

## **How to get your Senior Skipper rating in one summer**

Study for the written test by getting a copy of the "Information for Senior Skipper Candidates" handout. A book containing general information and sailing theory such as "Colgate's Basic Sailing" would also be useful. You will also need to study the club rules, especially those relating to Senior skippers.

When you feel that you are ready for the written test, call the Rating Committee chair to set up an appointment to take the test.

While you're studying for the written test, start to practice for the dingy test. You should plan on at least 40 hours of practice before you're ready for the test. Since the test is intended to test your reaction to unusual circumstances as well as your sailing ability, a complete list of things you might be asked to do is not possible (the person giving the test will probably ask you to do something you haven't practiced). There are, however, several things which are commonly included as part of the dingy test such as sailing a Lido rudderless or sailing a Laser around a buoy. The following exercises are suggested to get you started.

Practice rudderless man overboard maneuvers in a Lido (start by sailing up to a buoy several times in a row)

Sail a Laser upwind to the edge of the Junior area and jibe as many times as possible while sailing downwind.

Sail circles around a buoy in a Lido trying to stay within 1 boat length of the buoy.

Sail circles around a buoy in a Laser trying to stay within 5 boat lengths of the buoy.

Practice rapid (< 1 minute) man overboard maneuvers in a Lido using both quick jibe and figure eight methods.

Practice man overboard maneuvers in a Lido under main or jib alone.

Sail all the junior boats at least once (including the 470).

Try Sunday morning Lido racing or give some Lido lessons.

When you feel you can do all of the above in more than 15 knots, you are probably ready for the test. Sailing a Laser is not mandatory so if you have a physical problem let your tester know.

When you feel comfortable sailing dingys, start practicing on the Ensigns. If you wait until you're almost ready for your dingy test, you will find that you will have to spend less time learning to sail Ensigns. The best way to get practice on the Ensigns is the Wednesday night lessons, but if you can't do Wednesday nights (or even if you can) ask a Senior or Cruising skipper to take you out and practice. The most important things to practice are docking and man overboard maneuvers. You should also be able to sail rudderless, sail under main or jib alone, change headsails, reef underway, and use a spinnaker.

While you're practicing, get acquainted with some Rating Committee members and let them know you're working toward your Senior rating. You're more likely to get a test if people know you've been practicing. Rating Committee members (and other Senior and Cruising skippers) are usually glad to give advice on any maneuver you're having trouble with. When you're ready for a test, call Rating Committee members (or talk to them at the dock) to set up an appointment. Most appointments are contingent on

wind, but you have a better chance of a tester being available if you let them know in advance that you want to take the test.