

Safety Boat Guide

For Optimist racing in the RCYC

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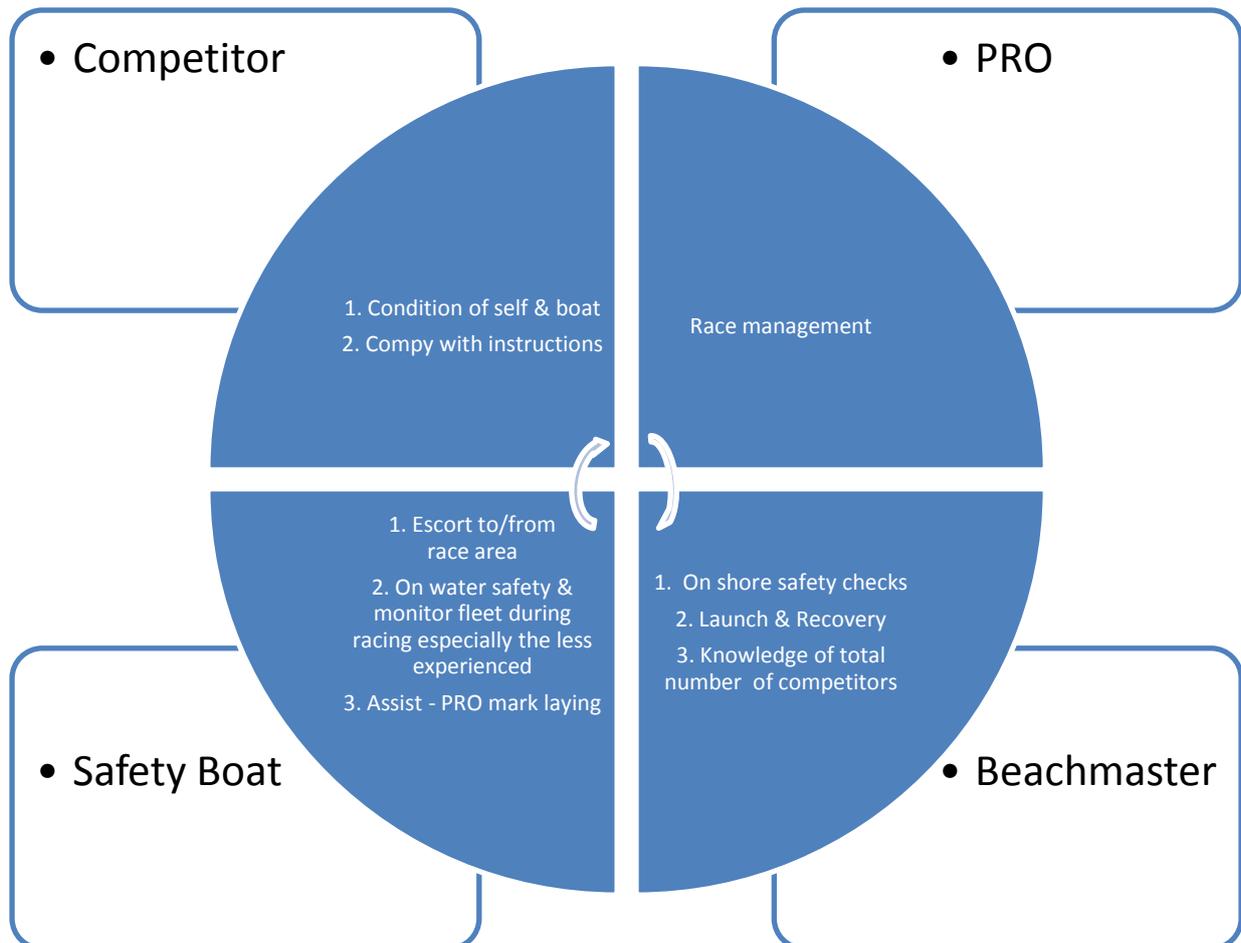
To provide a guide for Safety Boat operations to ensure safe racing and a structured approach and response to any incident that may occur. This guide is not a substitute for using your common sense, if something looks or feels wrong it generally is.

Responsibility:

- The responsibility to ensure the competitor and their craft is in an acceptable condition to participate is the **parent's/guardians and the competitors.**
- The PRO has the overall authority to decide on who will be allowed participate.
- It is the responsibility of the Principal Race Officer (PRO) and the Safety Boat crew to ensure the safety of all competitors from moment of launch to recovery back ashore.
- Overall authority for the race lies with the PRO. Safety Boats are under the direct control of the PRO throughout. Any concerns the Safety Boat crew may have should be voiced to the PRO.

SAFETY IS THE FIRST PRIORITY

Format of responsibilities;



Safety Boat Guide

For Optimist racing in the RCYC

Safety Boat Essential Duties

- ✓ Know that safety is a priority and that under no circumstances should any Optimist be allowed sail to or back from the race area unaccompanied.
- ✓ Know which RIB & what duty you are assigned to
 - See appendix 1
- ✓ Know how & where to sign out the boats and sign back in after use
- ✓ Know communications
 - What VHF channel & other means of communications are available to other safety boats & PRO
 - PRO will detail what VHF Channel to use
- ✓ Know numbers
 - How many competitors have launched (from briefing and PRO information once all launched)
 - Beach-master should inform PRO of numbers
- ✓ Know the chain of responsibility
 - Overall responsibility lies with the PRO, they will co-ordinate the safety boats
- ✓ Know righting arrangement
 - How to right an Optimist from the Safety Boat – see Note 1.
- ✓ Know towing arrangements
 - How to tow individual and multiple Optimists – see Note 2.
- ✓ Know the safety boat & equipment
 - Ensure safety boat is operational and fully equipped as required, see appendix 2 for boat checklist
- ✓ Know not to leave
 - The race area until the PRO gives permission to do so
- ✓ Know how to
 - Safely transport, deploy and recover the appropriate race marks (buoy first followed by the line and then the anchor. Approach from down wind
- ✓ Know what to do during the race
 - Shadow the fleet, encourage the less experienced, be mindful of your speed & wake and do not drive through the fleet
- ✓ Know the effects
 - Sailing can be tiring, being cold and wet will tire a child quicker, in Ireland the water is always cold and there's nearly always a wind chill factor (it's always colder on the water). Being cold and wet means the child may be less capable of helping themselves.

Notes:

Note 1 Capsize

All capsizes should be attended immediately to ascertain the wellbeing of the competitor. Be mindful however of charging in and creating more difficulties with a large wake. Most competitors will be able to deal with the situation and continue racing, capsizing after all is a normal hazard and part of sailing dinghies.

Safety Boat Guide

For Optimist racing in the RCYC

NB: If the boat is inverted (turtle) do not wait to intervene. The time taken for you to arrive alongside should have been plenty of time for the child to clear from under the inverted boat. It is essential when the child is not visible that you ensure they are not trapped under the hull, this may mean righting the boat or as a last resort a Safety boat crew member entering the water.

The priority is life not property!

Keep the following to mind. A person can survive;

- 3 weeks without food
- 3 days without water
- 3 minutes without air

If the child is seen in a position of safety after capsize ascertain if they are ok to continue racing. Standby until the boat is upright and they are making progress again. Monitor them thereafter being mindful that righting a boat is energy sapping. If they do not wish to continue inform the PRO and bring them to the start/finish boat. If there is a support boat nearby that can assist it may be better that they bring the competitor and boat to the start/finish boat so you can resume Safety Boat activities. When attending a capsize try best to avoid impeding other competitors.

Particular attention should be paid to in-experienced sailors who may not have the experience, ability or strength to right the boat unaided.

If you do need to assist remember;

- ✓ Approach nose in and from a downwind position, this keeps the **prop furthest away** and prevents you from being blown onto the Optimist.
- ✓ Be mindful of any line trailing in the water
- ✓ Ensure the engine is in neutral and when possible turned off
- ✓ If possible get the sailor to right the boat so it is on its side
- ✓ Take the sailor into the Rib
- ✓ Remove the dagger board and lift the Optimist onto the buoyancy chamber, this drains out most of the water. Lower it back into the water, put the dagger board back in and let the sailor re-board the boat if they wish to do so.

For those not familiar with Optimists the following may be of assistance;

1. Removing the sprit depowers the sail quickly, this is the pole that runs from the mast to the top of the sail and is held in place by a jamming cleat low down on the front of the mast
2. One of the main parts that a sailor can get entangled in would be the main sheet. This is attached to the boom via a quick release shackle.

Safety Boat Guide

For Optimist racing in the RCYC

Note 2 Towing

Individual towing should only be to the Committee boat or an appropriate support boat unless decreed otherwise by the PRO.

Multiple towing of boats. Should this be required, say for example after racing is finished it should be carried out using the 'daisy chain' method. The following should be carried out before commencing towing;

- ✓ Check all boats have their tow rope rigged correctly, i.e. tied at the base of the mast on to the step. The other end should have bowline (loop) and NO knots elsewhere. The length of the painter should be 8meters.
- ✓ Once above is ok then take the painter from the first boat, the painter of the next boat is passed through the eye at the end of the first boats painter and so on and so forth until all boats are linked (daisy chain) attached the final painter to the Safety boat.
- ✓ Ensure their main sheet is unclipped.
- ✓ Ensure the dagger board is raised
- ✓ Ensure the competitor mans the tiller and sits aft (unless you decide their condition warrants their removal from the boat).
- ✓ If the competitor is not in the boat remove the dagger board and put the rudder into the dagger board slot.
- ✓ On short tows the competitor would be advised to keep some pressure on the main sheet to prevent the sail from flogging too much, flogging will quickly ruin a good sail.
- ✓ On a longer tow it may be best to remove the sail and roll it loosely in the boat, the main sheet can be used as a lashing. Remember the mast clamp.
- ✓ Be mindful of your speed and course, remember those behind you

Emergency situations

IODAI define an emergency as one being where the competitor has been injured, becomes sick, suffers water inhalation or hypothermia to such an extent that medical attention is required. In essence it can be defined as any situation where the PRO or Safety Boat crew feel outside assistance is required. The PRO will be the one charged with deciding on the severity of any situation and co-ordinating the Safety Boats and any support boats as required. Any concerns the Safety boat crew have should be voiced to the PRO, remember Safety Boats are generally closer to the action and may at times see more than the PRO.

Hazardous situations

Higher than expected or sudden squalls

This can occasionally happen from time to time. However most Optimist club racing is held in sheltered waters where the conditions and forecasts are generally reasonably accurately known prior to launch. It will be the decision of the PRO whether to abandon racing or stand down certain fleets. This decision must also be based on the availability of safety cover. If several competitors are in trouble remember the priority is life, abandoned boats should be marked accordingly and can be picked up at a later stage.

Safety Boat Guide

For Optimist racing in the RCYC

Reduced visibility

An occasional occurrence in Cork harbour. Competitors should be informed prior to launch that the procedure would be to buddy up with whatever boats are near them and stop sailing if they can no longer see the Safety Boats. They can use their whistles to attract attention. The decision on abandoning a race will come from the PRO. The Safety boats must endeavour to pick up as many boats as possible and report back to the PRO with the numbers so that a tally can be made.

Briefing with PRO (prior to launch)

A short briefing with the PRO should be held prior to launch, it should cover at least the following;

- ✓ Race area
- ✓ VHF Channel
- ✓ Who has what specific task i.e. who is Boat 1 / 2 / 3 etc.
- ✓ The number of possible competitors, this to be confirmed by Beach-master once all have launched
- ✓ Weather forecast and state of tide

Competence & Qualification

The Club requires that all Safety Boat operators have as a minimum an ISA Level 2 Powerboat (this is a Club insurance requirement. However just because you have a qualification does not make you a competent RIB driver, competence comes with experience, experience comes from learning from others and practice.

Remember;

- ✓ There are no guards on the prop – it's a sharp blade travelling at speed! KEEP IT AWAY FROM EVERYTHING!
- ✓ The power of the engine and the damage the boat can do to itself or something else
- ✓ To have the engine in neutral and when possible switched off when involved in recovery of persons from the water
- ✓ To have the kill cord correctly attached
- ✓ To minimise your wake at all times
- ✓ To endeavour to stay on the outside of boats racing, not running in between them, unless attending an incident.
- ✓ To be prepared to possibly have one boat member enter the water, in exceptional circumstances.
- ✓ Boats don't have brakes, slow down well in advance

Safety Boat Guide

For Optimist racing in the RCYC

Appendix 1 Safety Boat – What RIB What Duty.

Safety 1	Safety 2	Safety 3
Check your boat, it's equipment & your crew	Check your boat, it's equipment & your crew	Check your boat, it's equipment & your crew
1st on course & covers front part of fleet to / from race area	Escort middle part of fleet to / from race area & assist RIB 3 if required	Escort back of fleet to / from race area. Ensures ALL competitors arrive at race area
Bring 3 Truning marks to/from race area & lays marks as per PRO instructions	Bring Pin end mark to/from race area & lays same as per PRO instructions	No specific mark duty
Monitor all competitors during race and assist as required or as directed by PRO	Monitor all competitors during race and assist as required or as directed by PRO	Monitor less experienced sailors & assist as required or as directed by PRO

• Additional Safety Boat

PRO to decide on specific role appropriate to the circumstances and conditions

Safety Boat Guide

For Optimist racing in the RCYC

Appendix 2 Safety Boat Equipment

Sign the boats out before use and in after use. Safety boats are provided and looked after by the Club but they are your responsibility for the duration of your use, leave them in the condition you found them, clean, tidy and ready for use. Ensure all equipment is where you found it, this includes all marks, these should be removed from the boats these should be stowed where you got them and not left lying around on the floating pontoon. The following checklist should be used to assist in ensuring the necessary equipment is available for use.

Personnel

- ✓ 2 per boat, at least one must hold a ISA Level 2 Powerboat qualification, which is also a Club insurance requirement. Ideally the 2nd person should also have the same qualification or be progressing towards the same qualification. They must also be familiar with these guidelines and should be briefed by the helmsperson of the Safety boat.
- ✓ Lead by example – wear the appropriate clothing and lifejacket – correctly donned

Boat equipment

- ✓ VHF Radio – part of the RIB's permanent features
- ✓ 1 x anchors & warps
- ✓ Fire extinguisher
- ✓ Warp – 10metres
- ✓ Paddles
- ✓ First aid kit

The following is also advisable;

- ✓ Chinagraph marker or some means of marking the hull of an abandoned boat in the case of an emergency
- ✓ A good sailing knife on a lanyard and easily accessible

If equipment is missing or if damage is noted please inform the PRO. Similarly on returning the boat if there were any problems or damage done notify the PRO and Racing & Marina Co-Ordinator (Mark Ring).