

DOWNNS SAILING CLUB

SAFETY BOAT DUTY SUMMARY (created April 2014 by John Cass and updated April 2022)

The average Club Member normally only gets to do a few Safety Boat duties in a season; therefore, it is hoped that this pre-season update will be useful. (N.B. It is recommended that all Club members attend an RYA Powerboat Course).

The following is a list of things to do when you turn up for your duty approximately 1 hour before the race start time:

1. Collect keys and switch on power to winches. Open the boathouse and petrol store. Select the appropriate petrol can and top up if necessary, ensuring funnel is clean. NB. All three main boats use common fuel cans.
2. If using Grey Lady, check the oil tank under the hood and if required, top up with Etec 2 stroke oil only.
3. Fit and secure fuel can to the boat and open the air vent.
4. Ensure boat is secured to sledge using bow and stern "D rings", (never the rubber handles) Use the winch and snatch block to pull boat out of boathouse.
5. Follow checklist (located on steering console) to run the engine on test. Check that the kill cord stops the engine.
6. Follow equipment checklist (located on steering console) to check boat equipment.
7. Attend the course setting meeting with the Race Officer and Sailing Committee then load boat with the appropriate race marks.
8. Winch the boat to the head of the beach using the snatch block then call for assistance to get the boat down to the launching position either before or after getting changed.
9. Carry out a radio check with the Race Officer on the Bridge.
10. Aim to be on the water at least 20 minutes before the advertised start time of the race. (Don't be shy, shout for help with launching) *Check the Boat is untied from the Sledge just prior to launch.*

On the water:

1. **The ignition kill cord must be used, it's there for your safety. The driver should fasten it around his or her leg.**
2. **Communicate clearly with your crew, particularly when accelerating or manoeuvring.**
3. Lay marks as directed by the Race Officer. Best technique to avoid tangles is to launch the buoy first then motor slowly forward against wind or tide whichever is strongest whilst paying out the warp, throwing the anchor over last.
4. Position your boat during the race near the centre of the course or coordinate with other Safety boats. keep a regular count of the number of boats on the water and check this number with the race officer after the start when he is not busy.
5. Monitor the weather and inform the race officer of any significant changes.

6. Most capsizes or incidents are sorted out without the aid of the safety boat, however, if you see a boat capsize or in difficulties, motor over and check crew are okay and do not require assistance.
7. **If there are any serious injuries on the water, particularly of a spinal nature do not hesitate to call the Lifeboat out. This should be done via the Race Officer who may also need to call an ambulance.**
8. If the crew are taken from a boat and the boat is abandoned, attach a "Crew Safe Buoy".
9. At the end of the race obtain permission from the Race Officer before lifting any marks.
10. When all sailing boats are ashore call for a beach party for the Safety boat.
11. NB. The Beach Party should position the sledge above the water line placing the yellow skids between the sledge and water's edge.
12. To minimise risk of propeller damage, partially tilt the engine before making your final run in. Approach the beach at a steady pace, stopping the engine just before hitting the beach and tilting up fully.
13. Hand the Bow line to the beach recovery crew (Do not throw the line)
14. Secure the boat to the sledge using the "D Rings" at the bow and stern.
15. Avoid standing behind the boat whilst winching up the beach in case of wire or rope failure.
16. Run the engine through with fresh water for as long as possible but at least 5 mins and wash down externally.
17. After the boat is stowed in the boathouse, tilt the engine down to drain any water.
18. Isolate the battery using the switch on the side of the console.
19. Open all hatches to allow wiring etc to breath.
20. Tidy all marks and tackle ready for the next event. (Anchor to bottom of bucket).
21. If you use "Downs Red", ensure that the fixed radio is switched off and washed down. Ensure all portable radios are switched off, rinsed off, dried, and put on charge in the lounge cupboard.
22. Report any defects or deficiencies to a member of the Sailing Committee.

If the engine fails:

1. **Inform the Race Officer immediately.**
2. Consider deploying the anchor to prevent drifting
3. Check instrument panel for alarms.
4. Check fuel tank quantity, that air vent is open and fuel line connected fully.
5. Check fuel lines are not kinked, or gear stowed on top.
6. Try pumping up fuel using the bulb before attempting to re-start.
7. Check oil levels. (Oil sump on Red and Ladybird, oil tank on Grey.
8. Check cooling water inlet is clear if high temperature is indicated.