

Risk Assessment

Activity:	Tomahawk Throwing
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In the event of any incident, the cause must be identified and prevention measures must be reviewed.

Hazard	People at Risk	Consequences	Prevention	Mitigation
Equipment and Equipment failure	Participants	Cuts, bruises, penetrating injuries, concussion, possibility of major bleeding.	Only throwing axes (tomahawks & angels) to be used – no hand axes, hatchets, felling axes or other edged items. All equipment to be inspected before set up and at regular intervals.	Equipment damaged during session to be withdrawn from use immediately. If running repairs are possible and safe, these must be carried out before equipment is returned to use.
Adverse Weather	All involved	Cuts, bruises, penetrating injuries, concussion, possibility of major bleeding.	Sessions may have to be cancelled during periods of heavy rain and storms, or excessive winds. Range location should take advantage of any shelter available without introducing additional risks due to overhanging branches etc.	Dynamic RA to be carried out throughout the activity. Move if required. Tomahawk/Angel handles and throwers hands to be kept dry. Viewing areas to be moved or closed if necessary.
Range Location	All involved	Cuts, bruises, sprains, penetrating injuries, concussion, possibility of major bleeding.	Range location to be inspected for uneven ground, potholes, exposed roots, and unstable or slippery ground. Running is prohibited within and around the range. Areas with overhanging branches, overhead cables or other hazards	Where possible, hazards should be removed, covered, cordoned off or highlighted.

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			encroaching upon the range are to be avoided.	
Unauthorised entry into the activity/danger area	All involved	Cuts, bruises, penetrating injuries, concussion, possibility of major bleeding and death.	Activity area cordoned off when in use ensuring no entry from rear of targets. Waiting area is clearly marked. Area fenced off and group warned of any hazards. Visual checks of area by instructor throughout the session. Clear lines of sight to anyone approaching the range. Layout of range as per Scouts POR (on final page)	Dynamic RA to be carried out throughout the activity. If there are concerns about unauthorised entry or danger to persons outside the range, the range layout must be reconsidered (e.g. reducing the number of targets, relocating).
Retrieval of tomahawks/angels from target/ground	All involved	Cuts, penetrating injuries, concussion, possibility of major bleeding and death.	Correct method of retrieving tomahawks/angels demonstrated and monitored throughout session. Participants should wait until instructed by the activity leader before retrieving the tomahawks/angels. To avoid accidental head or upper body injury when retrieving tomahawks; it is important to remove tomahawks that are embedded into a target before picking up those lying on the floor. Softwood targets allow for easy retrieval from target	Members not observing the proper precautions are to be reminded immediately. Member persistently failing to observe the proper precautions will be asked to leave the throwing area. In cases of multiple participants failing to observe precautions, the activity must be stopped and the safety briefing repeated.

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			Robust target – angled so as to remain upright.	
Improper use	All involved	Cuts, bruises, penetrating injuries, concussion, possibility of major bleeding and death.	Behavioural expectations to be made clear to all members as part of the safety briefing.	Members not using the equipment appropriately will be asked to leave the throwing area. In cases of persistent misuse, the activity must be stopped and the safety briefing repeated.
Overcrowding, disorderly behaviour	All involved	Cuts, bruises, penetrating injuries, concussion, possibility of major bleeding. Crush injuries and asphyxiation in extreme cases.	Maximum group sizes: For 1 or 2 targets operated by 1 instructor: 10. For 3 targets operated by 2 instructors: 15. For 4 targets operated by 2 instructors and 1 range control officer: 20 No more than 4 targets per range. Additional adult supervision for participants in waiting area, and spectators in viewing area as required. Behavioural expectations to be made clear to all members as part of the safety briefing.	Members not behaving appropriately will be asked to leave the throwing area. In cases of persistent misbehaviour or overcrowding, the activity must be stopped and the safety briefing repeated.
Sharp tomahawks/angels	All involved	Cuts, bruises, penetrating injuries, concussion, possibility of major bleeding.	Tomahawks/angels to be transported to and from the range by instructors only. Maintain tomahawks/angels regularly and monitor damage.	Participants deemed to be deliberately throwing too aggressively should be managed appropriately by the activity leader to ensure their own and others safety.

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			Members to be shown the correct method of holding, throwing and retrieving tomahawks/angels from the target. Members warned of potential risk before session begins.	
Rebounding / Ricocheting tomahawks/angels	Throwers and instructor	Cuts, bruises, penetrating injuries, concussion, possibility of major bleeding and death.	Members to wear suitable footwear so the full foot is covered (no flip-flops, crocs, sandals etc.). Full leg trousers are recommended. Throwing line is clearly visible and at a set distance away from target in accordance with current guidelines. Targets are at a set distance apart in accordance with current guidelines. Only participants at throwing line.	Dynamic RA to be carried out throughout the activity. If there are concerns about danger to persons within or outside the range, the range layout must be reconsidered (e.g. reducing the number of targets, relocating).
Clashing tomahawks/angels	Throwers	Cuts, bruises, penetrating injuries, concussion, possibility of major bleeding.	The number of tomahawks/angels thrown at each target in each turn is to be limited to either 4 angels or 1 tomahawk. Sharp burrs may be caused by tomahawks/angels clashing, careful retrieval from targets must be carried out. Instructor should constantly monitor condition of	Equipment damaged during session to be withdrawn from use immediately. If running repairs are possible and safe, these must be carried out before equipment is returned to use. If no spare equipment is available, consider reducing the number of targets in use.

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			tomahawks/angels and replacements sought when needed.	
Splintering Targets / Stands	Throwers and instructor	Cuts, splinters, penetrating injuries.	All equipment to be inspected before set up and at regular intervals. Protective gloves to be worn whilst handling targets.	Targets will inevitably splinter and deteriorate with use. Splinters to be removed and safely disposed of. Targets & stands are to be removed from use immediately if there are concerns about their continued usability.
Collapsing Targets	Throwers and instructor	Cuts, bruises, penetrating injuries, concussion, possibility of major bleeding.	All equipment to be inspected before set up and at regular intervals. Target stands are to be secured to the ground (pegs) to minimised movement.	Targets will inevitably loosen and deteriorate with use. Repairs to be carried out immediately, if possible. Targets & stands are to be removed from use immediately if there are concerns about their continued usability.
All accidents, injuries and near-misses	All involved	See above.	The leader in charge must ensure all participants adhere to the activity rules, understand the safety briefing, and are encouraged to report incidents and near-misses.	Adequate First Aid provision must be available. At least on leader with a current First Aid qualification must be present. An appropriate stocked First Aid kit must be on hand. In case of an incident, the activity must be stopped until the incident has been resolved. All equipment must be secured, especially tomahawks/angels.

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				<p>The throwing area must be cleared of all persons except leaders dealing with the incident and immobile casualties.</p> <p>Dynamic risk assessments are to be carried out after any incident, including near misses.</p>

Tomahawk Throwing Range Layout

