



TO: FWSA Member Clubs
FROM: Lynne Randall, FWSA VP
DATE: September 2, 2021
RE: Interclub Racing Safety

In an effort to ensure a safe and enjoyable sailing experience, the following guidelines will be used when we are racing in a FWSA sponsored Interclub. Guidelines are minimum requirements and do not preclude the Interclub Chairperson, Principal Race Official (PRO), or Club Captain from requiring more stringent standards.

- 1) There must be a least one safety boat dedicated to the race course. The safety boat may be the mark boat (if there is a shortage of boats) but it cannot be the signal boat. If the safety boat is being used to set marks, then safety takes precedence over setting marks. There must be voice communication by VHF radio or cell phone between the signal boat and the safety boat(s). The person operating the safety boat should know how to retrieve sailors and recover and tow boats. There should also be a cell phone on the safety boat in case of an emergency. Everyone on the safety boat should know, review, and follow emergency procedures. Crew should know where to take and unload injured persons and an address for the dispatch of emergency vehicles.
- 2) The safety boat should carry the following items:
 - a. Large Towel
 - b. Thermal Blanket (seasonal)
 - c. First Aid Kit
 - d. Whistle/Horn
 - e. Boat Hook
 - f. Extra Bow Line for towing
 - g. Radio and Cell Phone
 - h. Water
 - i. Boat Ladder if there is not one fixed on the boat
 - j. Portable bilge pump if prams and/or other non-self bailing boats are sailing.

- 3) There should be a safety briefing at the skippers' meeting about safety procedures. Competitors should have a bowline on their boat and a whistle. They also must be wearing a PFD. They should know what the safety boat looks like, who is operating it, and what they should do if they need help.
- 4) Occasionally, we deal with water temperatures and wind speeds that prevent us from sailing. Racing is questionable when:
 - a. The water and air temperatures (combined) fall below 120 degrees.
 - b. The sustained wind speed is at less than 4 mph across the race area.
 - c. The sustained wind speed is more than 17mph across the race area.
- 5) When weather conditions are marginal and the question is "to sail or not to sail?" the following can be used to assist making a decision:
 - a. Check apps such as Sail Flow, Wind finder, and local weather for current conditions.
 - b. Send a motorboat out to assess the course conditions, such as wind velocities, directions, and gusts.
 - c. Wait to see if the conditions improve before sending everyone out (consider a harbor start) or start training on shore.
 - d. Consider experience levels of the sailors and race committee. The Club Captain and PRO make the final decision whether or not to race but the final responsibility to participate is up to the individual competitor (Racing Rules of Sailing; RRS4).

Safety is everyone's responsibility. If you see an unsafe act, then correct it and/or report it to the club leadership. The goal is to have a safe and fun Interclub experience every time we meet. Any questions related to this memorandum should be addressed to the FWSA VP.