



## SEAMANSHIP AND SAFETY SKILLS CHECKLIST FOR PROSPECTIVE COMPETITORS

Thank you for your interest in the Chicago Yacht Club Race to Mackinac® presented by Wintrust. The safety of all competitors is a primary concern of the Chicago Yacht Club Mackinac Committee, and the primary responsibility of each skipper. The checklist below is derived from the requirements of a US Sailing Offshore Sailing course for the type of boats and offshore conditions of this race. It is the expectation of the Selections Sub-Committee that the Invited Competitor, Person-In-Charge, and appropriate crew members will be competent in these areas of seamanship and safety. We ask that you use this checklist to satisfy yourself of your competency and that of your navigator, watch captains, and other crew members prior to submitting a Request for Invitation.

**Selections Sub-Committee**  
**Chicago Yacht Club Mackinac Committee**

*The following items are strongly recommended, but are not required for an invitation to the race. These are NOT requirements and no competitor is subject to protest on these matters.*

### PREPARATION TO SAIL:

Able to:

- ☐ 1. Recognize and forecast basic local weather conditions.
- ☐ 2. Describe personal preparation such as physical fitness, clothing and sun protection.
- ☐ 3. Check auxiliary power systems: location and operation of engine controls, fuel filters, alternator, engine mechanical and fluids check, transmission controls, shut off valves, ventilation system, and engine cooling system.
- ☐ 4. Check the electrical system: main battery switch, electrical control panel, battery fluids and terminals.
- ☐ 5. Locate the bilge pump system for manual and electrical pumps, intake maintenance, and bilge pump alarms and fuses
- ☐ 6. Check and locate the anchoring system: rodes, shackles, and chain.
- ☐ 7. Check the sail inventory and understand the proper selection of sails for differing weather conditions.
- ☐ 8. Check the security and operation of all hatches, ports and companionways.
- ☐ 9. Check the inventory and location of all on board tools and spare parts.
- ☐ 10. Determine the motoring range under power and the vessel's fuel capacity.
- ☐ 11. Locate all required documentation for the crew and vessel.

### CREW OPERATION AND SKILLS:

Able to:

- ☐ 1. Describe the proper wearing of life jackets and the use of throwable floatation and rescue devices.
- ☐ 2. Demonstrate tying and the use of: stopper knot, bowline, cleat hitch and clove hitch.
- ☐ 3. Describe winch types, proper operation, and the procedure for clearing a fouled winch.
- ☐ 4. Properly heave a line for towing or docking.
- ☐ 5. Describe crew responsibilities and operational communications.
- ☐ 6. Demonstrate proper sail trimming and shaping techniques.
- ☐ 7. Describe proper VHF radio procedure, operation of controls, channel usage, weather receiving, and emergency procedures
- ☐ 8. Describe minimum US Coast Guard safety requirements for auxiliary powered vessels.
- ☐ 9. Explain the purpose and proper use of a radar reflector.
- ☐ 10. Describe how to safely go aloft.
- ☐ 11. Describe proper rafting techniques at docks and anchorages and with other vessels.
- ☐ 12. Operate the stove and its controls and shut off valves.
- ☐ 13. Properly operate the head, and its controls and valves.

## NAVIGATION:

- ☐ 1. Ability to use for navigation: a plotter, parallel rules, dividers, a clock, a hand bearing compass, a ship's compass, a depth sounder, a knot log and binoculars.
- ☐ 2. Is familiar with the International and Inland Navigation Rules 1 through 19, and rules 20 through 31 regarding the identification of day shapes, and rules 32 through 38 regarding sound signals.
- ☐ 3. Is familiar with basic chart reading and identification of chart symbols and landmarks.
- ☐ 4. Can describe aids to navigation: channel markers, day markers, regulatory markers, and other markers specific to Lake Michigan waters.
- ☐ 5. Can describe the two different designs for diver's flags.
- ☐ 6. Ability to perform basic dead reckoning, plotting, calculating speed/distance/time, and taking bearings and fixes.
- ☐ 7. Is familiar with the magnetic and electrical influences that may disrupt accurate compass readings.
- ☐ 8. Can define true and magnetic compass readings, and the application of variation and deviation.
- ☐ 9. Is familiar with considerations, responsibilities and special techniques for restricted visibility navigation.
- ☐ 10. Can use electronic navigation devices such as GPS for positioning and determining a course to steer.
- ☐ 11. Can demonstrate the data entry use of a navigation log.
- ☐ 12. Can describe the use and operation of electronic navigation instruments such as Knot meters, Depth Sounders, Wind Speed/Direction Indicators, Global Positioning Systems, VHF Radio, Chart Plotters, (and if your vessel is so equipped, Radar, Satellite weather, and Personal Computers, tablets, or phones with charting software).
- ☐ 13. Is familiar with sources for information and use of appropriate publications such as: NOAA Chart #1, Coast Pilots, Light Lists, Navigation Rules, Local Notice to mariners, Federal Requirements for recreational Boaters, and local rules and regulations.
- ☐ 14. Can determine your position on a chart based on casual observations, then confirmed by traditional piloting techniques.
- ☐ 15. Has an understanding of current, set and drift and its effects. Can determine current from known set and drift, then pilot an estimated position.

- ☐ 16. Can plot a fix using two or more bearings on different objects and a fix using at least one range (transit) as a Line of Position.
- ☐ 17. Can plot a running fix.
- ☐ 18. Is familiar with bow and beam bearings, doubling the angle on the bow, and their limitations and dangers.

## SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

- ☐ 1. Can locate first aid kit and identify its contents and use.
- ☐ 2. Knows treatment for victims of overheating, hypothermia and seasickness.
- ☐ 3. Can determine the location, use and regulations for safety flares.
- ☐ 4. Knows at least eight different distress and emergency signals.
- ☐ 5. Knows the US Coast Guard and ORC requirements for safety equipment.
- ☐ 6. Can describe the common recovery methods after going aground.
- ☐ 7. Is familiar with firefighting extinguishers on board: regulations, types, location and operation.
- ☐ 8. Knows the location and operation of the emergency steering system and boat control during a failure of the steering system.
- ☐ 9. Is familiar with proper towing techniques: maneuvering onto a tow, handling and securing a towline, chafing a protection, boat speed, dropping off a tow, and communications.
- ☐ 10. Can demonstrate proper deck safety and the use of life jackets, safety harnesses and jack lines during heavy weather conditions.
- ☐ 11. Can explain proper fueling techniques and potential hazards.
- ☐ 12. Can describe emergency procedures and equipment in the event you have struck an obstruction or holed your vessel in deep water.
- ☐ 13. Can describe a plan of action in the event of a dismasting in heavy wind and sea conditions.
- ☐ 14. Can describe a plan of action and deployment procedure if you suspect that your vessel is in danger of sinking, and you have a life raft aboard. Can describe how you were prepared for this unlikely event.
- ☐ 15. Can describe weather warning light and flag displays for small craft, gales, storms, and hurricane level winds.