Man Overboard!

Be Prepared, It could happen to you....
Pro Bowman Jamie Boeckel
Lost overboard/drowned 2002 STC Around Block Island Race
Preventive Measures..

Be Prepared!

- Boat
- Crew
- Equipment
- Procedures
First line of defense is to stay on the boat!

Know Your Boat’s Features...

- Deck Layout – risky zones
- Hand holds (on deck and around companionway)
- Lifelines and pulpits
- Hard points to clip onto (thru-bolted pad eyes, stanchion bases, etc.)
- Toe rails
- Handling characteristics in various wind/sea states and sail configurations
Know Your Crew..

• Individual skills and experience?
• Familiarity with each other?
• Physical/mental condition?
• Personal safety equipment
  - Is it the right stuff
  - Are they familiar with operation?
    (PFD, harness/tether, light, whistle, personal locator beacon)
• Familiarity and practice with the boat radio operations, and onboard COB recovery equipment?
Know Your Equipment..

- Deployable gear - M.O.M., horseshoe w/ drogue, DAN buoy, light, anything substantial that floats such as seat cushions
- MOB position save function of GPS (on deck and below)
- DSC Distress function on VHF
- AIS Personal Locator Beacon
- LIFESLING
- Heaving line
- Hoisting block and tackle, and other hardware
- Boarding ladder, swim platform
COB Recovery Equipment

- **M.O.M.** (man overboard module)
- **AIS Personal Locator Beacon** plus Onboard AIS Receiver/Chart Plotter
- **Hoisting rig for LIFESLING**
- **Galerider Drogue** can be used for victim retrieval
- **Heaving Line**

**LIFESLING**
Brief and practice your procedures..

- Best helmsperson (train multiple)
- AIS beacon use & plotter/VHF issues
- Recovery maneuver options?
- Assignments/responsibilities
**Procedures Common for All COB Scenarios:**

- Hail “Man Overboard” loud enough so entire crew (as well as any boats nearby) are made aware
- Deploy flotation and other floating/visible aids towards victim
- Designate spotter (get at least one permanent set of eyes on victim to serve as guidance for helm)
- Activate MOB function on GPS (operator should augment spotter info with range/bearing updates as requested)
- Get boat slowed, into a maneuverable state and aimed back in the direction of victim ASAP
- Start engine (keep in neutral until *absolutely* assured all lines are clear of the water)
Additional Procedures Common for All Situations

• Consider putting most experienced driver on the helm
• Ensure all remaining crew are not placed in unnecessary danger
• Helm/skipper communicates approach and recovery plans to crew with revisions as needed
• If feasible, make a “pan pan” or “Mayday” VHF broadcast advising area traffic of situation
• Contact Coast Guard (as dictated by situation)
Considerations for Choosing Recovery Method

- Wind and sea conditions
- Would a quickly executed jibe jeopardize boat or crew?
- Can boat be borne away without significant ease of mainsheet?
- Present point of sail
- Present sail/rigging configuration
- Number of crew immediately available
- Proximity to hazards (shoal water, traffic)
Navy Offshore Sailing

Quick Stop Recovery

1. Man Overboard!!

2. Immediately head up to initiate a tack, trim sheets hard if possible

3. Tack without releasing jib sheet (jib will go aback)

4. Allow speed to bleed off by holding a close winded angle

5. Head down to deep broad reach without easing sails

6. Once deep wind angle is reached, lower or furl jib

7. Jibe and continue on broad reach until approach angle to victim is approximately 60 degrees relative to true wind direction

8. Turn up towards victim, reduce/ control speed with mainsail trim, use motor assist with caution as required

9. Bring boat alongside victim then stop forward way

Note: Always ensure all rigging is clear of water before engaging propeller!!
**Varsity Offshore Sailing Team**

**Navy Offshore Sailing**

**Fast Return (figure 8) Recovery**

1. **Man Overboard!!**

2. Immediately head down to a deep broad reach

3. Continue until angle to victim is approximately 30 degrees relative to the true wind

4. Sharply tack the boat with a backed jib and continue turning until aimed well to leeward of victim

5. Continue heading down to broad reach then lower or furl the jib

6. Once angle to victim is approximately 60 degrees relative to the true wind, turn towards them and control speed with mainsail trim and motor as required

7. Bring boat alongside victim then stop forward way
Fast Return (figure 8) Recovery for High Performance Boats

1. Man Overboard!!

2. Immediately tack with a backed jib and continue turning down to deep broad reach.

3. Once deep wind angle is reached, lower or furl jib.

4. Continue until angle to victim is approximately 30 degrees relative to the true wind.

5. Sharply tack the boat and continue turning until aimed well to leeward of victim.

6. Once angle to victim is approximately 60 degrees relative to the true wind, turn towards them and control speed with mainsail trim and motor as required.
1. Man Overboard!!

2. Crew prepare to release spin halyard, advise to helm “ready on spin halyard”

3. Helm heads up sharply, in a continuous turn

4. Spin halyard is run on helmsman call, usually when turn up is initiated, do not release guy/tack

5. Helm tacks boat as crew gathers spin on old lee rail

6. Approach victim on close reach, lower spin pole to improve visibility

7. Bring boat alongside victim controlling speed with main trim and motor as required

Note: Always ensure all rigging is clear of water before engaging propeller!!
Varsity Offshore Sailing Team

Lifesling Recovery Method

1. Man Overboard!!

2. Immediately head up to initiate a tack, trim sheets hard if possible

3. Tack without releasing jib sheet (jib will go aback), deploy Lifesling

4. Head down to deep broad reach without easing sails

5. Jibe and continue on broad reach until approach angle to victim is approximately 80 degrees relative to true wind direction

6. Turn up towards victim, passing just to leeward of them to bring Lifesling pennant into contact with them

7. Once victim has pennant in hand, tack with backed jib, slow boat to heave to position

8. Drop sails, haul victim to boat using pennant. Keep boat stopped!! Execute recovery
Getting Victim Back Onboard

1. Decide on which side to approach (to windward or leeward of victim)
2. Establish positive contact/attachment with victim (throw rope, sheet tail etc.)
3. Stop the boat once in contact and don’t allow it to bear away from wind (generally full windward rudder)
4. Decide on method to bring them aboard
   - Stern platform
   - Swim ladder
   - Lifesling with halyard hoist or block and tackle rig
   - “Elevator” rig using jib sheet or other rigging
   - Use of a sail or drogue in event of incapacitation
5. Do they need assistance in the water (think hard before jeopardizing another crew member)
6. Prepare to provide first aid for injury/hypothermia
Summary

Stay on the boat! (or at least attached to it..)

Become intimately familiar with your boat’s handling characteristics

Know capabilities of your crew and monitor their physical condition

Learn proper function and use of all onboard rescue equipment. PRACTICE WITH IT!

Determine best maneuvering techniques for your boat in various conditions through practice

Practice in all conditions and configurations that you may encounter

A crew overboard is a for real life-threatening situation...