

CCSO Paddling Technique

The most important thing is that every one in the boat is doing the same thing, at the same time, all the time.

The parts of the stroke: Set-up; Catch; Moving the Boat; Exit (return to set-up).

SET-UP: Body is rotated and ready to start the stroke.

1. Core contact points: Hip to the gunwale, sit bones on front edge of seat, both feet planted and braced (knees slightly bent), head up and looking forward. Most of weight on outside hip. Hinge forward, from the hips, back straight, shoulders square.
2. Rotation: Starts at feet. Tighten core. Use inside foot/leg to push inside hip back (thus the outside hip is in front). The back and shoulders follow. Back should be to the water. Head still up and looking forward.
3. Arms: Outside arm is straight, extended forward, holding blade just above the water. Inside hand on paddle handle; Knuckles, wrist and elbow all in one line; Slight bend in the elbow to get hand out over the water; Inside hand extended forward, AWAY from forehead. The arms are levers only; they move up and down, but do not change position during the stroke.
4. Shoulders: At the set-up position, shoulders are square and in line with rotated hips. Shoulders are down, not at the ear.

CATCH: Blade enters the water at a positive angle until the blade is completely buried. No change in body position (body still rotated, hinged forward, head up and looking forward). Arm levers push the blade down. Bury the blade, not the entire hand.

Work with the coach on finding your “sweet spot” for the catch.

MOVING THE BOAT: Pushing off with outside leg, de-

rotate the hips back to square (with back and shoulders following), while sitting up slightly. During the stroke, continue to exert downward pressure to keep the blade buried. Core is locked, arms are locked, head up and looking forward. The BODY moves the boat forward, with the legs and hips driving the movement.

EXIT (return to Set-up): When the blade is at a negative angle, it is no longer moving the boat forward. This occurs when the blade is between the mid-thigh and hip, depending on the paddler. Work closely with the coach on timing of the exit.

Pulling the paddle out of the water is similar to pulling a sword out of a sheath. The inside arm will come inside the boat a bit to reposition the paddle; the outside elbow may need to bend slightly to get the paddle cleanly out of the water.

As the inside leg pushes the inside hip back to rotate again for set-up, the inside arm will again move the top of the paddle out over the water.