



## **SADDLEBROOKE HIKING CLUB HIKING POLE BASICS**

### **GRIP**

- ❖ Wear gloves with open fingers (biking or climbing gloves)
- ❖ Place hands through the strap from beneath the strap and grip both the strap and pole
- ❖ Strap should be tight enough so that hands fit snug against top of grip

### **LENGTH ADJUSTMENT**

- ❖ Extend lower section to maximum baseline length and leave
- ❖ Adjust only the center section for descents during a hike without removing the poles from wrist
- ❖ Make sure each time a pole length is changed it is tightened sufficiently to avoid collapse!!
- ❖ Use a rubber tip protector??? Purchase at [blackdiamondequipment.com](http://blackdiamondequipment.com) for around \$5/pair
- ❖ How to fix a pole that spins and fails to lock
- ❖ Pole maintenance – wipe down but never lubricate

### **BASELINE POSITION**

- ❖ Grips should be approximately at level of hips below waist
- ❖ Wrist should be in a line with forearm not cocked up

### **CRUISING**

- ❖ Poles lifted slightly off ground and tips near feet
- ❖ Always carry poles with tips facing forward

## **POLING TECHNIQUE**

### **LEVEL TERRAIN – TWO FINGER SWING**

- ❖ Light grip, elbows in to side fingers face forward and poles rotate to touch down lightly in front
- ❖ There is no up and down movement of arms
- ❖ Can alternate or double pole

### **UPHILL TERRAIN – PLANT PUSH**

- ❖ Poles at baseline length or slightly shorter
- ❖ Elbows into side, plant poles beside feet and push up
- ❖ Most of the effort is applied to the wrist straps or palms on top of grip
- ❖ Avoid planting poles ahead of body and pulling up
- ❖ Can double or single pole

### **DOWNHILL TERRAIN – PLANT AND STEP DOWN**

- ❖ Lengthen poles in center section to a length long enough that it is not necessary to bend over radically with the downhill plant - will vary based on steepness
- ❖ Keep poles in front and elbows into side
- ❖ Most of the force should be taken by the straps not the grips themselves
- ❖ Alternately can place palms on tops of poles
- ❖ Can double or single pole
- ❖ Best to bend knees and sit into hill while descending rather than bending radically over – keep nose over toes, plant poles and step down through the poles