dry Bag Check-in at Swim Start).
3. Make sure you thank your paddler. The Ultra Swim experience is dependent on many people, but the most important person in having a good event is your paddler.
4. Nutritional Products - maintain your calorie and fluid intake, even during the swim.
5. Don't do anything that you haven't already done many times in training.

### **Other hints or tips for the Paddler (from an experienced paddler)**

1. Be prepared for a long trip down the lake, which means anywhere from 2 hours 30 minutes to 6 hours 30 minutes. Even the fastest swimmer doesn't go very fast compared to a kayak so you'll find your stroke rate is about 10 strokes per minute if that.
2. You need to get to the beach a bit early as you will not only have to rig and launch, but you'll need to meet your swimmer and get his/her nutrition and hydration supplies.
3. Do not make the mistake of having coffee before you set out. It is a bad mistake, as by Ponderosa (8KM) you will really need to pee. Around Ponderosa you can get off the canoe into waist deep water and get some relief if need be. Be sure to communicate with your swimmer that you will be making a short stop and will catch up. Side note: adult diapers also work if you have a small bladder or weak kidneys.
4. There are some people who theorize that there is a current from the Channel that gives the swimmers a push down the west side of the lake. This may or may not be the case but discuss a line with your swimmer so you have a game plan. There's a buoy at Ponderosa (8KM) that's a bit of a challenge to see until you are about 1 KM away. There will be a series of buoy markers from this point approximately every KM which should be followed all the way into the Finish at Kenyon Park.
5. If you are planning on paddling back, it is suggest that you get out of the canoe and have a walk around. It is also suggested that you take something to eat before paddling home as it's a good 1.5 hr paddle.

6. Bring binoculars for sighting purposes.
7. Make yourself familiar with the swim map and the approximate land marks, so you can tell your swimmer where they are at, if they ask.
8. Carry your cell phone in a plastic bag in case you need to make an emergency phone call.
9. Be sure to attend the pre-race swim briefing and rescue seminar.

### **General Information for the Paddler**

Be sure you have read, understood and signed the Support Person Waiver and submitted at event package pickup the day prior to the event. Your Swimmer will not be allowed to start without this being done.

Both Paddler and Swimmer must check-in **Race Morning** prior to **6:15 AM**. If you are not there by race start your swimmer will not be allowed to participate.

You must be in the water by 6:50 AM awaiting Start Instructions.

### **Equipment**

- You must have a PFD for yourself and an extra one with you for your swimmer.
- Race Number attached to your outermost piece of clothing/PFD or hat
- Two paddles, a bailing device, a tow rope, and a whistle.
- You must have a cell phone (use a plastic zip lock bag for protection).
- Binoculars for sighting purposes.
- Make sure you bring warm clothing and sun protection, and water and a snack. You could be paddling for up to 6.5 hours, you need to provide for yourself during that time.

### **Race Day Instructions**

**Follow the timing on the Schedule of Events. This is set so we can start the event on time and avoid as much lake traffic as possible. This is a safety issue for everyone. You and your support boat and paddler must be at the start at Skaha Beach no later than 6:15 am. If your support boat is late (or does not show) you will not be able to swim.**

- 5:30 am - 6:15 am - Swim - Check-in – Prerace Preparation
- 6:30 am – Final Instructions on Beach (Athletes and Paddlers)
- 6:35 am – 6:50 am Final Dry Strip Drop Off
- 6:35 am - 6:50 am Swimmer Warm-up Opportunity
- 6:50 am – Support boats move into position

- 6:55 am - Ceremonial Opening – National Anthem (All swimmers on Beach, Support Boats on Water)
- 7:00 am - Swim - Start
- 1:30 pm - Swim - Cut-off - Okanagan Falls – Christie Beach
- 2:00 pm – Awards Ceremony - Okanagan Falls – Christie Beach

### **Athlete**

- Remember to bring your swim cap, wet suit, goggles and spares, anti-chafe product, nutrition and hydration product, and race number for your paddler. Remember that your swim cap is numbered and your race number is matched to your cap, so please do not exchange them with anyone else. Any extra gear, such as dry clothes/shoes can be left in your event package bag, and dropped off at the Dry Gear Drop shuttle vehicle.

### **Paddler**

- Remember to bring you're your safety gear to prepare your boat for the trip down the lake.
- Make sure you bring warm clothing and sun protection, and water and a snack. You could be paddling for up to 6.5 hours, you need to provide for yourself during that time.
- Your swimmer will depend on you to sight where they are going. Read the instructions in this manual to help you swim the fastest and straightest line possible.

### **Athlete and Paddler**

- **Listen carefully** to the instructions provided to you at the beach by the race announcer and attend the Final Instruction meeting on the beach.
- **White caps are available** for those who are anxious about their swim; these will allow us to keep a closer eye on you! Please ask for a white cap at the race package pick-up.
- If, on the morning of the swim, you feel like it is not your day, you do not feel well, or you are uncomfortable with the conditions, we encourage you to **consider safety first**, and not do the swim. If you have any **medical questions** on event day morning our medical staff are available to help.

- This will be your final opportunity to submit your Support Person Waiver. No waiver - no support kayak/canoe on the course which means you don't swim. It is your responsibility to ensure that your support person is competent to support you and is there for you race morning.
- Have a safety plan of sorts if you start to struggle during the race. If you swallow water, or are coughing, or are anxious or panicky, stop swimming, roll onto your back to make breathing easier, hold on to your swim buddy if you have one. Take a break and work at calming your breathing down. If you can resume your swim do so at a pace that is comfortable and manageable, with stops as needed. If you are unable to proceed, alert your support paddler that you no longer wish to continue and have them alert a support motor boat to pick you up.
- There will be a time cut-off at 8 KM (Ponderosa Point) which must be reached within 4 hours 25 minutes. If you have not reached Ponderosa Point within the cut off time, a support motor boat will pick you up and take you to the finish. Overall finish cut-off to have an official time will be 6 hours 30 minutes. The paddler will continue to paddle to the finish to check in with race officials after your swimmer has been removed from the course.

### **Race Start**

#### **Obey Starter and safety crew instructions on the water at all times!**

You should discuss in advance a method of identifying and finding each other - all swimmers look the same when in the water. Make sure you know your swimmer's cap number. In addition, you could attach a bright-coloured balloon to the watercraft, or you could wear bright clothing or a unique hat. We recommend that you be distinctive so that your swimmer can swim to you at the start of the race and then go from there, rather than you trying to paddle into the crowd of swimmers trying to find your swimmer. Stay out of the way of other swimmers at the start of the swim.

If you see a swimmer with a white cap, it means they are a little anxious about the swim, so pay extra attention to them and give them extra space!

### **During the Race**

**Above all, enjoy your swim!** Take a moment while you are out there to have a look around and marvel at what you are accomplishing!



Don't put your craft in danger and be alert for other swimmers and other support craft.

If your swimmer needs a break have them hold onto the FRONT of your boat (if possible) until ready to continue to swim. They can also hold onto their swim buddy if they have one or just float with the buoyancy of their wetsuit. DO NOT HAVE YOUR SWIMMER GRAB THE SIDE OF YOUR BOAT, THIS COULD RESULT IN A TIP OVER.

It is possible that your swimmer will decide that he/she cannot complete the swim, due to bad conditions, illness, anxiety, or exhaustion. Please do not try to convince your swimmer to continue if they report this to you. They know best what they are capable of doing. If they tell you they wish to stop, please alert a support motorboat by waving your paddle or blowing your whistle. The support motorboat will come to pick up your swimmer and take them to the finish line. You should then paddle yourself to the finish.

Raise your paddle, yell, or use a whistle when your (or any) swimmer needs assistance and alert the closest powerboat. Stay with the swimmer and offer the extra PFD. **In case of emergency, call the Safety Director Shelie at: 250-488-3583** and she will direct you what to do next.

You should NOT attempt to pull an injured/fatigued swimmer into your canoe, kayak. Instead, have the swimmer hold onto the PFD or carefully onto the front of the boat. You should then signal and wait for help from the lifeguards on the powerboats.

If the swim is cancelled due to sudden bad weather, please assist the swimmers. Where possible, direct all swimmers to return to the start if it is close enough, otherwise assist them as they wait for powerboats to come return them to the start.

#### FINISH LINE INSTRUCTIONS

- As you approach the finish in Okanagan Falls, be sure we can see the race number on the paddler, and please keep your swim cap on until you cross the finish line. This is to help our timing crew make sure we get your time. This is a manual timing system so we need to see your number.

- Paddler, steer off to the right side to allow swimmers clear access to entering the finish line chute. Be aware of other swimmers around you. Do not block or interfere with another swimmer or their support craft.
- Our finish line crew will help the paddler remove the support boat from the beach and into the holding compound until you retrieve it. You will need to keep your race number with the boat and then use your wrist band to identify/match with the number when you return to retrieve the boat.
- Be sure to pick up your Dry Clothes. Please use the change tents, No Public Nudity. One or both of you may take the Shuttle Bus back to Skaha Beach to pick up your vehicle so you can retrieve your support boat.
- If you are using a rental boat from Hoodoo Adventures, they will be at the finish to retrieve their boat. Be sure to remove all personal belongings from the boat.
- After the swim, celebrate your accomplishment at the Beach BBQ where awards will be handed out as soon as we are able to complete the final results, approximately by 1:45 pm but sooner if everyone is off the water. The BBQ and Awards Ceremony are included in your race entry fee for both the athlete and paddler. Additional tickets for family and friends must be purchased in advance at Race Package Pick-up.

### **Kayak Rental & Return**

If you are renting a kayak through Hoodoo Adventures they will arrange for the kayak to be delivered to the Swim Start area and be picked up at the Swim Finish area. [team@hoodooadventures.ca](mailto:team@hoodooadventures.ca) You only need to make sure your paddler is equipped with your nutrition and instructions. You do not need to worry about the kayak as Hoodoo Adventures will make all the necessary arrangements.

### **Post Swim Kayak Removal - Shuttle Service**

If you bring your own kayak or canoe then you will need to get it back to your hotel following the swim. Immediately after finishing the swim, the water craft needs to be removed to the back of Christie Park and placed in the compound until it is retrieved. The organizers will provide a shuttle between Christie Park Finish and Skaha Park Start which will run approximately every 45 minutes starting at 10:15 am and ending at 2:00 PM. One or both persons can ride back to Skaha to pick up your vehicle, then return to Kenyon Park to retrieve your water craft.

