Osprey Round the Isle of Wight Pre race check list

Overview

The Osprey is a powerful yet forgiving racing dinghy, ideally suited to cruising and racing in more challenging conditions and exposed waters.

This document provides a framework to help self assess that a boat is in a good condition to complete the race with a low chance of a significant gear failure resulting in the Osprey being unable to continue.

Compliance with this checklist and safety kit suggestions in no way reduces the helmsman's inescapable responsibility for the safety of himself and his crew when he makes the decisions to participate and/or continue in an event.

Osprey sail number …….., Type Mark ……, Construction Wood/GRP , Builder ……. ……

Owner ……, Date of checks ……., Checked by ……..

1 Hull

Item	Check list	Key areas	Notes	Initials
Outer Hull	Check for general condition, significant cracking, accident damage, poor repairs and rot.	Bow, shroud area and transom around rudder fittings		
Inner hull and deck	Check for general condition, significant cracking, accident damage, poor repairs and rot.	Bow around jib tack fitting, shroud area and shroud plates, centreboard case and pivot, mast foot particularly if boat has been stored bow down with water trapped causing rot of plywood. Check security of mainsheet jammer attachment area.		
Fittings and control lines	Check for general condition, security of attachment, signs of excessive wear and chafing or stranding of ropes, cords, wires and elastic. Loose or damaged shackles. Check toe straps and their attachments.	Pay particular attention to jib halyard and shroud controls if you have an adjustable rig. Failure of any one of these likely to result in dismasting. Look into every area in detail. Climb into boat to examine mast foot and front bulkhead areas and use a torch.		
Rudder fittings	Check for general condition, security of attachment and signs of excessive wear	Probably the number one cause of failure, extra care needed here. Relying on a spring clip only is not acceptable, an extra securing system is required. Check securing machine screws have zero play.		
Jib furler and upper swivel	Where fitted, check for correct alignment, smooth operation and signs of bearing failure	Certain makes of jib furler have the ball bearings in shear. Failure leads to the mast coming down. Bearings much better in compression.		

2 Mast, boom and pole(s)

Item	Check list	Key areas	Notes	Initials
Mast	Inspect mast out of the boat. Check for general condition, cracking, accident damage and poor repairs. Spreaders and spreader attachments. Smooth operation of all mast fittings.	Prime area for Osprey mast failure is the jib halyard. Inspect halyard wire very carefully, particularly where it passes over the pulley while sailing. Check security of jib halyard sheave. Any doubts, consider reattaching using machine screws from inside. (Ref 1).		
Shrouds and trapeze wires/lines	Check for general condition, security of attachment, signs of excessive wear and chafing or stranding of ropes, cords, wires and elastic.	Pay particular attention to T terminal ends, splices and signs of wear at spreader height.		
Main and spinnaker halyards	Check for general condition and chafing or stranding.	A failed main halyard is a regular occurrence. Pay particular attention to the halyard ends and where they are cleated or hooked.		
Boom and pole(s)	Check for general condition, security of attachment, signs of excessive wear and chafing or stranding of ropes, cords, wires and elastic.	Pay particular attention to concealed systems inside spars by pulling them out to inspect. Look for signs of cracking in high load areas such as gooseneck, kicker attachment and pole ends and centre section.		

3 Rudder assembly and centreboard

Item	Check list	Key areas	Notes	Initials
Rudder blade and centreboard	Check for general condition, cracking, accident damage and poor repairs.	Prime area for Osprey rudder failure is just below the stock. The centreboard can fail as it exits the support of the case in the full down position. Look for signs of stress cracking in these areas.		
Tiller, stock and tiller extension	Check for general condition, security of attachment, signs of excessive wear and chafing.	The three classic rudder failures are failure of flexible tiller extension joint, failure of downhaul and failure of transom clip arrangements. Pay particular attention to these areas. Consider making downhaul jellyfish resistant (ref 2)		
Control lines	Check for general condition and chafing or stranding.	Pay particular attention to rudder downhaul, particularly concealed systems in tiller or stock.		

4 Sails

Item	Check list	Key areas	Notes	Initials
Main and jib	Check for general condition, security of battens and pockets, jib luff wire distress, accident damage and poor repairs.	Prime area for failure is batten pockets on the mainsail. Look for signs of excessive wear and stitching loss in these areas or delamination of laminate cloth.		
Spinnaker	Check for general condition, accident damage and poor repairs.	Failure points here can be clew and head attachments and retractor patch(es).		

5 Additional equipment

Item	Check list	Key areas	Notes	Initials
Personal clothing	Check for general condition and suitability for purpose.	Check all fasteners for correct operation, e.g. zips. Look at condition of elastic webbing.		
Trapeze Harness	Check for general condition and comfort for extended use.	Check the condition and security of the hook, checking for any cracks in welds etc.		
Additional clothing	Recommended to carry warm hat and spray top if additional warmth required.	Secure using dry bags.		
Food and drink	Think it through early. 2 litres of water and around a 1000 calories of food is suggested.	Secure effectively to survive a capsize.		
Buoyancy aids	Close fitting, and comfortable	Check for signs of excessive wear.		
Spare parts	A few lengths of light line Shackle key/screwdriver Electrical tape Spare shackle	Have them secured and accessible (ideally not in a buoyancy tank)		
Communications	Mobile phone in waterproof bag. Waterproof hand held VHF.	Safety officer's number stored in memory, plenty of battery life. Knowledge of correct VHF procedure.		
Towline	A dedicated tow line of minimum 8mm diameter and minimum length 10 metres shall be carried on each boat ready for rapid deployment. Tie to mast to take large loads.	Have it secured and accessible (ideally not in a buoyancy tank). If boat awash, tow very slowly.		
Miscellaneous	Waterproof GPS. Waterproof torch Consideration should be given to carrying flares.	All secured but accessible.		

Ref 1 Osprey newsletter article “Jib halyard sheave attachment” O Chess December 2017

Ref 2 Particularly for inland sailors, consideration needs to be given to the rudder hitting an underwater object during a race at sea, e.g. jellyfish or submerged mooring line (just try a week in Saundersfoot!). The rudder system needs to be designed to cope with this.

If you are using a fixed rudder, it is all about selecting very strong fittings, e.g. Sea Sure 4 bolt pintle and gudgeon and hoping for the best. Inspect transom carefully for signs of cracking if a fixed rudder has been used on the boat.

For lifting rudders with a downhaul, there are specially designed pivoting clamcleats available that will release the downhaul before it snaps, allowing the rudder to be pulled back down. These releasing cleats need to be adjusted so that they won’t release under normal sailing loads in waves, but will release on impact before the downhaul fails.

Oscar Chess 16th Feb 2018