



The Sailing Foundation

For the advancement of sailing in the Pacific Northwest

August, 2008

To all interested sailors.....

OK...you're planning to sail offshore this year, either racing or cruising, and you're trying to get ready. What do you do for training and skill set improvement?

One way is to have attended one of The Sailing Foundation's Safety at Sea Seminars. Earlier this year, TSF sponsored another in a long series of successful seminars for offshore sailors. More than 150 people attended the weekend event at the Seattle Parks Armory and the Center for Wooden Boats on South Lake Union.

Many of the sailors were primed for west coast offshore races—primarily Pacific Cup from San Francisco to Kaneohe, Oahu or Vic-Maui. Racers had the encouragement of the US Sailing requirement that a portion of each offshore racing crew participate in offshore safety training before participating in the race. Others were preparing for a change to the cruising life with plans for a trip down the coast to foreign ports beyond. Their encouragement was mainly in the desire to prepare as completely as possible for events that might occur while offshore.



With the assistance of Chuck Hawley, technical advisor and writer for West Marine, a member of the US Sailing Safety at Sea committee and an offshore sailor with more than 40,000 miles, who moderated the Saturday sessions, the seminar covered such subjects as:



- 10 Items you shouldn't leave without
- Crew overboard
- Storm Sails and Tactics
- Damage Control and Jury Rigging
- Liferafts, rescue at sea
- Search and Rescue

Other sessions, in smaller groups, dealt with Crew Selection and Leadership, Personal Safety Equipment, and Communications Options with emphasis on weather forecasts.

On the second day, the practical hands-on training began, with sessions on Safety Equipment and Rescue, Medical Emergencies at Sea, Weather Forecasting and Communications, and an in-the-water event where participants donned survival suits, inflatable PFD's and climbed into a life raft floating nearby.



The experience of the instructors covered hundreds of years of sailing and several hundred thousand miles of ocean. Many commented that the personal experience of the instructors made the difference—for example,

Paul Russell, who taught the Search and Rescue session actually flew search and rescue mission for the USCG and seminar attendees were very interested in his comments on how to become more visible to a helicopter pilot from above. Or take the case of the weather sessions by Jim Corenman, a member of US Sailing Safety at Sea Committee and The Sailing Foundation Board, where attendees commented that they had never found so much useful information on the subject in such a compact format.



Many found it beneficial to be able to participate hands-on in firing the flares over the water, and to see the differences between various “approved” brands. And the question and answer session at the close of each day brought out the unasked questions from several of the attendees.

A highlight of the group session was a first-hand account of an offshore rescue by a young PNW sailor who had to abandon ship off the California coast.

There was uniformly high praise for the organization and presentation of the seminar. If you attended yourself, you'll be glad you did. If not, consider the possibility of attending our next seminar which is planned for the spring of 2009. Watch for information in the local press or on our web site WWW.TheSailingFoundation.org.

The Sailing Foundation is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the promotion of sailing in the Pacific Northwest with primary emphasis on youth programs and safety at sea. The Sailing Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization and we welcome your deductible contributions which can be mailed to The Sailing Foundation, PO Box 18106, Seattle, WA 98118.