

# Assembly Instructions

## EVA backrest

The EVA backrest position is the key to how you can get your seating position comfortable and efficient. It is also the means to ensuring a proper fit for different leg lengths.

1. Sit in the inflated boat with your feet on the back of the bow tube. Knees bent. For whitewater they need to be bent more so you are naturally leaning forward at the waist. There should be some space behind you.
2. Fit the backrest by running the straps through the rear D-rings on the tubes. The straps thread through the D-ring, then the small slot piece, then the buckle.
3. DO NOT OVER TIGHTEN
4. Then thread the centrally placed straps through the black patches on the stern.



5. These stern straps are for stopping the backrest from slipping down under your butt.
6. All straps should be just taut, but not tight. Too tight risks tearing the fabric.



### Thigh Braces

Thigh braces are a must for whitewater over Grade 2, and are the means by which you become part of your packraft. Correctly fitted, you should be able to sit in the water, turn your head to one side and feel the boat tilt.

Whitewater moves involving crossing fast currents require you to “rail” the boat – tilting it downstream so water flows under the upstream tube. No rail move means you will usually capsize upstream.

If you are leaning slightly forward and have firm thigh braces your balance in tricky water will improve greatly. In bouncy wave trains you will stay seated and not fly up off the seat.

1. The long end straps go through a webbing attachment by your ankles and the front D-ring on the tube by your hips.
2. Sit in the boat with your knees bent to about 30 -45 degrees of bend. 90 degrees is too much.
3. Fit the curved thigh braces – mesh side against your thigh to be a snug fit.
4. Connect the metal buckles to the black ladder attachment at close to 90 degrees.
5. Tighten the straps until your thighs are pushed gently against the tubes.

Test everything out in the water. You should be able to sit without slumping. You are paddling not watching TV, and you need to sit with a straight back. Too much bend in the knees will be uncomfortable, and too little will allow the thigh braces to slip off too easily.

**To exit thigh braces – just straighten your legs.**

### Useful Stuff

- ✓ As the boat cools everything will become slack. Don't tighten the straps any further, just top up the air.
- ✓ When carrying your packraft on your shoulders the thigh straps are ideally placed. Some people use the (loosened) thigh braces as pack straps and carry the inflated boat vertically.

- ✓ Our thigh braces each have four points of attachment, making them much stronger than the deckline attachments.
- ✓ When you are climbing back in from a wet exit, use the thigh braces as a handy place to grip. They are strong, easy to hang onto, and are in the centre of the boat. You can use one side in each hand – a short grip and an extended grip. Pull across the boat with the extended arm and push with the bent nearest arm. *Video to come.*
- ✓ Train yourself to grab a thigh brace as you capsize. If you can make this an automatic reaction, you will be ideally placed for a rapid re-entry. *PS don't let go of your paddle.* A quick reentry is not as fast as an eskimo roll, but it's much easier to do in a packraft. Practice this in a pool or calm water until you find out what works and then your confidence will improve hugely. *Capsize to back in the boat paddling – aim for 20 seconds as a target.*
- ✓ If you are rescuing someone, grab the thigh braces of their boat. They can be directed to grab the thigh braces of your boat too.
- ✓ In a lake or sea rescue or rest scenario you can make a stable platform by clipping two packrafts side by side with a carabiner using the thigh braces.

Enjoyable and safe paddling,

Hugh Canard

Blue Duck Packrafting Ltd