

## **Health and Safety**

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The other evening I watched a television documentary about the ditching of an Airbus A320 on the Hudson River after the engines swallowed some Canada Geese and stopped running. What struck me as the most important factor ensuring there were no deaths and minimum injuries was the use of briefings and checklists. Off course we are only sailing on the river nevertheless we can use the same idea of checklists and briefings to ensure our own safe sailing.

Here is my checklist of stuff that might help us avoid injury.

### **Are we ready to sail.**

Are we fit enough for the days sailing.

Are we dressed for the sailing conditions, wetsuit, hat(maybe bump hat), gloves, buoyancy vest or lifejacket (not a self or auto inflating buoyancy vest).

Is sunscreen needed today.

### **The sailing environment today.**

What is the water temperature, river level and flow.

Know the wind strength and direction.

Know where shallows, mud-banks and fishing nets are.

Know what the patrol boats area of operation is.

Know how to recover from a capsize.

### **Rigging Area and Launching ramp**

Check that silt brought down by the river has not made the ramp slippery.

Watch for swinging yacht booms. Alert visitors to this hazard.

### **The Boat**

Is your boat serviceable to sail.

Are the requirements of safety gear and regulations met.

When rigging, watch for other people when raising or lowering the mast.

Watch for swinging booms and warn any visitors of this danger.

### **The Clubrooms**

Rain or water on the stairs and floor can create a slippery surface.

Use the plastic mats in the changing rooms to help avoid slipping.

The wind can add pressure to opening doors endangering fingers.

The control cab stairs are steep.

Know where our basic First Aid kit is.

The area around the Clubrooms has moving vehicles, trailers and things to trip over.

Talk to visitors.

**The Rescue boat**

Know the Standard Operating Procedures.

Help maintain the boats to be fit for purpose

Know the crewing levels for each situation.

Know what safety gear is needed onboard.

Be part of any crew training.

Know that launching and retrieving the rescue boats can be heavier than expected.

Know the procedure for laying of marker buoys.

**Other hazards**

The air-horn used for starting a race can be loud.

Most of us run through a similar check list in our sub-conscious and by habit every time we go sailing. This is the way it should be and the way it will ensure our sailing day is safe.

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