

WRC Safety Boat - draft guidance on using the safety boat : Honda Honwave T35-AE

All drivers should read and understand RowSafe 2020, and the launch user manual ([website](#))

Launching:

Check the safety kit equipment is in the bowbag in the boat, plus enough lifejackets for crew and a rescued rower.

Wheel the boat trailer out and park up outside the undercroft, watching riggers on racked boats. Ask others for help with this.

Check the inflatable tubes are at correct pressure using pressure gauge, top up if necessary using foot pump.

Make sure fuel tank is strapped in, fuel lines are connected up and clipped in correctly.

Check the outboard engine is securely clamped to the transom before launching the boat.

Lower the boat into the water at the jetty on its trailer, then tie on with the bow rope.

Park the trailer out of the way.

Starting up:

Outboard engine - run through the pre-start checks - see PDF [outboard engine checklist](#). See also [video clips](#) for starting the engine correctly.

Allow the engine to warm up to a smooth tickover before setting off.

Also - carry out a warm-up before going out rowing if the boat is to be left on standby at the jetty for the session, so it is not starting from cold if there's an emergency.

Before setting off ensure the kill-cord is attached to the motor, and your wrist or lifejacket. Loosen the bow line and bring on board before moving off.

On the water:

Keep your speed in check and avoid creating wake near rowers & other lake users. Crew should sit evenly spaced to balance the boat and keep it in trim.

Keep a good lookout for other lake users and hazards, and keep a constant eye on rowers - be aware the bow will raise as speed rises and this could limit your view ahead.

Coming back in:

[See video](#) for coming back in alongside the jetty and attaching the bow line. If the lake is low, cut the engine and use the paddle to manoeuvre alongside.

Ask others to help with the boat and trailer to recover the boat to shore. Wash the tubes and touch points, then rinse before putting away - as per washing our rowing boats. Remember (and encourage others to remember) to put the boat away after every outing. Park at the back of the undercroft out the way of boats stored on racks or bogies.

Take extra care manoeuvring into the boathouse, minding riggers etc on the way in. Detach outboard engine and fuel tank. Report any defects, damage or low fuel level to safety boat team.

In an emergency :

When the Safety Boat is crewed and on the water for the outing (Red Sessions):

In a capsize, follow the usual drill: if you capsize, stay with your boat and use it as a float, get to shallow water with the boat if possible, by straddling the boat and paddling to shore. Otherwise await assistance, keeping hold of the boat in all circumstances.

The safety boat should be near the rowers and attend as per 'Rescue' below - if not immediately at the scene, use shout, whistle, or mobile phone to alert the launch crew.

Other rowers on the outing should maintain visual contact with anyone in the water - re-assure the capsized person(s) and assist them to stay with their boat and paddle to shallower water if possible.

Keep sufficiently clear for the safety boat to approach the people being rescued.

When the Safety Boat is on standby at jetty (Green Sessions):

Pre-designate the driver/crew who will row back to fetch the launch. Session leader to note this on the risk assessment form for the outing, plus a reserve in case the designated driver is the person who capsizes.

In a capsize, capsized person to follow the usual drill as above. Other rowers on the outing to keep visual contact, re-assure the capsized person(s) and assist them to stay with their boat and paddle to shallower water if possible, while the safety boat is fetched.

The designated safety boat crew for the session will row directly back to the pontoon, tie up their rowing boat(s) leaving oars on the pontoon jetty. Bring the safety launch direct to the capsize site or shoreline.

Rescue & recovery :

Drivers - be aware of wind and stream conditions on the day. Approach the capsized person(s) from downwind and downstream, to avoid drifting onto the person in the water. If necessary, go past and turn then approach from leeward side. Slow right down when nearby and switch the engine off. If necessary use the paddles to get nearer or hold position against the wind or stream.

Driver - focus on position, steering and stability of the safety boat.

Crew (s) - focus on the capsized person. Encourage them to stay with their boat and straddle it as per capsize drill while the safety boat gets into position.

Rescue on the water - use the floating throw-line or a paddle to bring the capsized person alongside if necessary. Once alongside steady yourself first and grab the person by the arm. Get them to grab onto the boat handles. Avoid leaning out and de-stabilising the launch or risking going in yourself. Get the person out of the water onto the side tube of the safety boat, then roll them into the boat. If coherent and able to do so the person being rescued can help with this by paddling their legs to help raise themselves onto the tube.

If the person has got to shore, land the boat carefully keeping the propellor clear of the lake bed. If necessary apply first aid on shore or in the boat. If injured or unconscious alert emergency services immediately, directing them to NT Fell Foot Park Active Base. Once in the boat, get the person into a survival blanket and warm hat. Return to Fell Foot and get the person into the clubhouse for shower, change, and warm-up - if severe hypothermia is suspected seek urgent medical help or handover to ambulance if present.

Recovering capsized boats:

When the capsized boat has been paddled to shore and the rower taken back in the safety launch, if possible the rowing boat should be hauled out and left clear of the water to be recovered afterwards by others on the outing, or other club members. This will be arranged based on the location and circumstances - see separate procedures.

Do not attempt to tow a boat back while rescuing cold capsized people - priority is to get the rower(s) back to base for warm up, change of clothes - and medical help if needed.

In warm weather and good conditions where a boat has capsized but the rower(s) are deemed fit to row, row back carefully accompanied by another boat, get a shower and change at the clubhouse.

Additional COVID-19 measures:

British Rowing guidance is for safety boats to continue to be used where possible, but with relevant precautions in place.

This includes : Driver and any passengers or crew to be from the same household or support-bubble, or in an agreed rowing bubble.

PPE is advised in a rescue situation. Face coverings and gloves are placed in the safety kit bag, or bring your own. Please replenish any kit-bag PPE used.

Ensure thorough cleaning down is done after using the boat and related equipment.