

Safety Briefing

1. Navigation Lights for April/September Wednesday Evenings

Competitors are reminded that the Wednesday evening races may finish in fading visibility, so navigation lights may be required while returning to their moorings.

Yachts under 7m are strongly recommended to carry a suitable torch, so that they can show a white light.

2. Safety Incidents

Following a man overboard incident during a Wednesday race, the Racing Committee have issued this briefing.

- a) Competitors are reminded that rescue boats are not provided, therefore it is a condition of racing that all RDYC yachts shall carry a VHF radio and a means of returning to the river (i.e. an engine or support boat).
- b) It is the responsibility of each yacht to ensure that crew are able to use key safety equipment (e.g. the VHF radio).
- c) In the first instance, a yacht shall try to rectify a minor safety incident itself, without recourse to external help.
- d) If the safety incident cannot be rectified immediately by the yacht itself, **and always in the event of a man overboard**, the yacht shall call for help, e.g. by radio Channel 37a.
- e) All competitors are bound to render assistance on receipt of such a call.
- f) If the victim yacht decides that help from another yacht is unlikely to rectify the situation, or help is not forthcoming, then the yacht shall escalate the situation by calling the Coastguard on Channel 16. A MAYDAY should be used if there is imminent danger to life. A Pan-Pan (urgency) call is appropriate to inform the coastguard of the problem and what you are doing about it, and will speed the response if you later issue a MAYDAY.
In the event of a serious injury, it is strongly recommended that the Coastguard is called so that medical help can be coordinated as swiftly as possible.
- g) If a Committee Boat is present, then the Race Officer may attempt to coordinate rescue by competing yachts. It is recommended that this is restricted to making the closest yachts aware of the incident on Channel 37. Using the Committee Boat itself in the rescue is unlikely to be effective unless the incident happens close to the CB.
- h) Normally, the Committee Boat can continue to run the race. Redress will be given to any competitors involved in a rescue. In the event of a major incident, the race should be abandoned.

Examples of Safety Incidents

- a) **Man Overboard 1**
Squib loses crew overboard. Helmsman turns around and recovers crew without incident.
No call for help required.
- b) **Man Overboard 2**
Squib loses helmsman overboard; crew unable to sail the boat back to pick him up.
Crew puts out call on 37 to all yachts.
Nearest yacht returns and picks up casualty.
Yacht puts a man on the Squib to sail it home, or assist in towing.
- c) **Dismasting**
Yacht dismasted. Call on 37 even if it appears not needed as dismasting should be clearly visible to others.
Nearest yachts render assistance.
Casualty towed home if engine disabled.
- d) **Serious Head Injury on Squib**
The priority here is to get the casualty ashore as soon as possible. Transfer to a faster vessel is desirable, so a call on 37 for help is a sensible first step.
A call on 16 to the Coastguard is recommended so that they can coordinate with an ambulance.

If the casualty has been transferred to one of the larger cruisers, the cruiser is likely to get ashore before the lifeboat can attend. Unless instructed otherwise, the best access to the shore/ambulance is the inner visitors' pontoon at Darthaven. The Harbour Master has a reserved space here which is kept vacant. As an alternative, the Town Jetty can be used. DHNA river officers are on duty (until 2300 between May and September) and can be contacted on Channel 11 to help with berthing.