The Osprey Class
Round the Isle of Wight Race 2023

LYMINGTON TOWN SAILING CLUB

23rd or 24th September 2023

RISK ASSESSMENT



Introduction

The Osprey Class Association are planning an Osprey race anticlockwise around the Isle of Wight. This race will be held on either Saturday 23rd September or Sunday 24th September 2023 and will start and finish in the Solent off the entrance to Lymington River.

This document records the safety related planning and decisions that have been made by the race organisers.

Risks to competitors and the race management team have been discussed and assessed by the race organisers leading to decisions on minimum equipment, support boat cover and race management as noted under each section.

Risk Assessment introduction

In accordance with good health and safety principles, the organisers have carried out a number of risk assessments. Each risk has been assessed according to its likelihood and its consequence. Judgements have been made with the experience gained by successfully participating in many long-distance races over previous years. Likelihood and consequence have been individually assessed on a scale of ONE to THREE. ONE being the least hazard and THREE being the most hazard. These assessments have then been multiplied together to give an overall hazard rating of between ONE and NINE. Mitigation measures have been taken for each of the hazards identified and reference steps taken within the various sections of the safety plan.

Risk Assessments

Hazard	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Measures
Hypothermia	1	3	3	All competitors and safety crews to wear correct clothing – see paragraph on Hypothermia
Drowning	1	3	3	All competitors and safety crews to wear suitable buoyancy aids or life-jackets – see paragraph on Drowning
Dehydration	1	2	2	All competitors and safety crews to carry adequate water – see Appendix for Patrol Boats and Competitors
Collision with other vessels	1	3	3	All competitors and safety crews to observe all “Moving Prohibited Zones” around naval and commercial vessels – also see Appendix on avoiding collisions at sea.
Equipment Failure	1	2	2	All competitors and safety crews are responsible for the condition and fitness of their boats – see paragraph on Responsibility of Osprey crews and relevant equipment lists.
Getting Lost Poor Navigation	2	1	2	Organisers to count competitors through gates – see paragraph on Long Distance Races
Tiredness Exhaustion	2	1	2	Competitors and safety crews advised to get good sleep before the event.
Missing Craft	1	3	3	All competitors will be required to “*Sign Out*” and will be issued with a GPS tracker which will be monitored during the race.
Loss of Communication	1	1	1	All competitors to carry a mobile phone and VHF. Organisers will communicate with marine VHF and mobile phones – see paragraph on Communication

Insurance

It is a requirement of entry that each competing boat must be in possession of a third-party liability insurance policy having a minimum insured value of £2 million. Support boats will be required to have their own insurance policies in place to cover public liability, their own craft and occupants.

Timing of the Race

The Round the Island race is scheduled to take place on either Saturday 23rd September or Sunday 24th September 2023.

The course around the Isle of Wight (IoW) is from the vicinity of the entrance to Lymington River towards the Needles to St. Catherines, on to Bembridge and returning past Cowes to Lymington. The race start line will be in the area of the Jack in the Basket and will be marked with appropriate temporary buoys or will use existing permanent buoys and will be notified to competitors during the race briefing along with details of the finish line.

The race is scheduled to start at approximately 07:00 and the intent is for all competitors to complete the course in eight to twelve hours so that the race can be completed well within daylight hours. The date and timing of the race have been chosen so that competitors benefit from the tidal flows assisting the direction of the course.

Preparation

All competitors and race organisers will be notified of the existence of this document as a source of safety related information and it will also be posted on the Osprey Sailing website, www.ospreysailing.org.uk. In addition to this document there will be a safety briefing for all race officials, volunteers and support boat crews. A race briefing for all competitors will be held at 8pm on Friday 22nd September at the LTSC clubhouse. Attendance at this briefing is mandatory as a condition of entry. Prior to going afloat all helmsmen, race officials and volunteers will be issued with a GPS tracker and safety related race data such as: a schematic of the Isle of Wight with the course and tidal information and the race organisers' emergency contact phone numbers.

Those competing may be required to pass through control gates, to be confirmed at briefing. The Needles Lighthouse and Bembridge Ledge buoy are both marks of the course, which must be left to port thus reducing hazards from cutting corners.

General

The progress of Osprey dinghies will be monitored ashore using GPS tracking. An overview will be passed to the Safety Coordinator using mobile phone to monitor the location of the fleet in addition to updates from the support boats to allow missing boats to be identified. A tail end support boat will ensure that the position of the tail end of the fleet is known. This procedure will allow the Safety Coordinator and the Race Manager to be aware of the whereabouts of the lead and last boat together with the location of the remainder of the fleet.

Young Sailors

(Under 18 years of age) All competitors under the age of 18 on 22nd September 2023 will be required to provide a parent/guardian declaration. An assessment will be made of the sailing conditions on the day of the race. In the light of all relevant considerations, the decision of the organisers whether or not to permit the person concerned to sail shall be final.

Support Boats

The organisers will coordinate a fleet of Support Boats of which a majority will be suitable RIB's (*e.g.* over 5.5 metres in length powered by 70 -250 HP outboard motors, suitable for use on the southerly side of the IoW). In addition to the Support Boats, there will be a Guard ship/comms vessel (possibly "*Ayres and Graces*", a Sweden 39 yacht).

Each Support Boat will carry a GPS tracker, first aid kit, mobile phone, a VHF radio, chart of the course and a fixed or hand-held GPS receiver. The minimum equipment list for the Patrol Boats is shown in Appendix 1.

Support Boat crews

It is essential that the race support boats and crews are fully prepared for a long day at sea.

Items to be considered include the following:

- Parking, launching and recovery of boats at the Lymington slipway.
- Food, drink and protective clothing for crew.
- Communication equipment.
- First aid provisions.
- Fuel

Responsibility of Osprey crews

The racing of dinghies in the Solent and around the Isle of Wight is a challenging event and all crews will be required to read and sign a declaration before going afloat. This will bring to their attention that:

- The crews alone are exercising the decision to race in the prevailing or anticipated weather and tidal conditions
- The crews alone are responsible for the condition and fitness of their boats to enter the race
- The crews alone are responsible for carrying the minimum recommended safety equipment (see Appendix 2) and the Race Tracker.
- The crews alone have taken steps to register their mobile phone numbers, names etc with the race organisers.
- The crews shall attend the pre-race briefing including the safety briefing.
- The crews have completed the entry form and have declared next of kin and contact details who must be ashore during the race.

All competitors will be informed by means of the Notice of Race and will be informed again at the pre-race briefing that the organisers will give priority to the rescue of crews over the recovery of boats.

Ospreys from which crews have been recovered will, if time permits, be put ashore, beached, tied off to buoys for subsequent recovery by the owner or in extreme cases abandoned. All boats that have had their crews removed will be marked. The race competitors will be required to acknowledge that the race organisers are not undertaking to recover or tow boats to a safe location.

Competitors are expected to assist with the safety of other competitors and will be suitably compensated in their race times.

For the sake of clarity, the Race Organisers take no responsibility for checking competitors' boats for seaworthiness, minimum equipment list or for being in class.

Hypothermia

Racing high performance dinghies often results in capsizes or a crewmember falling off into the water. The Osprey RTI Race is to take place in September when the surface seawater temperatures will relatively be at their peak.

All competitors will be required to wear either dry suits with suitable thermal undergarments or wet suits that as a minimum cover the trunk of the body.

Each crew shall also carry a waterproofed mobile phone into the memory of which the competitors shall enter the race emergency numbers.

The event will not be run if the winds are considered to be too strong for effective racing (in excess of say 25 knots). These precautions all reduce the hazard posed by hypothermia due to prolonged exposure in the water.

Drowning

Racing high performance dinghies can result in capsize at speeds up to some 15 knots. It is not possible for the Support Boats to provide immediate assistance to competitors who have capsized as the dinghies will be distributed over a relatively large area of water. Therefore, all competitors must make their own arrangements for their immediate safety. All competitors shall be required to wear suitable buoyancy aids centred above the waist. Uninflated lifejackets are not acceptable.

Support boat crews may wear inflatable buoyancy aids or life-jackets in the uninflated condition, as they may need to enter the water to recover dinghy crews or boats.

Dispersal of the Fleet

The distance around the IoW is in excess of 60 miles and would require a very large Support Boat Fleet to provide continuous cover over the entire or even a substantial part of the course. A Support Boat will provide cover for the fleet leader and for the tail ender of the fleet. Additionally, the race may incorporate "gates" through which all competitors must pass. Crews at the gates will provide data to allow the passage of Ospreys to be monitored by the Safety Coordinator. Any missing Ospreys or stragglers can then be identified so that Support Boats can be sent to search for any missing or "overdue" boats.

High Winds, Low Winds

If the prevailing or anticipated winds are too high (in excess of say 25 knots) or too low (below say 5 knots) then the Race Officer will determine whether the race should proceed. It may be preferable in such circumstances to set an alternative course within the confines of the Solent.

Fishing Gear

The course will pass over fishing grounds used by pot and net fishermen. Pot mooring lines do not pose a significant hazard to dinghies as centreboards and rudders which can all be disentangled from fouled lines. Race competitors and race staff will be reminded to stay clear of fishing vessels using towed nets etc.

Collision with Other Vessels

The course passes through areas that are heavily used by naval, commercial and pleasure craft. Race competitors are reminded to observe all "*Moving Prohibited Zones*" around naval and commercial vessels as detailed on Admiralty Chart 2036.

Race competitors are reminded to observe the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea and the Racing Rules. See Appendix 3.

National Maritime Operations Centre (NMOC)

As a part of the preparation for the Osprey RTI Race the National Maritime Operations Centre (NMOC) at Fareham (tel: 02392 552100):

- will be advised in advance that a Round the Island race will be held; and
- will be notified of the existence of this Risk Assessment; and
- will be contacted on the day of the event to ensure that communication links are established.

At the end of the event the NMOC will be advised that all competitors have been accounted for.

In emergencies VHF Channel 16 may be used to contact the NMOC with the alternative of Channel 67 to be used for routine traffic however telephone is the preferred method for routine traffic.

Accounting for competitors, signing out and in

Each boat will be responsible for collecting a GPS tracker from the organisers before going afloat. Failure to do so will result in disqualification from the event.

In addition, each competitor boat must sign out before going afloat.

This sign out will initiate the recording of each competitors' ongoing passage and will permit the Safety Coordinator to determine the area in which each Osprey is located.

Each competitor boat will be required to sign back in and return their GPS tracker after completing the course.

If a crew decides to withdraw from racing and returns to shore at any time they are required to telephone the Safety Coordinator in order to record their withdrawal and to notify any assistance required.

Minimum Safety Equipment

Dinghies of 17 feet 6 inches long do not have facilities for storing extensive quantities of safety equipment and burdening these boats can make them difficult to sail by impeding crew movement. Appendix 2 details the minimum safety equipment to be carried on each Osprey. It has been decided that anchors are not a requirement as the course offers few places to securely anchor an Osprey for which beaching is a safer and better option. One paddle is considered adequate, as it is normal for one crewmember to steer and the other to paddle and to then alternate to share the work. Competitors are responsible for providing and carrying the equipment aboard their boat. Not doing so is grounds for disqualification without any right of redress or protest.

Support Boats

All Support Boats will be deployed at the start of racing. The Race Officer will be aboard "*Ayres and Graces*" (TBC). Communications will be via either mobile phone or marine VHF between the Patrol Boats.

Support boats reporting the position of competitors to the Safety Coordinator will do so by mobile telephone in order to leave radio channels as free as possible. Radio users are expected to and will be reminded to keep unnecessary traffic to a minimum so that the channels are open for genuine use.

Crews of Support Boats will have the safety of people as their priority and will not tow any boats unless expressly instructed to do so by the Safety Coordinator. In the event that a crew is removed from a boat and the boat abandoned (even if anchored or beached), the boat will be marked and the Race Officer will be notified so that NMOC can be informed of abandoned boats. If a Support Boat has to leave the event for whatever reason the crew must inform both the Safety Coordinator and the Race Officer and preferably should obtain prior approval from the Safety Coordinator.

Competitor Tracking

Each boat will be issued with a GPS tracker. Boat sail numbers, crew names, contact and next of kin details will be cross referenced to the tracker before sign out from Lymington. A list will be kept by the Safety Coordinator and will be updated using visual information, relayed GPS data, Patrol Boat feedback and race competitors so that the approximate position of each competitor is known.

Communication

Several communication systems will be used during the event. The first and preferred method will be using mobile phones. If unsuccessful the next method in the following list will be used – and so on.

1. Mobile Phone Call
2. Marine VHF
3. Mobile Phone Calls using Voice Mail – where recipient is not available.

Race Officer

The Race Officer is responsible for the conduct of racing, start and finish lines, position of committee boat etc and for producing the race results. The Race Officer will organise and/or conduct the briefings of the competitors, Support Boat crews and other race organisers and volunteers.

The Race Officer has single point responsibility for all aspects of the conduct of the Race including a decision to race or cancel, delay by a day, alter the course, shorten the course etc.

The Race Officer has overall responsibility for consulting his team and in particular the Safety Coordinator before taking the decision to run the race and having taken the decision to race is responsible for ensuring that all competitors and race organisers etc are fully accounted for before standing down the race management team at the end of the day.

The Race Officer will be based on the comms vessel “Ayres and Graces” during the race and will be assisted by the Safety Coordinator who will be monitoring the position and status of each competing boat and Support Boat from visual information, Support Boat reports and GPS tracking data updates.

In the event of there being a safety incident the Race Officer will maintain communications with the NMOC etc and will keep a log of calls etc related to that incident.

Safety Coordinator

The Safety Coordinator reports to the Race Officer who is in overall charge of the race and is responsible for safety related matters during the race.

The Safety Coordinator will be on board the Comms Vessel and act as coordinator for all safety related activities under the direction of the Race Officer on the water.

A list will be kept by the Safety Coordinator and will be updated using visual information, relayed GPS data, Patrol Boat feedback and race competitors so that the approximate position of each competitor is known.

The Safety Coordinator will call a briefing for all safety crews prior to the race commencing.

The Safety Coordinator will advise the NMOC that the race is on and to also advise NMOC at the end of the day when all competitors and race organisers etc have been accounted for and the race is considered to be complete.

The Safety Coordinator will manage the sign out and sign in process to ensure that all competitors are identified and have been accounted for at the beginning and end of the race.

The Safety Coordinator will manage the location of Support Boats and direct on water operations such as crew or boat recovery, any towing, evacuation of crews to shore or other boats etc.

The Safety Coordinator will advise the Race Officer if in his/her view the prevailing or anticipated weather or tidal conditions call for an amendment to or cancellation.

Role	Name	Location during race (TBC)
Race Officer	**Nigel Walbank**	**“*Ayres and Graces*” Comms vessel**
Safety Coordinator	**TBC**	**“*Ayres and Graces*” Comms vessel**
GPS tracker monitor and relay	**TBD**	**Land based**

Appendix 1

Race Organisers Minimum Equipment List

Minimum Equipment List	
Support Boats	**Crews of Support Boats**
1. First aid kit 2. Survival Bags/blankets 3. Compass and charts 4. Water (at least 10 litres/boat) 5. Flares 6. VHF Radio plus spare with spare batteries if hand-held 7. Ropes for towing and securing RIB's and/or Osprey to mooring buoys 8. Spare fuel (at least 20 Litres.) 9. Blocker tape (to mark abandoned dinghies) 10. Gaffer tape 11. Cable ties (small and large)	1. One crewmember should have a wet suit or dry suit. 2. Spare clothing 3. Sunblock 4. Sun glasses 5. Food 6. Drinks 7. Mobile phone fully charged and preferably a power bank

Appendix 2

Competitor's Minimum Equipment List

Each boat shall as a minimum carry the following:

- A GPS tracker as provided by the race organisers
- A mobile phone in a waterproof pouch with the phone number and sail number registered with the Safety coordinator. Each crew will also have programmed into the phone memory the numbers given at the briefing. Consider a power bank as well in waterproof case. Mobile shall be fully charged prior to start of race.
- A waterproof hand-held VHF radio capable of working on channel 37A with spare batteries. Ensure VHF radio fully charged before start of race if using rechargeable batteries.
- Personal buoyancy and either wet suits or dry suits with suitable thermal undergarments.
- A 10-metre dedicated tow rope of minimum 8mm diameter suitable for towing an Osprey.
- The laminated course sheet which will indicate the course, approximate position of "*gate*" boats and useful telephone numbers.
- A hand held or boat mounted compass.
- A single paddle.
- Adequate water and food for twelve hours duration.
- Positive rudder location (spring steel not adequate).

Appendix 3

Extract from IRPCS – Avoidance of Collision as Sea

Rule No.	Description	Main Points
5	**Look-Out**	Blind spots (sailing craft/cabin cruisers/clothing) Night vision Poor visibility (Listening watch/Stop Engines)
6	**Safe Speed**	Visibility Traffic density Ability to manoeuvre/stop Conditions (waves etc.) Depth
7	**Risk of Collision**	Who has right of way? Fundamental requirement to avoid collision. Recognising potential collision situations.
8	**Action to Avoid Collision**	Port to Port rule Turn Right Rule
9	**Narrow Channels**	Keep Right Crossing
10	**Traffic Separation Schemes**	Understanding them from charts Obeying rules
12	**Sailing Vessels**	Right of way rules When is a sailing vessel not a sailing vessel?
13	**Overtaking**	Keeping clear Passing on correct side where applicable
14	**Head on**	Port to port
15	**Crossing Boat**	Right of way Clarity of your manoeuvre
16	**Action by Give-way Vessel**	Clarity of your manoeuvre Act in good time
17	**Action of Stand-on Vessel**	Maintain course and speed Common sense (don't take on an aircraft carrier!)
18	**Responsibilities Between Vessels**	Keep clear of: Vessel not under command Vessel restricted in her ability to manoeuvre Fishing vessel whilst fishing Sailing craft under sail
19	**Conduct of Vessels in Restricted Visibility**	Lights and sound signals