

International Canoe Federation Level 1- Online Assistant Canoe Sprint Coach Course

**Presented by Gregory van Heerden ICF Level 1 accredited course
Facilitator**

Acknowledgements

The implementation of this course would not have been possible without the generous help and support of the following:

- The International Canoe Federation and Canoeing South Africa.



Online Session in progress

Course date

This online level 1 course was held over 9 sessions split over a three-week period (5th to 23rd January 2021), with sessions of 60 to 90 minutes being held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings and Saturday mornings. Whilst predominantly an online course three practical elements were included to ensure a transfer of theory to actual coaching application.

Course Outcomes and measurement

The purpose of the Level 1 course was to provide the coaches with the basic knowledge and skills needed to coach beginners in canoe/kayak. The course comprised of theory and three practical tasks as well as an “apprenticeship”.

On the completion of the course the coaches were able to:

- Provide a safe environment for paddling to take place
- Plan and conduct beginner lessons
- Plan and conduct a basic training session
- Teach balance, the basic technique of kayak paddling and steering
- Conduct basic physical conditioning training
- Prepare athletes for domestic level competition

In order to assess the coaches' knowledge and their practical ability to apply this they had to complete three practical assignments followed by a written exam comprising of 20 questions (a minimum of 16 correct responses was required in order to pass)

It was also recommended that all the Coaches keep a personal log of their coaching activities to document their "apprenticeship" activities as this proof will be needed as one of the requirements of entry onto the Level 2 course.

Furthermore, it is expected that all the coaches be compliant with the regulations of Canoeing South Africa in terms of having the following in place:

- A current first aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation certificate,
- Proof of completion of the online Safeguarding Awareness certificate,
- Proof of the following Police clearance screenings:
 - The Sexual Offences register, Child Protection register and Standard criminal check.

All the successful candidates shall receive a "Level 1 Assistant Canoe Sprint Coach" certificate from the ICF/CAC.

Course content

The following content was covered in the course:

- Introduction to Canoeing, a short history of Canoeing, the definition, discipline descriptions and Canoe Sprint description
- Equipment; Boats, parts of the boats, paddles and accessories, handling of equipment
- Safety and Rescue; equipment, personal safety, injuries, methods of rescue
- The technique of canoeing; launching, balance, strokes of canoeing, basic paddling technique, steering
- Physical conditioning; endurance development and strength development
- Training and basic training methods; Why training is necessary, training loads, frequency and duration, long distance, fartlek, interval and complex training.
- Role of the coach; teaching skills and communication, coaching tools, methods and teaching beginners.
- Introducing racing; race course, racing rules, the goals and principles of racing

With the Practical component including three practical assignments:

- The demonstration and teaching of the Szanto dryland technique method,
- Running a bodyweight training session, and
- The development and presentation of a periodised training program.



PHASE 2 – SPECIFIC PREPARATION

Goal: More time in boat (Long, medium, short endurance development)

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Am	Canoeing x5 1000m with 750m easy in between (Above 170HR)	Pilates	Swimming	Pilates	Swimming	Rest	Canoeing 10km time trail (Sub 1 hour)
Pm	Cycling (Static) - 10km – easy/moderate	Canoeing x15 200m (Alternating between hard and easy)	Rest	Canoeing Pyramid: x3 100m x3 200m x3 500m x3 1000m x3 200m	Cycling – Static – Moderate – 10km	Run(5km)	Rest

Practicals in full swing

Attendance

The course was attended by 6 Coaches from the Gauteng Province in South Africa, The group consisted of 2 Females (33%) and 4 males (67%). The Racial split was 17% (1) Non-white attendee and 83% (5) white attendees.

Attendee details and session attendance:

Full Name	Gender	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	Test
Theo Jacob Dreyer	M	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tome dos Santos	M	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No - Travel	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sarah Lyndall Evans	F	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Reginald Sean Evans	M	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Luke Howard Salmon	M	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Kamilah Hank	F	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No - LS	Yes	Yes

Facilitator Comments

This course was predominantly made up of young coaches, however their level of engagement, grasp of theory and the technical aspects, as well as their commitment to attendance and submission of their practical's was of the highest level, which made me very excited about their ability and how potentially this learning experience could translate into high levels of peer to peer coaching, helping to provide an environment where the correct skills can be taught and training carried out between athletes and coaches of a similar age, potentially increasing their engagement, promoting new styles of coaching, and developing intelligent athletes. Feedback at the end of the course indicated that the coaches expectations were met and that the information shared was worthwhile and could be used in their preparations and training sessions.



Coaches in action

The course was held on Zoom, we had two technical problems that resulted in the inability to live share video footage, but this was resolved after the lectures by sharing the footage via WeTransfer.com. We also had an issue with load shedding which affected session 7 for one coach, however all information from the session was shared afterwards resulting in little impact on the learning process for the coach in question.



Warming up routines

Sessions were limited to between sixty and ninety minutes to maintain the attendees focus and this was generally adhered to with some exceptions due to more involved discussions after the presentation. I do feel that allowing for this to happen is very beneficial as it gives the coaches the opportunity to share their viewpoints, experience and ideas.



Pull-ups 101

We were able to incorporate all the necessary practical elements, with each attendee having to submit two brief videos as well as present an abridged training program across all sections of the standard training periodisation periods.



The training program design element of the practical component once again received the best feedback from the attendees with all of them really enjoying the process and learning a lot from each other during the sharing process.



In terms of understanding the theoretical aspects, I feel that by having the sessions split across three weeks this enabled the coaches to reflect on their learning as well as prepare properly for each session by reviewing the relevant chapter in the course manual prior to the online lecture.

The following videos were added to the homework of the coaches from the ICF online lecture series:

https://www.canoeicf.com/icf-performance-education-free-online-series?utm_campaign=PerformanceEducation

- Difference between women's and men's training methods,
- Choosing a paddle for young kayak athletes,
- How to train your athletes to paddle faster,
- Anti-doping Education - Keeping canoeing clean.

During our last session we once again included a discussion around the importance of developing a culture of collaboration amongst the coaches which stressed the vision of a shared goal (having South African paddlers achieving results on the world stage) and a willingness to work together towards this by sharing knowledge, recognising and respecting differences, and pushing each other to excel thereby raising the level of coaching from within our structures for the benefit of all our athletes.



As always I strive to ensure that on completion of the course that the coaches leave competent and able to transfer the necessary skills that beginners would need (balance, technique etc.) in the correct way, as well as being able to set up basic training programs that can be implemented to train their athletes towards competing in provincial competitions and I can confidently say that this goal was achieved.



In summary I believe the course objectives were met and the experience was worthwhile for all involved. I would like to thank all those responsible for providing the opportunity for this knowledge sharing experience to take place, and look forward to seeing how the coaches progress, find fulfilment in their roles and make canoeing a fun, safe and challenging experience for those with whom they interact.