

Risk Assessment Symonds Yat Wildwater Race

Date:	03/06/2025
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Assessors Name:	Jacob Holmes	Review Date:	Original
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Description of assessment	Wild Water Event Specific Risk Assessment: Symonds Yat Wildwater Race
Organisers and Experience	Jacob Holmes: 17 years of paddling experience in competition, organised and helped organise multiple races previously Alex Sheppy: Over 10 years of competitive paddling experience, assisted in organising the previous Symonds Yat race Freddie Brown: Over 10 years of competitive paddling experience, assisted in organising the previous Symonds Yat race
Event Safety Officer	Jacob Holmes, last event Safety course completed February 2025
Safeguarding	Jacob Holmes: has completed the safeguarding course delivered by Paddle Scotland.

Location Details	<p>The Sprint race runs from just above the Symonds Yat rapid to just below the Symonds Yat rapid. Access for the start uses the Paddle UK recognised access point at the Wye Dean Activity Centre. Access at the get-out will use the steps at the finish 500m downstream from the start on river left.</p> <p>The Classic will have the same start location but will finish at the steps at Monmouth Rowing Club, 7km downstream. These steps will be used for access.</p> <p>The location is popular with hikers, cyclists, dog walkers, and other water users, so there can be plenty of people in the vicinity of the race. Local clubs and committees have been made aware of the intention to run a race.</p> <p>The whole sprint course and most of the classic course has a footpath alongside.</p>
Safety Plan	No safety cover is provided other than the provision details below.

Risk Assessment Symonds Yat Wildwater Race

Emergency Plan	In the Event of an Emergency or suspected emergency the organisers should be notified and the emergency services called.
Welfare and Safeguarding Plan	The event adopts the Paddle UK policy for welfare and safeguarding, in the event of a suspected incident the organisers should be notified, and the emergency services will be contacted if required.
Evacuation Plan	The race is organised in the car park of the WyeDean Activity Centre, which is an outside space so evacuation can occur easily and be coordinated by the event safety officer.
Incident reporting	Following any Safety, Emergency, Safeguarding or evacuation incident a Paddle UK incident form shall be submitted as a record of the situation.

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing to control the risks?	What further action do you need to take to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?	Done
Lack of Paddler Competence	Paddlers	<p>All entrants or person in “loco Parentis” must complete a separate WWR entry form stating the paddler is competent and fit to race the WWR race on the conditions and distance etc. on the day.</p> <p>Paddlers are solely responsible for their own competence, medical fitness, endurance to complete the race and issues and welfare undertaking the race in the conditions present on the day.</p> <p>All Paddlers and parents must follow instructions and comply with any safety, plans and directions from the organisers. It is their responsibility to acquaint themselves with this.</p>	Any new competitors to the race are asked to come and speak to the organisers immediately after the briefing	Event Organiser and competitor	At the briefing	

Risk Assessment Symonds Yat Wildwater Race

		Event description clearly describes the severity of course, and the fact that paddlers need to be self-supporting on the river section.				
Other water users	Paddlers	<p>The river is open to other rivers users such as fishermen, rowing boats and other recreational paddlers,</p> <p>Competitors should be aware of this and treat anyone they interact with politely and assist if they come across anyone in difficulty.</p>	Other river users will be made aware of the event beforehand, where possible, and all competitors will be asked to treat any other river users with respect and assist anyone in difficulty.	Event organiser	Before event and at breifing.	
Missing Paddler(s) & or Children	Paddlers	<p>All paddlers will have a start number and start time allocated. Start and finish numbers will be compared.</p> <p>Start list is organised as per the current rolling ranking system so those without a ranking start before more experience paddles who have a ranking and competed in other races.</p> <p>Paddlers will be briefed on ensuring they do not leave the race area without first reporting their withdrawal.</p>	<p>Event team to be in contact throughout the event to ensure that all expected paddlers are accounted for.</p> <p>Paddlers briefed as to their responsibility to others throughout the event.</p> <p>Paddlers/parents briefed on recommendation that no paddler under 16 should be allowed to move around the Venue for any reason e.g. taking canoes to the river, going to the toilets etc., on their own (nor be left on their own).</p>	Event Organiser Start and Finish Team	On the day and at the Briefing	
Injury to Non-Paddlers and Members of the Public	Public Event Team Spectators	First Aider is available	<p>Paddlers briefed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - not to block footpaths - take care when they move boats and 	Event Organiser Paddlers	On the day	

Risk Assessment Symonds Yat Wildwater Race

			<p>equipment around the site.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - boats to be secured in windy weather. 			
Moving Water	<p>Paddlers</p> <p>Event Safety Team</p> <p>Starter</p> <p>Spectators</p>	<p>All WWR paddlers or officials getting on the water MUST wear a buoyancy aid and helmet.</p> <p>Spraydecks are highly recommended but not essential.</p> <p>It is recommended officials doing start and finish and parents, spectators etc., if on the bank and potentially prepared to intervene in a rescue wear a buoyancy aid.</p> <p>No on the water safety cover is provided at this event paddlers are responsible for their own and the safety of fellow competitors when on the water.</p> <p>Any competitor coming across another competitor in trouble must stop and give assistance.</p> <p>Each competitor must wait on the water at the finish for the next 2 competitors to finish before leaving the water.</p> <p>Chaperones are allowed to accompany less competent paddlers during the race</p>	<p>Paddler safety to be discuss at the briefing</p>	Event Organiser	On the day at Briefing	

Risk Assessment Symonds Yat Wildwater Race

Drowning	Paddlers	<p>All paddlers are required to wear and approved buoyancy aid, each paddler is responsible for ensuring the buoyancy aid is in good condition and suitable for the event.</p> <p>Any competitor coming across another competitor in trouble must stop and give assistance.</p>	Reminder given at the race briefing	Event Organiser	On the Day	
Head Injury	Paddlers Organisers	<p>Helmets are mandatory at this event.</p> <p><u>Paddle UK Head Injury Guidance</u> to be followed.</p>	First Aider is available	Event Organiser	On the Day	
Injury - body, inc manual handling	Paddlers Event Team	<p>All WWR canoes and Kayaks must comply with the current <u>WWR safety rules</u></p> <p>Other types of craft such as Sprint/Marathon, slalom, surf ski, sea kayaks and canoes must contain enough buoyancy to prevent them sinking in the event of a capsize.</p> <p>Other craft such as stand up paddle boards, coracle or dragon boats must contain enough buoyancy to prevent them sinking in the event of a capsize.</p> <p>Volunteers and Safety Team briefed on Manual Handling</p>	First Aider is available	Event Organiser/First Aider	On the day	

Risk Assessment Symonds Yat Wildwater Race

Slips and Trips	Paddlers Event Team Spectators		Paddlers & Volunteers briefed to take care getting in and out of WWC due to slippery banks First Aider is available	Event Organiser/First Aider Paddlers & volunteers	On the day	
Entrapment or injury from hazards on the course - Trees - Boats - damaged WWC - Throwlines	Paddlers Event Team	The River Wye is a natural river lined with trees and other hazards. There are two grade 2 rapids on the river (one at Symonds Yat (location of the sprint course and start of the classic course) and one further along the classic). Both of these rapids are alongside an island, which, at exceptionally high water levels this would present an increased risk of entrapment due to trees. In these circumstances the race would be moved to a safer location or cancelled.	River conditions are assessed on the day and competitors are advised of any specific risks at the briefing. River conditions are assessed on the day of the race and the course can be shortened or an alternative course can be raced upstream which reduce the risk of entrapment in trees.	Event Organiser	On the day at the briefing	
Poor Water Quality	Paddlers Event Team	Water quality is not monitored, and competitors compete at their own risk. Event has an Emergency Plan to be followed, including evacuation procedures	Paddlers briefed to wash hands and shower after being on and around the water	Event organiser	At the Briefing	

Risk Assessment Symonds Yat Wildwater Race

ILL HEALTH and or INJURY	Paddlers Event Team	Event has an Emergency Plan to be followed, including evacuation procedures	First Aider is available Paddlers briefed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - pull to a safe area if possible and rest on the bank - Report to safety team/organisers or first aid - look out for each other and assist paddlers in trouble. 	Event organiser/First Aider Paddlers	On the Day	
HYPOTHERMIA / HEAT STROKE	Paddlers Event Team Spectators	Paddlers can withdraw from race by attracting other paddlers' attention. Wear clothing appropriate to conditions and that suits your own bodily temperature control needs.	First Aider is available Paddlers briefed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - wear clothing appropriate to conditions and that suits your own bodily temperature control needs 	Event Organiser First Aider		
High water levels	Paddlers Event Team	The river is a natural water course and river levels increase or decrease depending on weather conditions preceding the event.	Review water levels and weather conditions in the days running up to the event to prepare additional mitigations if required. E.g. live gauges upstream will be monitored https://check-for-flooding.service.gov.uk/station/2158	Event Organiser	On the day	
Lightning Strike	Paddlers Event Team Spectators	If there are concerns about potential storms. Lightning will be tracked using a site such www.lightningmaps.org . If	Monitoring of lightning in place	Event Organiser	On the day	

Risk Assessment Symonds Yat Wildwater Race

		lightning is within 10km of the event, racing will immediately stop, paddlers will be removed from the water as quickly as possible and all will be advised to seek shelter.				
High Winds	Paddlers Event Team Spectators	Boats and paddlers equipment secured when not in use	Review conditions on the day	Event Organiser	On the day	
WEILS DISEASE	Paddlers Event Team	Washing Facilities are available in the pub toilets	<p>Paddler and volunteer briefing on hazards and symptoms:</p> <p>Precautions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Avoid capsize drill or rolling in stagnant or slow moving water - Wash or shower after canoeing Cover minor scratches on exposed parts of the body with water-proof plaster - Use foot-wear to avoid cutting feet Should you become ill after canoeing (2-19 days) with a flu-like illness (temperature, aching limbs & joints) call your doctor and tell him/her you are a canoeist and may have come into contact with the Leptospirosis bacteria 	Event Organiser Paddlers Event Volunteers	On the Day	

Risk Assessment Symonds Yat Wildwater Race

			Paddlers briefed to report any infection to Paddle UK incident reporting			
Safeguarding or Welfare incident	Paddlers Event Team Spectators	Paddle UK Safeguarding processes to be followed Trained Event Safeguarding Officer to manage concerns during the event.	U18 or vulnerable paddlers to be the responsibility of & supervised by parent / coach / club throughout the event	Event Organiser	Monitored during the event	
Equipment Failure (Catastrophic)	Event Team Paddlers	All Competitors are responsible for ensuring their equipment is fit for purpose and meets manufacturer specifications Event has an Emergency Plan to be followed	,			
Equipment Failure (Organisational Risk)	Event Team Paddle UK	Equipment maintained and regularly checked	Back-up manual system available if required			

Office use only (to be completed by a risk assessment sampler if selected for sampling)

Sampled by		Position:		Date:	
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Risk Assessment Symonds Yat Wildwater Race