



GSC Shore Master Guidance & Launch & Recovery in a Swell

This document includes guidance for Junior Sunday Sailing and Junior events.

Those assisting in Race Management, who are not Club members, are Temporary Members for the day.

1. In advance of arrival at Club the Shoremaster should:

1.1 Check weather forecast and tide times on the morning of your duty:

www.met.ie ; www.windguru.cz ; www.sailing.ie/tides/dublin

1.2 Go to the slipway to assess:

- swell in harbour and
- breaking waves on slip and beach
- condition of slipway (weed) if the tide will be low at launch/recovery time.

2. Shoremaster should be familiar with the Safety on the Water - Race Officer Procedure (www.gsc.ie)

2.1. The Shoremaster must assist the Principal Race Officer (PRO) and Safety Crews in the implementation of the Club's Safety Procedure during a water-based activity.

2.2. At all times, all **Race officials, Senior Instructors, Session Leaders including shoremasters** will adhere to the following order of priorities:

- Safety of the race officials themselves – **do not risk injury**
- Safety of persons being assisted
- Safety of other participating crews
- Prevention of further damage to disabled or other boats
- Recovery of disabled or capsized boat

3. At the Club

3.1. Arrive at the club at least **an hour and a half** before first warning signal to ensure plenty of time to gather equipment and attend the pre-launch brief of the safety crews.

3.2. **PRO will brief safety boat team**, role clarity is key and some may be inexperienced:

- Advise PRO of launch conditions:
 - Swimmers, anglers on pier and other harbour users
 - Slipway
 - wind direction may dictate use of public slipway rather than Club slipway (eg a Northerly breeze makes recovery at the Club Slipway difficult)
- The Shoremaster should identify the RIB covering launch and recovery in the harbour and discuss concerns with reference to weather, sea state and sailors.
- Ask safety team to convey any concerns they may have re sailors, equipment, weather etc.
- Identify sailors who may be advised to reef their sails or stay ashore



- **EXPRESS concern** if you are uncomfortable in any way and reserve your right to withdraw your offer of assistance.

3.3. Before you leave the Clubhouse, ensure you have:

- a working VHF radio in an aqua Pac tied to your buoyancy aid to avoid loss
- the shoremaster kit which includes:
 - knife in case of emergency
 - clipboard
 - pencil & sharpener
 - thermal blanket
 - sunscreen
 - Junior Parents' contact details
 - Brief outline how to use & communicate with VHF radio
 - These instructions

All of the above must be returned to the race office, and radios replaced in chargers after racing.

4. Dress warmly and appropriately as for dinghy sailing to include buoyancy aid. You will get wet assisting launching and recovery effectively and even on warm days you may feel cold sitting inactively while racing is underway.

5. At the Harbour

- 5.1. Ensure sailors are dressed appropriately to include Kag, buoyancy aid and booties. A wetsuit is mandatory. Hats and sunscreen are advisable: in spring the water is very cold, in summer the UV rays and reflection from the water can cause skin damage.
- 5.2. Dinghies should be turned head to wind for rigging
- 5.3. Rudders should be attached to the transom (and tied on for Picos) before the mainsail is hoisted and before the boat is put in the water.
- 5.4. Check bungs and painters on each boat.
- 5.5. If the exposed area of the slip is covered in weed, to avoid injury, launch/recover from the beach.
- 5.6. Attend launch of dinghies at the slip and on the beach.
- 5.7. An offshore wind will become considerably stronger further from the shore, encourage the sailors to be aware of their limitations.
- 5.8. **ABOVE ALL** Ensure all sailors happy to go afloat before leaving the beach and harbour. Congratulate wisdom where consideration of limitations results in staying ashore.
- 5.9. The Shoremaster should only allow sailors to launch with permission from the PRO and Safety Crews.



6. A swell may occur if there is, or has been, a North Easterly breeze. The apparently mild effect in the harbour is exacerbated in shallow water on the slip/beach with breaking waves that can cause damage and injury.

6.1. If there is a swell in the harbour or an **onshore breeze**, consideration should be given as to **whether the sailors are sufficiently wind aware** to go afloat **and recover their dinghy after the on the water session.**

6.2. The dinghy may be pushed back towards the shore by an onshore wind or waves. Plan to sail close hauled as soon as possible leaving the shore.

6.3. Discussion re recovery (i.e. returning to shore) in a swell/onshore breeze **before launch** is necessary as it can prove difficult and may require dropping/reefing a sail before recovery.

6.4. If there is a swell in the harbour launch and recover from **THE BEACH**

6.5. Choose a launch/recovery area that is most sheltered from wind and waves

7. Launch

7.1. Kicker should be on **loosely** to avoid a gust causing capsize

7.2. Ensure all rigging is clear to run free and tiller is clear of traveller and mainsheet

7.3. The dinghy should enter the water **head to wind**

7.4. A sailor should stand steadily in the water and hold the boat head to wind **at the bow**, with hand on painter or forestay while the trolley is removed and parked up the beach or on the very edge of the slip taking care not to obstruct other harbour users.

7.5. Respect the elements:

- **No attempt** should be made to hold the boat against the movement of the sea except at the bow where it is free to swing.
- **Do not stand** between the boat and the shore as the boat may be pushed back by waves in an onshore wind.
- **Beware** of the boat being turned side-on to the waves and rolled onto its side when launching returning to shore.
- Ensure the sailor at the bow **is well within his/her depth** in a swell to avoid being lifted off their feet and losing control.

7.6. Before launch remind less experienced sailors:

- about wind direction, point of sailing and necessity to tack/gybe to get through harbour mouth
- to go directly to the race area and not to wander from it during the session



7.7. Where necessary hold the bow head to wind while the sailors enter the boat, drop the rudder and dagger board as far as practicable.

8. Transit across Harbour

- 8.1. **Alert Harbour Safety Boat** to assist/guide where necessary or issues develop
- 8.2. Assess traffic in the harbour with reference to ability of the sailors.
- 8.3. Periodically confirm with the Assistant Race Officer how many boats have left the harbour and how many are waiting to launch.

9. Safety Issues

- 9.1 The Race Officer may postpone, abandon or cancel racing if weather conditions deteriorate, where conditions in the harbour make launch and recovery difficult or where Safety Cover is deemed insufficient.
- 9.2 Ensure appropriate assistance is given to inexperienced sailors, even if refused, to avoid an incident developing. The Race Officer or Safety boat crew may direct a boat to go ashore if concerned for the safety of the crew or if it is tying up a safety boat for a disproportionate time.
- 9.3 All race officials will record all incidents in the Incident Book including incidents where members were advised / ordered not to go afloat or to return ashore.

10. After Racing

- 10.1 As boats finish racing and return towards the harbour area, the Race Officer should inform the Shoremaster and again instruct a safety boat to standby near or in the harbour to oversee recovery.
- 10.2 Safety Boat crews and Shoremasters should remind less experienced sailors how to approach the shore in prevailing conditions:

Helm and crew should plan and discuss approach:

- prepare to raise the centerboard and rudder blade gradually as late as possible
 - depending on wind direction, strength and waves, the helm turns the boat into the wind, this can be in shallow water with an off shore breeze but in deeper water with an on shore breeze
 - the crew disembarks on the **windward** side and holds the bow head to wind while the helm drops the sails.
 - If there is a strong on shore breeze or waves, it may be preferable to **drop mainsail before** approaching the shore to ensure greater control.
 - Get the dinghy out of the water as soon as practicable.
- 10.3 Safety boats should remain on the water until **all** dinghies are ashore or have been notified that safety cover is ending and the dinghies have clearly signaled their intention to stay on the water without Safety cover.
 - 10.4 If a trolley remains in the harbour, notify the PRO and Safety Crews immediately to ascertain the whereabouts and identification of the sailors. The sign out book will also assist here if an answer is not immediately apparent.



Greystones
Sailing Club

Familiarisation with all GSC policies is advisable including Children in Sport and Race Officer & Safety Crew instructions.