



Safety Thursday - Safety at Sea
March 28, 2013

Part of being a safe sailor is ensuring that you and your fellow crew members have adequate training before you ever set forth from the dock. The Mac Safety Regulations (MSRs) recognize this by strongly encouraging attendance at a US Sailing Safety at Sea Course (Monohull MSR 73, Multihull MSR 77). The MSRs strongly recommend that at least 30% of the crew including the skipper have a current Safety at Sea Certification issued by US Sailing in the last five year period. Safety at Sea attendance is also one of the factors looked at by the race's selections committee when determining whether to extend an invitation to a prospective competitor. Many other offshore regattas recommend or require attendance at these seminars for their participants.

US Sailing Sanction Safety at Sea (SAS) courses follow a curriculum developed by US Sailing from the ISAF Offshore Special Regulations (OSR). There are two types of courses: a one-day classroom seminar, and a two-day seminar that adds a day of practical, hands-on and in the water training. Full details are at <http://offshore.ussailing.org/SAS/Seminars.htm>.

In the Great Lakes, almost all SAS seminars offered are of the one-day variety. A full schedule of all such seminars nationwide is at http://offshore.ussailing.org/SAS/Seminars/SAS_Calendar.htm. The Chicago Yacht Club is hosting a SAS seminar on April 20, at its Belmont Station. For details, see <http://www.cycracetomackinac.com/events/2013-us-sailing-safety-at-sea-seminar/>.

In all such seminars, topics discussed include personal safety equipment; man overboard prevention and recovery; emergency communications; and search and rescue procedures. Most courses also cover storm tactics; abandoning ship and life

rafts; hypothermia and medical issues; and fires onboard. Each SAS is tailored by the organizer for local conditions and events, so the Chicago area ones usually focus on the Mac.

It should be noted that SAS seminars are useful to cruisers and delivery crews as well as racers; we all face similar conditions and threats when sailing offshore.

The Mac Committee strongly encourages ALL crew in our race to attend a SAS seminar.

In addition to SAS, there are numerous other training opportunities which will make your race safer.

Although it is not a requirement of the race, we strongly encourage all crew to have several members trained in CPR and First Aid. Your local Red Cross is an easy and inexpensive way to obtain that training. American Red Cross Standard First Aid and CPR is recognized as fulfilling the ISAF OSR Senior First Aid Certification, so this would be a good class. We recommend that several people on each crew be trained to this level. To find a local class, visit <http://www.redcross.org/take-a-class>. In a later Safety Thursday we will cover the topic of medical issues and first aid more thoroughly, but now in the off season is the time to take the formal training you should have to prepare.

Other training that would improve safety would include weather training. All sailors are by nature amateur meteorologists, but formal training will help you anticipate changing weather conditions and react to them more quickly (as well as helping you sail faster!). Training is available from a wide variety of sources, from books all the way to full online coursework such as the Penn State Weather Certificate Program (<http://www.worldcampus.psu.edu/degrees-and-certificates/weather-forecasting-certificate/overview>).

Chicago Yacht Club is hosting a one-day Advanced Wind Forecasting Seminar on April 6, 2013, which would be of great benefit to Mac skippers and navigators in racing more safely and quickly. For details, see <http://www.cycracetomackinac.com/events/event/?eventid=171>.

We hope you will join us online at our Facebook page to continue the conversation on safety and safety training. Visit us at <https://www.facebook.com/ChicagoYCRaceToMackinac>. What other safety training do you recommend?

Note: The purpose of this article is to highlight some of the Mac Safety Regulations and how your crew can race the Mac as safely as possible. As always, ultimate responsibility for the safety of the crew and the decision whether to race or to stop racing is that of the skipper (RRS4, MSR2). This email is meant as a courtesy only and you should always refer to the Race Documents section of the website for the Notice of Race, Sailing Instructions and Mac Safety Regulations, which govern the race.

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www.cycracetomackinac.com.

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