

Safety Procedures and Information Pender Island Junior Sailing Association (PIJSA)

Version 1.5

V 1.2 Updated August 17, 2014

V 1.3 Updated October 15, 2014

V 1.4 Updated March 18, 2017

V 1.5 Updated April 28, 2019

Introduction

This document is organized such that students and their parents or other responsible persons can read in Part 1 the precautions that are necessary to safely enjoy the courses that are offered. Directors will be familiar with both Part 1 and Part 2, which has more detailed information and procedures, which others are welcomed to review. Volunteers should read all of the document. The Association, which has been giving courses since 1993, has not had a serious incident.

If participants have questions and concerns during the courses, please feel free to speak to the instructor or any Director. Your safety remains a top concern and anything you share will be discussed and reviewed at the Board level usually the same day.

Part 1: Information for Students, Parents, etc.

Index: Part 1

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1. Participant Requirements

Clothing

A participant should have:

- A hat or cap to provide shade from the sun.
- Some warmer clothing in case they get cold or chilled.
- A change of clothes and towel for when they get wet.
- Consider water or beach shoes as the beach is pebbles, not sand.
- Suitable gloves that can help stop ropes chaffing hands may be used.

Supplies

A participant should bring for the day:

- Adequate water. (PIJSA will have extra).
- Suitable lunch except for the Friday BBQ. (See Food Allergies section 5e).
- Sunscreen required (PIJSA will have extra) and inexpensive sunglasses optional.

- Appropriate medicines for conditions and allergies. (PIJSA has Benedryl and Epi-Pens, some dated).

Avoidances

A participant should:

- Not take a cell phone in the boat.
- Secure long hair so it does not become entangled in rigging on the boat.

Behaviour

A participant will:

- Obey instructions from the instructors and Directors, especially when on the water.
- Be courteous to others in the boat, especially those who are first time sailors.

2. Instructor Certification

PIJSA on water instructors are certified by Sail Canada to teach the **CANSail levels 1, 2, 3 & 4 courses**. This certification includes quality assurance of instructor technical knowledge and student assessments. Instructors are also trained in basic first aid for on-water emergencies. Instructors are periodically recertified by Sail Canada, including on-site visits to our Association.

3. Medical Services

The outcome of a minor or major incident may require medical services. Pender Island has a Health Centre staffed by appropriate medical personnel to provide primary health care. Ambulance service is provided by an on-call BC Ambulance Service. Generally, minor medical attention at the Health Centre will not result in any charges to BC residents, other Canadians, and even non-Canadians. However, charges will apply for emergency services for an injury or condition that requires evacuation from the Island. This evacuation can be by ambulance on a ferry; a boat ambulance, or an air ambulance depending upon the urgency. In many cases, BC residents may be covered for these services; others should consider appropriate insurance.

The hours of operation of the courses coincide with the Pender Island Medical Clinic service periods. PIJSA reserves the right to seek medical treatment for a student in the event that no responsible person is present.

4. On Water Safety Issues and Information

a) Clothing

July and August on Pender Island are generally pleasant with moderate winds and sunny skies. Nevertheless, changes can rapidly occur and students should be prepared for weather deterioration. On sunny days, students should regularly apply sunscreen. The wearing of water tolerant shoes and a hat are strongly encouraged. Sun glasses and gloves are desirable. A change of clothes given the marine environment is required. Cooler temperatures with rain will require appropriate modifications to ensure students remain warm and can face sustained time on the water. A daily weather check is important before leaving the house.

b) Personal Flotation Devices and Swimming

The need to wear lifejackets is continuously stressed with all students. PFDs are supplied by PIJSA and may be supplemented by individuals using their own life jackets. All PFDs must be certified to Canadian

Coast Guard standards. All PFDs will have whistles, the use of which will be limited to emergency situations. PFDs must be worn fully buckled when on the water. **Inflatable PFDs are not acceptable to be used by students during class sessions.**

All participants should visually verify that fellow sailors are wearing their PFDs with a whistle attached. Near-shore omissions will result in immediate return of that vessel to the beach. Delayed oversights will be replenished from spare PFDs and/or whistles carried in the safety boat in the event a student does get on the water without a PFD or whistle.

Students will have to demonstrate swimming ability when wearing a PFD at the beginning of each course and will participate in a capsizing exercise the next day. Because these are considered important requirements with respect to safety, all students must participate in order to continue in the course.

c) Electronics

Sailing requires continuous vigilance for wind shifts by the entire boat team. There is a zero tolerance policy for students to take electronic equipment in the boats and mobile devices when on shore should only be used for essential contacting. Cameras must be used only when on land.

d) Boating Equipment

The sailing school is equipped with 5 Laser 1s, 2-3 Laser 2s, 2 Bytes, and 6 Pirate class boats. The Bytes are primarily for lighter students. The school has 2 motorized support boats (zodiacs) identified as "Laser coach boat" and "Pirate coach boat" for VHF communication. An additional support boat will be on the beach ready for use. School support boats will only be refuelled and piloted by instructors, Directors and volunteers familiar with outboard motors.

No student-manned boat may leave the beach area until the main instructor boat is underway. Only once this vessel is in position will other boats leave. Depending on student proficiency, Pirate boat departures may initially be assisted by Directors and volunteers. Students should be able to handle this challenge by mid-week.

The sailing program co-mingles CanSail Level 1 and 2 students to ensure a balance of competencies in each boat. Where necessary, a Director or volunteer may accompany a boat to stabilize and provide sailor feedback on initial sorties. The latter is only expected to happen on the initial day and is on an exception basis.

All boats will be rigged and de-rigged by students. Instructors assisted by Directors and volunteers as needed will support these efforts and verify rigging details as well as the loading of supplementary safety devices such as bailers and paddles.

e) Rules of Navigation

In order to reduce the likelihood of a collision the following rules will be explained to the students and will be instructed to follow them:

- Moored boats are to be passed at their stern so the student boat is downwind of the moored boat as this ensures that the student boat will tend to be moved away from the moored boat.

- Students are to pass other boats that are under sail on the downwind side which is the side on which the sails are set.
- Students are to try to keep their boats separated by the length of 3 boats either from behind or on the side when passing.

f) Designated Sailing Area

In order to minimize moored obstacles, the club deploys high visibility buoys to delineate our main training area. This generally is close to the shoreline near the club house. As students gain skills, they will sail outside these boundaries accompanied by an instructor in a coach boat. Their horizon will increase commensurate with skill level and weather conditions and the final day will normally include a trip to and from Mortimer Spit (accompanied by the support boats).

Beginner sailors (Levels 1 & 2) are not authorized to sail beyond Mortimer Spit, irrespective of wind conditions as this is considered the limit for sighting and deployment in case of emergencies. **Advanced sailors** (Levels 3 & 4) are permitted to group sail beyond Mortimer when accompanied by an instructor boat. Under no circumstances will any boats sail outside of Browning Harbour.

g) Weather

Browning Harbour is renowned for stable sailing conditions with a gentle onshore breeze and very little current. The summer months are generally sunny, with 5-10 knots winds and very little precipitation. Thunderstorms are a rarity. Nevertheless, depending on conditions and our students' skill levels, PIJSA may decide to replace water time with land-based teaching as a safety precaution. If the weather changes are judged dangerous an emergency claxon will sound in 5 bursts and all student boats must return to shore immediately.

During strong winds the following precautions will be taken as judged necessary by the Director-in-Charge:

- Have those who have sailed before go out to test the conditions.
- Remove the jibs from the Pirates.
- Reef the Laser 2 sails.
- Put two students on the Laser 1s.
- Have a volunteer or Director accompany the instructors in the zodiac(s).

h) Injury Processing

Individuals may be incapacitated while on the water. All serious accidents must be communicated to shore support using VHF channel 73. Shore support will commence emergency land notifications including 911 and if necessary notifying our local RC Marine Search & Rescue craft located in the vicinity through Victoria Coast Guard radio on Channel 16. At least one Board Member shall have a cell phone. The emergency claxon will sound in 5 bursts and all student boats must return to shore immediately. Shore support will ensure the access area is cleared for arrival of emergency services. Depending on the situation, the support boats will be deployed to assist the injured person or accompany remaining boats to shore. The individual's registration document (held in the clubhouse) will be scrutinized and key contacts will be called and supplied with known relevant information. Once the injured person has been tended to by qualified emergency personnel, shore support will assist students who may be upset, and secure the boats if necessary. **See section Part 2, Medical Emergency Guidelines Section 1 for details.**

5. Other Safety Information

a) Rigging of Boats

Students are responsible for boat rigging and take-down at the end of the day. All boats will be hand-trailerred to the beach for rigging. All boats will be oriented bow-to-wind before commencing rigging in order to simplify sail hoisting and to prevent the booms from swinging in the wind. After this, boats will be moved into the water stern first, and trailers returned to the top of the beach.

b) Student Safety

PIJSA is committed to prevent any incidents of harassment from any cause, and will emphasize the need for students to be considerate of each other both on and off the water. Washrooms are available in the lower level of the Port Browning Pub near the Marina office. Boys and girls must go by twos or be accompanied by a suitable adult.

c) First Aid Kit

A comprehensive kit is located on the rear shelf of the club house. Access is generally limited to Directors and assigned volunteers. The kit must be returned to this location and is verified before each week of classes to ensure necessary materials are on hand. A list of the minimal contents is in the black binder which is on the work platform, adjacent to the rudders' deck.

d) Key Contact Numbers

A list of all possible emergency contact phone numbers is maintained in the club house. The assigned Directors will have at least one mobile phone for emergency calls. Emergency services should be contacted using 911. Dialling 911 ensures officials are notified and that adequate resources are directed to the issue. It is important to assign one person to remain with the phone to provide details as requested by the 911 coordinator. Only resort to local services (police/fire/medical etc.) after the 911 call is completed.

e) Medical Information

Student medical records and contact phone numbers are maintained in a black binder in the club house. This information is updated before the Monday morning of each course. If the information has not been received by PIJSA, the student or appropriate responsible person shall be asked to provide the information at the first meeting on Monday.

6. Risk Assessment

The sailing environment provides unique situations for our participants. This safety plan does NOT focus on items with a remote likelihood of happening. Plans addressing catastrophic fires, floods and earthquakes already exist with various government agencies. The club will follow directives as issued by government agencies in those circumstances.

This safety plan focuses on issues under the control of participants. Based on past experience, the following items are considered most likely to reoccur over the summer. The relative rankings will be evaluated annually by the Safety Committee to determine any changes/additions which should be

addressed. In addition, any of the below-noted issues will be discussed at the following morning's group meeting to avoid a recurrence.

Key issues for on-water participants:

a) Boom Strike to Head [Frequency: weekly]

The base of a mainsail is a hollow metal rod-like structure called the boom that usually moves above the heads of the sailors. Failure to pay attention to this movement can result in a "boom strike" to the head. PIJSA does cover the booms of the Pirate boats with "pool noodles" to soften these strikes. The Instructor will assess severity and advise club shore support by VHF using channel 73. If there is any doubt about the severity of the boom strike the student will be relayed to shore in a motorized boat. For details about medical treatment see Part 2, Medical Emergency Guidelines (Section 1), c-2

b) Forgotten PFD, Whistles [Frequency: weekly], **See 4-b) above**

c) Collision [Frequency: Very rare for moored vessels, twice per week between club boats]

A designated sail training area will be outlined with high visibility buoys. Outlining the training area in this way is an attempt to reduce the number of moored vessels in proximity to the primary teaching area. Students will have been advised on navigation rules on their first day and in particular, moored vessels must be passed at their stern (rear).

Where collisions are unavoidable, **do not try to stop the collision with hands as fingers can be crushed.** Keep hands inside the boat at all times. In cases of glancing collisions between club boats, vessels are assessed for worthiness and students checked for any personal injury.

d) Mild Sunstroke, Sunburn and Heat Exhaustion [Frequency: weekly]

In warm summer weather with bright sun, students can suffer the effects of heat exhaustion and sunburn. Should symptoms such as nausea occur, Directors and volunteers will take action to cool students and get them out of the sun and cool them down. For more details of action to be taken see Part 2, Medical Emergency Guidelines Section (Section1), c-3).

e) Allergic Reactions

[Frequency: Bites are weekly, allergic reactions are rare in any season]

From experience PIJSA knows that allergic reactions can result from: 1. insect bites; 2. consuming food to which the student is allergic; 3. contacts with dogs. It is critical that sailors with allergies come equipped with appropriate antidotes and that the Director-in-Charge is advised at the beginning of the course of the nature and severity of any allergies.

1. Insect bites are most common on the beach, but can occur on the water. PIJSA recommends fanny packs with sealed dosages (including Epi-Pens) for on-water application if necessary.

2. **PIJSA cannot attend to all food allergies.** Students with food allergies who attend the Friday lunch BBQ should have a parent or guardian attend with them to ensure appropriate food is consumed, or bring their own food if necessary. If the allergy is severe such that proximity is a problem, PIJSA must be informed.

3. Hamilton Beach is used by people who walk their dogs often off leash.

See Part 2, Medical Emergency Guidelines (Section 1), c-5

f) Unplanned Capsize [Frequency: infrequent for Levels 1 & 2, frequent for Levels 3 & 4]

Students are taught righting processes as part of their curriculum. This is conducted in stable conditions under the auspices of the instructor. Occasionally, boats will unintentionally capsize. Shore Support will notify the instructor using VHF channel 73 and sound a single blast on the alarm horn for capsizes when the instructor does not respond to the radio. The instructor will assist people in the water to right overturned sailboats and, if necessary, a tow to shore. Instructors and Directors need to pay attention for symptoms of hypothermia should students spend sufficient time in the water following a capsize incident. See Section Medical Emergency Guidelines Part 2 section 4c-4) for response to symptoms of hypothermia.

Part 2: Information for Directors and Volunteers

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- 2. Board Member Participation**
- 3. End of Day/Week Reflection**
- 4. Record of Past Safety Improvements**

1. Medical Emergency Guidelines

a) Protocols for Medical Emergency

If the injury or condition is judge to be serious, 911 should be called ASAP.

Dial 911 for emergency support. State “This is the Pender Island Junior Sailing. My name is xxxxxx. We are located on the beach at the bottom of Hamilton Road/Oak Road at the head of Browning Harbour on North Pender. We require emergency services support for xxxx”. On arrival of the emergency services, provide the medical information submitted on registration to the emergency care-givers if the parents or guardians are not present.

However, in most cases, appropriate attention and first aid should suffice, or if in doubt the student should be taken to the Health Clinic by a Director or volunteer if the family is absent. It should be remembered that the Clinic closes over lunch, thus if it is close to 12 noon, the clinic should be called to warn them of the arrival. Over lunch, try calling the Clinic, doctors number; the phone should be answered or ring through to an answering service.

If the parents, guardians or responsible adults are not present on the beach, they should be contacted ASAP by someone other than the Director-in-Charge who should be dealing with the accident.

The below duties may vary per circumstances.

The Director in-Charge will assign another Director to:

- handle outside communications,
- inform parents/guardians, and
- keep Oak Road free of boat launchings to facilitate emergency crew access.

A second Director or assigned volunteer may be assigned to:

- communicate with instructors,
- obtain first aid kit/blankets and forward to staff on water if necessary, and
- liaise with instructor using VHF channel 73

One or more additional Directors or assigned volunteers will be assigned to:

- assist with injured person(s), and
- handle on-water students' return to shore.

The Director in-Charge will:

- Remain calm and reassuring.
- Assess the situation and solicit advice from those with any first aid experience, and defer to any family members or responsible adult.
- Ensure that assistance is provided to students or parents showing signs of stress.
- Once emergency crews arrive, summarize the situation and provide any support logistics requested.
- After injured person is attended to and under medical supervision, secure boats on beach and provide support to students.
- Remain on site until all students have been picked up by guardians. Provide synopsis to parents.
- If the accident is serious, the insurance company carrying the policy may need to be notified by a member of the Executive when there is an indication of action against PIJSA.
- All serious injuries will require detailed documentation outlining the situation, actions taken and timeline for interventions.

b) Precautionary.

The first aid kit will be inspected prior to the start of each week of courses to ensure that supplies are current. This will include an Epi-Pen. Out-of-date Epi-Pens can be used as a back-up, if they are not cloudy.

A cooler with ice will keep at least 1 gal of water to supplement that brought by students and others. Keep a "cold pack" on the ice for first aid.

Directors and volunteers must be aware of the first aid kit location and emergency numbers located in the shed.

c) Most Likely Accidents and Responses to them.

1. Cuts and Abrasions

Minor cuts and abrasions should be cleaned using a saline solution. Apply bandaids or Telfa pads (non-stick), gauze, and bandage as appropriate to the size of the injury. **Do not** apply any topical treatment to the wound. Do not apply a cold pack as this will inhibit blood clotting.

If the cut is deep, the student should be taken to the clinic for possible stitches.

If there is considerable blood flow, find where applying pressure lessens the flow, and if necessary also elevate a limb above the heart.

2. Possible Concussion

Most commonly caused by the boom, which may also cause a cut or abrasion. Normally this injury will produce a large “goose-egg” swelling which is best treated with a cold pack, but is not a cause for concern unless symptoms of concussion are observed. Cold compresses will be applied to contain swelling at which point further medical intervention may be undertaken. Shore support will check for concussion symptoms and, if a concussion is suspected, will transport individuals to the medical clinic before authorizing a return to active sailing. Concussion will be exhibited by any of: disorientation, motor control impairment, and even unconsciousness. Unconsciousness shall require a 911 call, which may be required for the other symptoms, and in all cases must lead to a trip to the Health Clinic. Delayed symptoms may include a very bad headache and/or nausea. These should be checked at the Health Clinic

3. Sunstroke or Heat Exhaustion

Nausea is a common symptom. The student needs to be cooled down. The student should be in the shade; cool water can be applied; drinking water to hydrate should occur. Probably should go home

To reduce the possibility of sun and heat effects, students should apply protective sunscreen, and wear appropriate clothing including hats while on the water. Regular hydration and food consumption will also be scheduled. Where incidents of excessive exposure occur, the on-water instructor will advise shore support and the student will be conveyed to shore. Shade, rehydration and possible cooling using water-soaked cloths will be started. If necessary, the individual will be driven to the medical clinic.

4. Hypothermia

Thin children in particular can get cold very quickly. If shivering persists, students should go into the shed and remove all wet clothing (one reason for a change of clothing always being available). Be given the available blankets, and sit in the sun or in a heated car. Providing a warm drink can help.

5. Allergic Reactions

Pender Island, including the area around Junior Sailing Station, is noted for **wasp nests** which are destroyed when found. In the rare case of a sting, Benadryl tablets and an Epi-Pen are stored in the First Aid box on the club house rear wall shelf. Directors have been instructed in its use and will determine application based on the individual’s reaction to any sting.

The Club holds an end of week BBQ which may be preceded by a race to Mortimer Spit. PIJSA is too small an organization to provide for all food allergies. Those with food allergies may need to bring their own food. Students with severe food allergies should have parents, guardians or other responsible adult present at the BBQ.

Benedryl is available in the first aid kit, but the Epi-Pen should be used if there is any doubt about the severity. If the student is familiar with its use, let them self-administer, or a family member. Call 911 immediately, and wait for the responders.

2. Board Member Participation

PIJSA Board has a Safety Committee consisting of three Board Members. The Safety Committee is

chaired by the Safety Officer who manages the Safety Program.

Directors attend regular board meetings and are active participants in managing the club sailing program. This includes directly sharing safety issues with participants while attending the courses

Directors actively discuss safety issues and will determine and undertake preventive measures as they arise during sailing operations. Board members will also evaluate parent proposals regarding safety concerns.

3. End of Day/Week Reflection

Any safety issues arising during the course of the day shall be informally discussed among the attending Directors and instructors. Issues will be documented and additional safety measures may be adopted where appropriate. The issue and planned action will be discussed with students, instructors and parents the following morning before launch.

An informal session with Directors and volunteers is held at the end of each training week. Among other items, safety issues will be discussed and a review of mitigating action completed. These will be put into place for the following week of training. In order for the learnings from the week to be transmitted to those not at the training session the Director-in-Charge will circulate an email to other directors including important issues.

A formal Board meeting will review issues and preventive measures when necessary.

4. Record of Past Safety Improvements

Safety is a continuous process requiring vigilance and adaptation. The Board is committed to making the necessary changes to reduce risk for our students. During the past years PIJSA has implemented the following safety improvements.

Implemented in Calendar 2014

Acquired a **2nd support boat** with motor propulsion. The boat serves as a back-up unit for emergencies and supports Laser sailors.

Obtained high visibility **buoys to mark the main teaching area**. Our objective is to reduce the number of moored vessels in a Designated Sailing area.

Developed an easy to understand **Safety Plan** to be shared with Instructors, volunteers and Board Members.

Acquired **VHF radios** and agreed communication protocol.

Developed Board/Safety **Attendance Calendar**.

Sent all Board Members for **VHF certification**.

Implemented for Calendar 2015

~~Tested replacing aluminum booms with plasticized material to reduce the impact of potential strikes. (This item was deemed impractical and will not be adopted.)~~

Extended the Designated Sailing Area with further buoys and develop usage protocol.

Enhanced the written **Safety Plan** and pro-actively shared with students and guardians.

Implemented corrective process to ensure **PFDs availability on the water** if forgotten.

Revisited the boat rigging process to reduce potential boom swings and potential sail snags.
Acquired caps to easily **identify Board Members** on duty.

Implemented for Calendar 2016

Acquired an additional support boat (currently have 3 support vessels).
Updated student life vest inventory with new PFDs and whistles.
Acquired caps to identify beach support persons.
Improved documentation detailing Director and Volunteer duties.

Implemented for Calendar 2017

Bought more powerful marine engine for 2nd support boat (currently have 3 support boats).
Developed new registration form to obtain all student information before the start of a course.
Acquired another Laser 2 and Byte for the Level 3 and 4 courses.
Updated the Safety Plan.
Acquired another handheld radio giving one spare to needs

Implemented For Calendar 2019

Major revision of Safety Plan by including the Medical Emergency Guidelines, elements of Beach Attendance Duties and elements of Notes for Director in Charge at the Beach, **and renamed Safety Procedures and Information**
Replaced Flying Junior boats with newer Pirate vessels to mitigate rigging/boat breakdowns.
Another Laser 2 was added to give greater capacity for use of 2-person boats at advanced level
Another Byte was added to give greater capacity for lighter sailors at the advanced level
Added more PFDs
Added “pool noodles” to Pirate booms to reduce severity of boom strikes

Latest Review/Amendment by Board Members is August 17, 2014

Scheduled Review by Parent/Guardian Representatives in September 2014

Scheduled Review by Royal Canadian Marine Search & Rescue Representative in October 2014

Scheduled Approval of Updates by PIJSA Board in Fall 2014