



Round the Island Race

Saturday 1st July 2023

Safety Booklet

organised by the
Island
Sailing
Club 

For more information visit
www.roundtheisland.org.uk
or call the Island Sailing Club on 01983 296621

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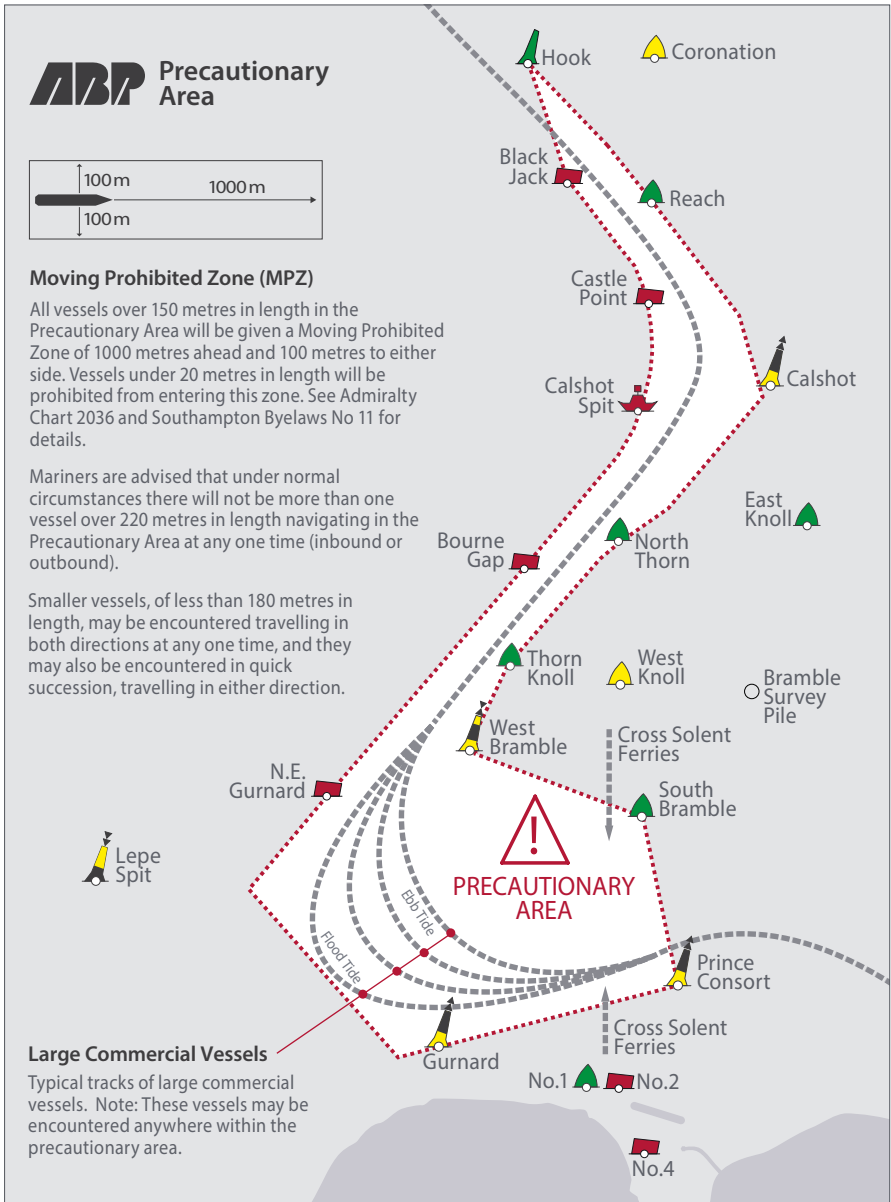


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FIG 1 : PRECAUTIONARY AREA





ROUND THE ISLAND RACE SAFETY BOOKLET

Yacht racing is by its nature an unpredictable sport and therefore inherently involves an element of risk. Many thousands of people take part in the 'Round The Island Race' because of its special atmosphere. It is an enjoyable day out in company with a great many like minded competitive people and we want everyone to have a good, but safe, race.

A great deal of thought has been put into safety aspects of the structure of the race, but ultimately, safety depends on you. This booklet will draw your attention to some of the dangers which you must be aware of and some of the Sailing Instructions which you must comply with to make this a safe race for everybody. The last section deals with what to do if you are in trouble or see someone else in trouble.

PERSON IN CHARGE

Under RRS 3 the responsibility for a boat's decision to participate in a race or continue racing is hers alone. The safety of a boat and her crew is also the sole responsibility of the Person in Charge and a second person should be assigned to take over these responsibilities in the event of his/her incapacitation.

SHOREWATCH AND CREW LISTS

Shorewatch is a simple system for nominating one person as the contact for all persons on board a yacht in the Round the Island Race. This should be the telephone number of someone who will not be sailing on the boat who can be easily contacted in the unlikely event of an accident or medical issue with someone on your boat. This person must hold an up to date list of everyone on board and their emergency contact details. Should there be any queries about the safety of that yacht the 'Shorewatch' person nominated should telephone the Island Sailing Club on (01983) 296621 and then inform the contacts of all the members of that crew of the latest information.

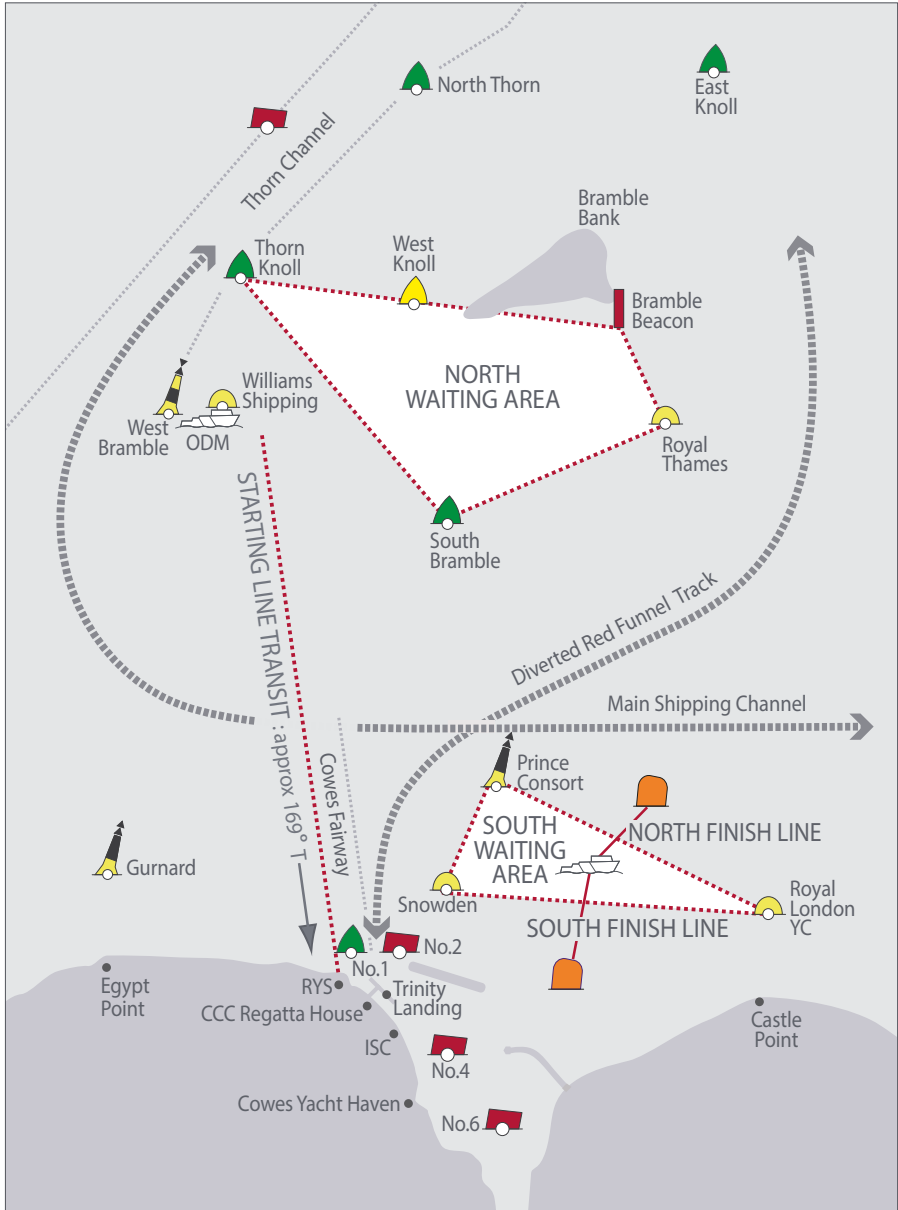
For safety reasons, please also make sure that you have given the Island Sailing Club an up to date full crew list of persons on board.

PRE START

Before the Race, check all your safety equipment and ensure you comply with the World Sailing Offshore Special Regulations governing minimum equipment and accommodation standards for a Category 4 race. Should you not know what these are, you are advised to obtain a copy of the special regulations from the World Sailing website: www.sailing.org If you are racing in a one design class please check the separate safety requirements defined in the Notice of Race and Sailing Instructions.



FIG 2 : START / FINISH LINES AND WAITING AREAS





For the Round the Island Race we require every boat, in whatever class they are entered in, to carry lifejackets, with thigh or crotch straps, for every crew member on board. Make sure that you can recognise International Code Flag "Y" (yankee). If this flag is flying, you must wear your lifejacket while afloat and for the duration of the Race. Race marshalls will have cameras and if you fail to comply you are likely to be disqualified.



Y Flag

THE START

The starting line lies right across the deep water navigation channel and turning area for commercial vessels approaching or leaving the Port of Southampton. The Harbour Master has the statutory responsibility for the safety of navigation of all vessels.

Large commercial vessels, and container ships, have to use this channel. Many of these vessels, with a limited underkeel clearance, are constrained by their draft. They have to maintain their course and speed for adequate steerage way and often have restricted visibility ahead. Whilst navigating this channel between Prince Consort buoy off Cowes, round the Bramble Bank to Black Jack and Reach buoys North of Calshot, all vessels over 150m length overall are given a "Moving Prohibited Zone" around them of 1,000m ahead and 100m either side. Yachts and small vessels are prohibited from entering this moving zone (see FIG 1).

Although there is no longer an exclusion zone around the new Cowes breakwater, boats should be aware that rocky "toes" limit the depth up close to the breakwater wall. There is also a strong sideways tidal flow within the Harbour which occurs around High Water.

Waiting Areas (see FIG 2) are established to the North of the South Bramble buoy and South of Prince Consort buoy, to keep yachts that are waiting to start clear of the main navigable channel.

It is vitally important that you keep within one of the waiting areas until your own warning (ten minute) signal. If you fail to keep well clear of the starting line then you may be disqualified without a hearing.

If a large commercial vessel is about to pass through the starting area, all participating yachts will be instructed to proceed to the waiting area, using engines if necessary to clear the channel quickly. The Harbour Master in a designated patrol launch and Island Sailing Club Race Marshals in RIBs will be on hand to direct yachts out of the way. If you are instructed to proceed to a waiting area either by radio or by the Harbour Master or a Marshal, you must go directly there. The Race Committee has the authority to disqualify you without a hearing and the Harbour Master may prosecute if you disregard his instructions.

Car ferries and high speed passenger craft crossing between Cowes and Southampton will be recommended by the Southampton Harbour Master to route their vessels to the East of the Bramble Bank and clear of the waiting area during the starting period. Please look out for them and give them room, particularly in the fairway or harbour entrance at Cowes.



Maintaining control is the secret to a smooth safe start in a mass yacht race. The Race Officers need your co-operation. Listen out for instructions on VHF Radio Channel 22 on which you should listen to the start sequence broadcasts. Please operate on low power unless in distress.

A little patience and sporting unselfishness are required to get so many yachts off to a good clean start. There are at least 50 nautical miles to go.

NO ANCHORS OVER THE BOW

If your yacht has a fitted stowage for the anchor where it protrudes over the bow or over the side, it must be restowed elsewhere. There are inevitably some close quarters situations sometimes leading to collisions and it is highly dangerous to have an anchor mounted on your bow in these situations. You will be disqualified without a hearing if spotted.

OUTBOARD MOTORS OVER THE STERN

Outboard Motors which are carried over the stern should be stowed in such a way that they do not create a hazard to other yachts in a close quarters situation. Trimarans with fixed outboard motors may leave them in place.

THE WEST SOLENT

Once clear of the start, this can be an exhilarating leg of the course, with often a good beat down to the Needles. This is where you overtake and are overtaken. It is also where most of the collisions occur.

If it is your obligation under the racing rules to keep clear of another yacht, make your intentions known early before there is a risk of collision. Holding on, or pressing your advantage too far, often leads to retirement with damage or gear failure, and almost certainly to a protest under the racing rules. It is often best to give way to boats which are not under good control. For those of you who are not regular racers we have produced in the Documents and Guides section in the Competitor area of our website a 'Layman's Guide to the Racing Rules' which will talk you through the main rules situations you are likely to encounter during the race. Watch out for mooring buoys around the new tidal monitoring/testing ground in the area between Black Rock and Sconce. As you approach Yarmouth (or Lymington if you are on the mainland shore) you should be aware of the car ferries entering and leaving the harbour/river and avoid the moorings west of Yarmouth Harbour (see SI 8.3.1)

Boats are advised to proceed with caution off Hurst Point where a new shingle bank in position 50 42.50N 001 32.83W has appeared and depths in this area are subject to change.

There are a number of Dive Sites, marked with small yellow buoys, in the Western Solent. Keeping a sharp lookout here is essential, especially if Alpha flag is displayed on a dive boat which denotes they have divers down.



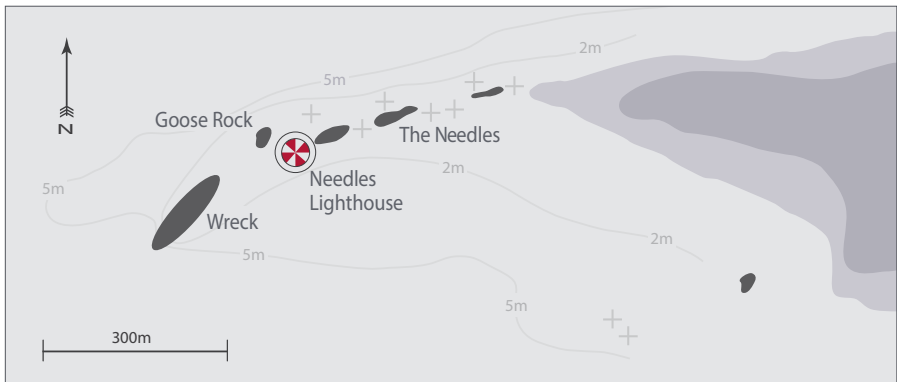
Alpha Flag



THE NEEDLES

The mark is the Needles Lighthouse, but there is a shallow rock ledge, which extends approximately 250 metres to the West South West of it. The principal danger comes from some remnants of the wreck of the Varvassi lying on the ledge. She is well broken up but wreckage and boulders are scattered all over the ledge (see FIG 3 & 4).

FIG 3 : PLAN OF RELATIVE POSITIONS OF HAZARDS AT THE NEEDLES



There are four large and very solid pieces which stand proud of the seabed by some 2.5m and either dry at chart datum or remain just below the surface (see FIG 3 & 4). At the time the fleet rounds the lighthouse, they may have less than 1 metre over them and are therefore extremely dangerous.

FIG 4 : THE VARVASSI WRECK AT THE NEEDLES

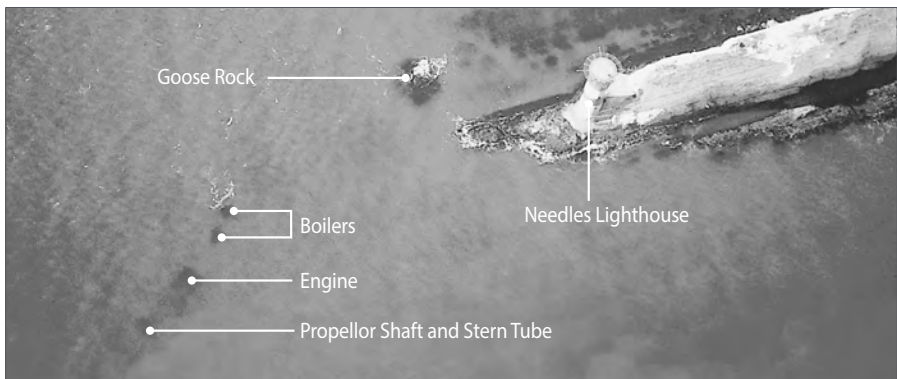
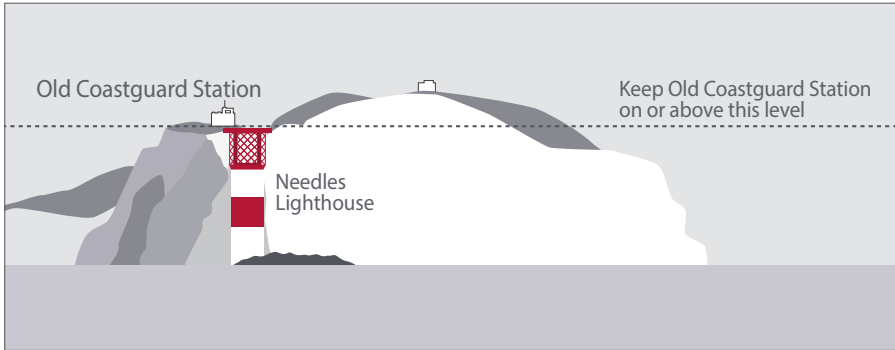


FIG 5 : ROUGH GUIDE TO KEEPING CLEAR OF HAZARDS AT THE NEEDLES



Just to the north west of the lighthouse lies Goose Rock, which also dries at low tide and presents a hazard to those who try to cut inside between the lighthouse and the Varvassi's boilers. Even if the major hazards are avoided, the inshore passage is too shallow for larger boats. More detailed information will be found in the book *SOLENT HAZARDS* by Peter Bruce.

All who sail across the Needles ledge, do so at their peril, and many have taken the gamble and lost. The only safe way of rounding the Needles is to navigate outside the ledge - more than 250m clear of the lighthouse. As a guide to those without electronic or optical aids, make sure you can see (with a height of eye of 6ft above the water) the Old Coastguard Station at a level clear above the top of the lighthouse (see FIG 5). This will keep you in a least depth of 3.5m and clear of the ledge.

IF YOU SIMPLY FOLLOW THE YACHT IN FRONT, OR WORSE STILL, CUT INSIDE, YOU ARE TAKING A FOOLHARDY RISK.

More details of the Varvassi and other underwater obstructions can also be found in the book, *WIGHT HAZARDS*, by Peter Bruce.

SOUTH OF THE WIGHT

Once clear of the Needles there are many more hazardous rocks to avoid if taking an inshore route, in particular the pinnacle of Irex Rock (see *WIGHT HAZARDS* by Peter Bruce) which lies surprisingly far to seaward in Scratchells Bay. The other rocks are too numerous to mention but at least take note of the ledges off Brook and Atherfield, the rocks off St Catherine's Point and Church Rocks that lie deceptively far offshore. Again precise details will be found in *WIGHT HAZARDS* by Peter Bruce.

In a fresh wind, the short steep sea and overfalls at St. Catherine's Point and Dunnose can make boat handling difficult. This may be all that is necessary to induce a gybe or broach. If you are at close quarters with other yachts competing for the optimum track, a gybe or broach can be very dangerous. In such conditions it is safer to keep some freedom of manoeuvre, so avoid getting boxed in and give yourself some sea room.



BEMBRIDGE LEDGE

Having reached Bembridge Ledge, you are three quarters of the way round, but there is plenty of time to win or lose. The Bembridge ledge buoy is the only buoyed mark on the Course. It is a rounding mark, and a point for which everyone is heading. In a race of this size, there is a real risk of collision at the mark. Having got so far, it would be a shame to risk a penalty or damage.

Watch out too, for the cross channel ferries which pass close to Bembridge Ledge buoy and through St. Helens Roads. This is also an area with a lot of lobster pots which are all too easy to get wrapped around your propeller.

THE FORTS

No Man's Land Fort is not a mark of the course and boats can pass either side of the Fort. You should be aware of the potential wind shadow from the Fort, and the effect of the tide. If this part of the race is upwind, it is likely that there will be boats on starboard tack anxious to get inshore into less tide. The message is, therefore, be careful and vigilant when negotiating No Man's Land Fort .

Boats that decide to go inside the Fort should be aware of the exclusion zone off Seaview. The exclusion zone, which is in place to protect the Sea View Yacht Club moorings, is a box originating from the shoreline at the north end of Seagrove Bay (the white flats), out to Pier Head buoy, NW to the Line Post, then directly back to the shoreline at Seaview Duver.

For a more detailed description, including co-ordinates, see Diagram B and Sailing Instruction 8.3.4 in the Sailing Instructions. Take care as boats that are seen to enter the zone may be penalised or disqualified by the Race Committee without a hearing.

RYDE SANDS

Almost the last hazard for the unwary, the large expanse of Ryde Sands is a trap you can fall into (or on to) if you cut the corner after negotiating the Forts. Shaped like a horseshoe, once caught in the trap it can prove difficult to find your way out. If you are unlucky enough to go aground on the Sands you can continue racing provided that you do not accept outside help by way of a tow off, or by using your engine.

After passing No Man's Land Fort, you should be aware of a number of fast passenger ferries and Hovercraft leaving Ryde and Portsmouth. Although the craft are highly manoeuvrable it is very important to make your intentions crystal clear at an early stage and commit to maintaining a constant course and speed. Particular care should also be taken approaching Wootton Creek as the Wightlink car ferries approach, leave and use the narrow fairway.

As you approach the finish you also need to watch out for anchored yachts in Osborne Bay.

THE FINISH

For most competitors, the finish usually comes after a beat inshore over Mother Bank and Peel Bank and round Old Castle Point. The finishing lines in Cowes Roads are side by side. If you are beating for the line and keeping out of adverse tidal streams, watch out for yachts crossing over to finish on the opposite line from you. The Shrape mud bank is the final natural hazard and extends further North than you may think.

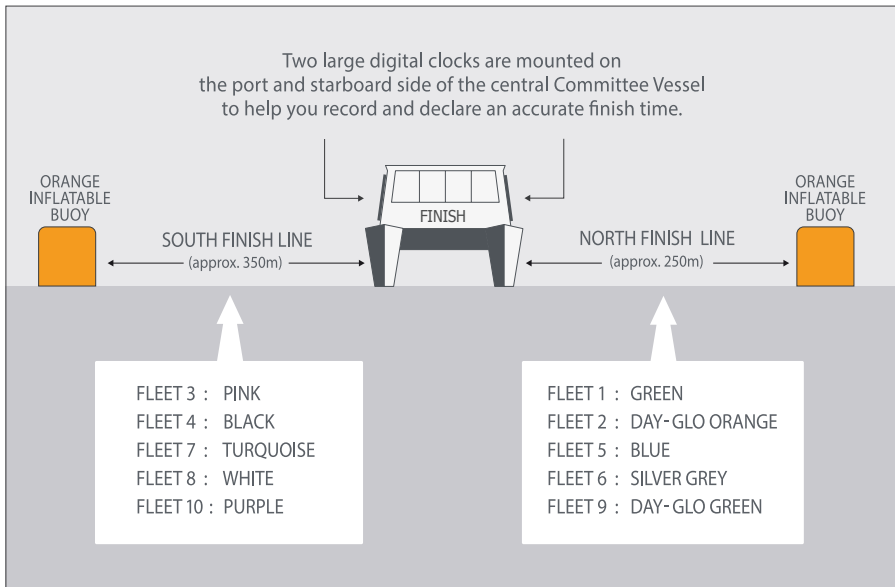
Watch out for the port hand Shrape Beacon with Tide Gauge for the Small Craft Channel approximately 370 metres NW of Old Castle Point on the 2 metre chart datum contour in position 50° 46.09 N and 001°16.90 W.

Finishers on the Southern line must particularly be aware of the shallow patches on the approach to the line after rounding Old Castle Point.

Once you have finished you should clear the line quickly and once you have stopped racing you should use power, if you have it.

If you are wanting to enter the Harbour via the small craft channel you should be aware that the depth is limited and you will need to check your charts and keep a sharp eye on your echo sounder.

FIG 6 : THE FINISH LINE VIEWED FROM THE EAST (not to scale)





DECLARATIONS

Declarations are only by SMS Text Message but if you run into difficulties with this go to our information site at the Island Sailing Club where we will be able to help you. If you have been involved in a protest you MUST report to the CCC, Regatta House, Bath Road, Cowes (see FIG 2) and your declaration can be processed there.

If you finish the course without a bump and your gear intact and nobody has put in a protest against you or even shouted a rude remark, congratulations. In fact, the vast majority of competitors do finish safely and they come back year after year to do the race again - we hope you will too.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE IN TROUBLE OR SEE SOMEONE ELSE IN TROUBLE

SAFETY SERVICES AVAILABLE AND ON ALERT

COASTGUARD

- National Maritime Operations Centre
VHF Channel 16 & 67 DSC MMSI 002320011 Tel: (02392) 552100
- Needles Coastguard
- Bembridge Coastguard
- Ventnor Coastguard

AMBULANCE

Non urgent ambulance cases on board competitors' boats should proceed to Trinity Landing (Off the Parade) in West Cowes (see FIG 2), and inform the Island Sailing Club on VHF Channel 22.

SEARCH AND RESCUE HELICOPTER

Coastguard SAR helicopter based at Lee-on-Solent.

COASTWATCH

National Coastwatch Institution (direct liason with Coastguard)

RESCUE CRAFT

RNLI Lifeboats

- Calshot
- Yarmouth
- Bembridge
- Lymington
- Cowes
- Mudeford

Solent Safety Rescue Organisation

- Solent Rescue (Lepe)
- Freshwater Lifeboat
- Sandown and Shanklin Inshore Lifeboat
- Ryde Inshore Rescue
- Gosport and Fareham Inshore Rescue Service (Stokes Bay)
- Hamble Rescue



SEA START

For engine breakdown on your way to the start or going home after finishing, Sea Start provides an afloat mobile engineering service to Sea Start members. Call 'Sea Start' on VHF Channel 16, or 0800 885500 (24 hours). Non-members may use the service for a call-out fee in addition to the membership fee.

DISTRESS OR SAFETY CALLS

If you need urgent assistance:

Call 'Solent Coastguard' on VHF Channel 16.

Make a Mayday call if in imminent danger and requiring immediate assistance.

Make a Pan Pan call if the situation is urgent.

Report the following:

- Name of Yacht and Sail Number
- Position relative to a coastal reference point or maybe a racing mark giving latitude and longitude where possible.
- Nature of Problem
- Assistance Required
- Number of Crew on board
- Description of vessel

Otherwise call 'Solent Coastguard' on VHF Channel 67.

If you see another yacht in distress or in need of assistance, STAND BY her, and render whatever assistance you can. Keep the Coastguard informed of the situation.

USE OF MOBILE PHONES

Your mobile can be used for giving further information to the Coastguard. The number to call is (02392) 552100.

IDENTIFICATION

Amongst all the other yachts, the rescue services may have difficulty in picking out a yacht in distress or requiring assistance. To identify yourself, set off an orange smoke on the approach of the helicopter or rescue craft if requested. It is also helpful to drop sails and show your sail number dodger.



HELICOPTER RESCUE

If you or a crew member is being rescued or evacuated as a casualty by helicopter from the deck of your yacht, the helicopter will use the Hi-line Technique. Proceed as far as possible as follows:

Winching from vessels with high masts creates a degree of difficulty for the standard vertical winch lift, particularly in heavy seas. In most cases, the Hi-line Technique is used, both by Military and Civilian Search and Rescue units.

Initially, the helicopter will contact you on VHF Channel 16, and may request you to change to a working channel, although he may ask you to stay on VHF Channel 16 for the casualty working.

Normally you will be requested to keep steerage way with the wind approximately 30° on the Port bow but wind speed and direction, sea state, the position of transfer area and manoeuvrability of the vessel may necessitate variation to the above. In any case, the helicopter should hover into the relative wind and care should be taken that variations in the vessels course do not prejudice this during transfers.

The transfer area should be selected to give as clear an area as possible with unobstructed access to the deck edge. Normally, the vessel's port quarter would be used. However, circumstances may dictate otherwise. The helicopter crew will advise you where the transfer is to take place.

The 'Hi-line', itself, is a 120ft length of ¼ inch braided nylon line. A screw gate Karabiner is attached to the helicopter winch hook and the bottom end has weights attached to it.

The weighted end of the line is lowered on to the deck of the vessel. Two deck crew on the vessel should receive this end and take in the slack, coiling loose line on the deck, clear of deck obstructions. **THE LINE MUST NEVER BE ATTACHED TO THE VESSEL.** Tension on the line should be maintained to keep the line taut. Do not heave in the Hi-line at this time. Deck crew are advised to wear gloves whilst handling the Hi-line.

Once the line has been accepted by the vessel's deck crew, the helicopter will move away from the vessel to prepare the winchman for lowering to the deck. At this time the vessel's deck crew must pay out the Hi-line.

The helicopter will then climb to a safe height over the masts and any obstructions whilst lowering the winchman to keep him level with the transfer area.

The helicopter will then move across towards the transfer area. At this stage, the deck crew handling the Hi-line continue to take up the slack and on instructions from the winchman, haul him on board. When the winchman is on the deck, he will disconnect himself from the winch wire and the helicopter will move away from the vessel.



The deck crew should now pay out the Hi-line. The winchman will now brief the deck crew on any requirements.

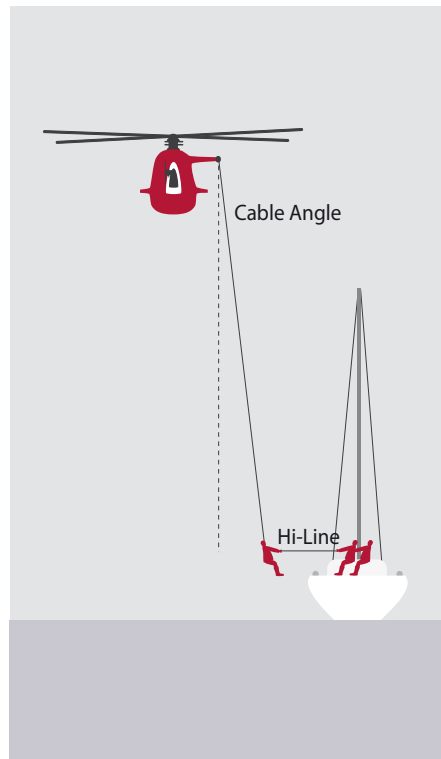
For recovery, the winch hook is pulled inboard to allow the winchman and casualty to be attached. They will then be lifted off the deck. The deck crew should retain tension on the Hi-line to prevent excessive swinging.

Once the winchman and casualty are on board the helicopter, the Hi-line will be recovered by taking up the Hi-line until just the weighted end is left on the vessel. The deck crew should clear the weighted end from all obstructions and the Hi-line will be fully recovered by the helicopter.

HI-LINE TECHNIQUE

- 1 If possible take down your sails and use your engine to put wind 30° on Port bow.
- 2 Maintain heading unless instructed otherwise by helicopter
- 3 Accept Hi-line in clear area on Port Quarter.
- 4 Deck crew should wear gloves.
- 5 Take in slack as Hi-line is lowered.
- 6 Do not attach Hi-line to any part of the vessel
- 7 Pull in winchman when he indicates.
- 8 Maintain tension on Hi-line at all times.
- 9 On recovery of Hi-line, maintain tension until weights are in hand and then release them clear of obstructions.
- 10 Static electricity can build up in any hovering helicopter. Static discharge cable is attached to the end of the winch cable. The deck crew should never touch the discharge cable or the winch-man until such time as either one of them have come into contact with the vessel and any static electricity build up has been discharged.

FIG 7 : HI-LINE TECHNIQUE





RESPONSIBILITIES OF OTHER YACHTS IN VICINITY OF A YACHT IN TROUBLE

RENDERING ASSISTANCE

The first fundamental racing rule states that every boat or competitor shall give all possible help to any person or vessel in danger. If you do not stop to assist a boat in danger, or help recover a person overboard, you may be protested and disqualified from the race. However you can request redress from the protest committee for the time you spent standing by or assisting, unless it is to your own boat or crew (RRS 62.1(c)).

KEEPING CLEAR OF RESCUE OPERATIONS

The presence of an SAR helicopter hovering over a yacht, or the presence of a lifeboat or inshore rescue craft in the close vicinity of a yacht, signifies that there is a rescue operation in progress, and you must keep well clear.

Similarly other yachts or craft may also be involved in rescue operations. You need to keep a wary eye open for them and again give them a wide berth.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Island Sailing Club wishes to acknowledge the assistance of the following organisations and individuals in the preparation of this Safety Booklet:

ASSOCIATED BRITISH PORTS, SOUTHAMPTON

H.M. COASTGUARD

MARITIME VOLUNTEER SERVICE

PETER BRUCE

ROYAL OCEAN RACING CLUB

**DON'T
FORGET**

The Race Committee
VHF Channel is
CHANNEL 22



HOW TO HAVE A SAFE RACE

- 1** Remember, yacht racing is an unpredictable sport.
- 2** **SAFETY DEPENDS ON YOU.**
- 3** Keep to the Waiting Areas at the start until your 10 minute gun.
- 4** Listen out for instructions on VHF Channel 22.
- 5** Make sure that your radio is fully charged, readily available, on at all times and not accidentally transmitting.
- 6** Your anchor, when stowed, must not protrude over the bow.
- 7** Don't hold on or press your advantage too far. Yacht racing is not a game of 'chicken'.
- 8** Beware the ledge and wreck at the Needles. Use the rough guide of keeping the Old Coastguard Station above the level of the top of the lighthouse to maintain a safe distance off.
- 9** Keep well clear of the many rocks just offshore, South of the Wight.
- 10** Don't get boxed in with other competitors while running before a fresh wind. A gybe or a broach in such a situation can be very dangerous.
- 11** Remember that every competitor is heading for the same point in the water by Bembridge Ledge buoy - approach it with caution.
- 12** Take care with the wind shadow near No Man's Land Fort
- 13** Avoid the trap of Ryde Sands.
- 14** Watch out for yachts crossing over to finish on the opposite line from you.
- 15** Beware the shallow patches of the Shrape mudbank, marked by the Shrape beacon, just before the finish.
- 16** Render assistance to other yachts in difficulties, but keep well clear of rescue operations which are already in progress.

SAIL WELL - SAIL SAFELY



Solent Hazards & Secrets (6th Ed.).....	£16.95
Wight Hazards (4th Ed.)	£15.95
Inshore along the Dorset Coast (4th Ed. Publ. 2008).....	£16.95
Solent & Island Tidal Streams (Waterproof 2nd Ed. Publ. May 2013)	£17.95
Tidal Streams between Portland Bill & St. Albans Head (2nd Ed. Publ. Nov 2012)	£7.99

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tel **01983 865 834** for Isle of Wight

tel **02392 643 395** for Portsmouth



National Coastwatch

EYES ALONG THE COAST

WHO WE ARE

Established in 1994 and financed entirely by charitable donations, National Coastwatch Institution (also known as NCI) is a volunteer component of the UK Search & Rescue Service.

WHAT WE DO

Our core task is to keep watch and visually identify, locate and report to His Majesty's Coastguard (HMCG) any incident which may require Search and Rescue (SAR) action.

Our 59 lookout stations situated around the coast of England and Wales are manned entirely by trained volunteers and are supported by the generosity of the public. Every year, new stations are opened to help make our coastline safer for work and leisure activities.

We monitor marine VHF radio channels plus our own dedicated channel 65 and regularly broadcast local weather conditions, sea state, visibility, and tidal information.

COME AND JOIN US!

Our stations are often seeking volunteers who would like to be involved and train as Watchkeepers. No previous experience is necessary. If interested, please visit our website: www.nci.org.uk to find your local station.



Registered Charity No. 1159975

Patrons: HRH The Princess Royal Dame Katherine Granger DBE Sir Christopher Coville KCB



The ISLAND SAILING CLUB



AT THE HEART OF SAILING



Sailing

Our racing calendar features fixtures for all skill levels and includes our own Round the Island Race.



Food and Drink

Our bars, balconies and acclaimed restaurant look out over Cowes Fairway – we're at the heart of global sailing.



Social

We're one of the country's most popular sailing clubs and have a packed social diary – from formal to informal.

Come and join us

THE ISLAND SAILING CLUB – AT THE HEART OF SAILING

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