Use and Care of PRSA Skiffs

Highlights

- Check gas level. Fill tank if below ⅔ full. Regular gas is what Yamaha recommends and all grades of gas include the detergents that keep the injectors and valve seats clean. (We recommend the Shell station in Old Town Alexandria to avoid contamination). Gas cans are in the bench storage seat behind the 17. Add gas using the gas can with the rotating hose at the bottom. Use the long funnel to fill that can from the other.
- Install plugs after uncovering the boat. Each skiff has *three* transom drain plugs.
- Motors should be *up* to tow boat out of slip, across lot, and launch. Motor should be *up* to retrieve, tow, and park in dry sail slip. Lower motor after boat is parked (backing in with the motor down could result in striking the parking stop and damaging the motor).
- Both boats are launched and retrieved using the ramp. When retrieving, carefully center the boat so that the long bunks on the trailer run *inside* the long ribs on the bottom of the boat. The bunks should be flat (not turned up on narrow edge).
- **Remember to turn the battery switch to OFF at the end of the day**. Otherwise, the battery will be dead next week. Also, please crank up the tongue jack as far as it will go at the end of the day, so that rain water will drain.
- When leaving and entering the marina, please motor ***all*** the way down the VA shore channel, cross the channel, and motor up the shipping channel on the MD shore. Whether or not there is visible hydrilla, please do ***not*** cut across the river. Cutting across the mud flats has led to clogged water intake and damaged the motors and props. Stay in marked channels!
- We ***strongly discourage*** towing boats out to the race course. If there is not enough wind to sail, you should postpone ashore and reassess conditions periodically.
- Have your boat safety certificate with you. Though rarely enforced, it is the law. Get one at http://www.boatus.org/onlinecourse.

Towing and Launching

- Both boats are ramp launched. Leave the cover at the dry slip. Take a photo of the cover before removing so that you are sure to recover the boat properly.
- Install the *three* drain plugs from the outside. Flip handle down on the rubber drain plugs to seal.
- Check gas level. Fill tank if below ⅔ full. Premium gas at highest octane should be used. (We recommend the Shell station in Old Town Alexandria to avoid contamination). Add gas using the long funnel(s) stored under the console.
- Engine should be in the *up* position for trailering and launching. The toggle switch on the throttle handle will raise and lower it.

- Trailer has 2” hitch, but, can be towed in the yard with 1 7/8” ball. Be sure hitch is seated on ball and attach the safety chains as insurance.
- Once at the ramp, remove winch bow strap and safety chain before backing down ramp. Double check that transom plugs are in and firmly seated.
- Lower bumpers.
- A helper on the dock should be holding onto the painter. Back down ramp until boat floats free.

Starting

- Turn battery switch to the on position.
- Lower engine using the toggle switch on throttle handle.
- **Attach safety lanyard**; engine will crank but won’t start, without it (buzzer sounds).
- Put gearshift in neutral.
- Insert key and start as you would your car, it has electronic fuel injection.
- ***Important*:** look to see that water is coming out of the engine (left Side as you look back). If not, shut it off and find the vice commodore!

If Motor Does Not Crank or Start, DO NOT OPEN COVER

Does not crank:

- Is controller in neutral?
- Is prop fouled with a dock or other line?
- Is battery dead (blow horn to test it)? Was the battery switch left on? If dead or very low and you know how to jump start a car, you can jump start this motor in the same way. Jumper cables are in the seat of the smaller skiff.

Cranks but does not start:

- Check that the safety lanyard is attached.
- Check that there is some gas in the tank.

On The Water

- When leaving and entering the marina, please motor ***all*** the way down the VA shore channel, cross the channel, and motor up the shipping channel on the MD shore. Whether or not there is visible hydrilla, please do ***not*** cut across the river. Cutting across the mud flats has led to clogged water intake and damaged the motors and props. Stay in marked channels!
- We ***strongly discourage*** towing boats out to the race course. If there is not enough wind to sail, you should postpone ashore and reassess conditions periodically. Towing boats back to WSM after the racing is advisable only in exceptional conditions (absolutely no wind, extreme heat). In such circumstances, we also recommend dropping boats near the end of the airport pier rather than attempting to tow all the way back up the VA channel.
- Keep speed down while docking, turning and approaching boats and people.

- The boat has a very flat bottom and will skid sideways. There is no center board, so turning rate is controlled by inertia and engine power/helm. Plan for this when approaching docks, capsized boats, etc.
- Be conscious of your speed and stay in control! Use neutral to control boat speed; idle is sometimes too fast.
- Mind the wind and current when near people in the water or near other objects.
- Registration is taped to the underside of the seat, if needed.
- While conducting racing we recommend that, if safety allows, you shut off the engine of any skiff that is anchored.

Retrieving

- Raise motor.
- Turn off bilge pump, VHF radio, and anything else that uses the battery.
- Turn battery switch to OFF.
- Unwind the strap on the trailer about 4 feet.
- Back trailer down until wheel fenders are almost submerged.
- Pull boat forward onto the trailer using the bow line. A helper should keep the stern centered.
- Check to be sure the long bunks on the trailer are ***flat*** and are ***inside*** the long ribs on the bottom of the boat. If not, back boat into water and try again.
- Remove the three drain plugs on the 19 and the five on the 17.

Cleaning and storing

- Wash the boat (soap and brush in seat).
- Return all equipment (paddles, boat hooks, life jackets, anchors) to their storage positions. Everything should be stored. Throw away trash.
- Rotate antenna to down position.
- Lower the engine once the boat is back in the dry slip (this helps the engine drain properly).
- **Make sure the battery switch is OFF.**
- Replace cover and make sure it is well tied down in case of windy weather.
- Crank the tongue jack all the way up so rain water will drain out the back.

Post-Race Report

- Email an equipment report to prsaboard@gmail.com, including information on the gas level in each skiff as well as any damage/breakage, operating problems, maintenance issues or other information that the next user of the boat would need to know.