

# Safety Boat Helm & Crew: Refresher for Spinnaker Sailing Club

## Before You Arrive:

- Check the weather forecast.
- Wear appropriate kit for the prevailing and forecast conditions, remember the crew of a safety boat should be prepared to enter the water if required.
- Buoyancy aids are preferable to lifejackets which are cumbersome when inflated.
- Helm and crew should be equipped with knife and whistle. In an emergency it may be too late by the time you have got the safety box open.

## Pre-Race Preparation:

- Collect and check the radio. Don't leave it in the bottom of the boat tie it on to yourself in a manner that can be undone easily. Not all radios float!
- Check and tidy the boat and equipment. Coil lines, anchor ready, tubes inflated, plenty of fuel, steering and engine trim operating properly. Prop clear.
- Start Boat, check telltale as engine is started. Check the kill cord works.
- Lay marks etc. as directed by the PRO: Do not drag marks which uproots weed, lift the whole thing including its anchor into the boat, if you pull up any weed keep it in the boat and take it ashore when time allows.
- At start count boats and confirm count with PRO

## During the Race:

- Observe start from ODM and advise PRO if anyone is over
- Once racing commences wait upwind in a position where you can see the whole course.
- Helm and crew should be alert and watching the fleet at all times. If you are motoring through the fleet the helm will be looking forwards, the crew should be watching the boats astern which the helm cannot see.
- Monitor the whole course and fleet. Watch tail enders, less experienced sailors tend to capsize more often. Closely monitor gybe marks. Make sure marks are not dragging.
- Remember even if you are assisting one boat you are still responsible for the rest of the fleet. In the event of multiple capsizes you should assess which sailor is in most need of assistance
- Safety boat helm should give clear direction to the safety boat crew and sailors you are assisting.

## Capsizes:

- In the event of a capsize you should aim to be in attendance within 2 minutes, slow down in good time to avoid your wash making the situation worse and on arrival circle the capsized boat and count heads.
- Offer assistance, this may be declined if sailor is racing, in which case stand by until the sailor has righted the boat got in and has sorted him or herself out.
- Consider conditions including wind direction, proximity to hazards and age of sailor. Older sailors may not be as fit and are more susceptible to cold water shock. Juniors tend to be more susceptible to cold generally as they have less body mass. If you believe the sailor is unfit to continue due to injury or cold you should be assertive and strongly advise or direct them to retire. Sailors retiring under these circumstances should be escorted in if it is safe to do so. Advise PRO by radio of any retirements.
- In the event of an injury get the casualty aboard the safety boat and get them ashore, leave their boat it can be recovered later. Radio PRO to organise assistance ashore. Don't forget to tell any passengers to hold on.

## Further information:

- RYA Safety Boat Handbook G16
- RYA Powerboat Handbook G13