



Use and Care of PRSA Skiffs

Highlights

- Check gas level. Fill tank if below $\frac{2}{3}$ 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.
- 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.
- 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 $\frac{2}{3}$ 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)? 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.

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.

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.