MAN OVERBOARD – BASIC ROUTINES
When a crew member goes over the side recovery time is of the essence. Often the quickest way is to immediately drop sails and change to engine propulsion.
There are however situations where there is no engine available or the engine is weak in heavy seaway. In such cases, the “Quick-Stop” method of man-overboard recovery is a well proven method.
The hallmark of this method is the immediate reduction of boat speed by turning to windward and then maneuvering slowly, remaining near the Person in Water (PIW). In most cases, this is better than reaching off, then gybing or tacking and returning on a reciprocal course.

QUICK-STOP
1. Shout “man overboard” and detail a crew member to spot and point to the PIW position in the water. The spotter should not take his eyes off the PIW (see Figure 1). Throw floatation with reflecting strips and drogue as close to the PIW as possible. Also press MOB button if available and prepare for a Mayday call. If a Swimmer of the Watch is assigned, he should immediately start preparations to go into the water.
2. Provide additional flotation and identification objects. Throw buoyant objects such as cockpit cushions, life rings and so on. These objects may not only come to the aid of the PIW, but will “litter the water” where he went overboard and help your spotter to keep him in view.
3. Bring boat head-to-wind and beyond (see Figure 1).
4. Allow headsail to back and further slow the boat.
5. **Keep turning with headsail backed** until wind is abaft the beam.
6. **Head on beam-to-broad reach course** for two or three lengths then go nearly dead downwind.
7. **Drop the headsail** while keeping the mainsail centred (or nearly so). The jib sheets are not slacked, even during the dousing manoeuvre, to keep them inside the lifelines.
8. **Hold the downward course** until victim is abaft the beam.
9. **Gybe.**
10. **Approach the victim** on a course of approximately 45 degrees to 60 degrees off the wind.
11. **Establish contact** with the victim with rescue line, heaving line or other device.
12. **Start recovery** over the windward side.

**Quickstop Under Spinnaker**
The same procedure is used to accommodate a spinnaker. Follow the preceding instructions. As the boat comes head-to-wind and the pole is eased to the head stay, the spinnaker halyard is lowered and the sail is gathered on the fore deck. The turn is continued through the tack and the approach phase commences.

**Quickstop in Yawls & Ketches**
Experiment with your mizzen sail. During sea trials, it was found best to drop the mizzen as soon as possible during the early phases of Quick-Stop.

**Quickstop Using Engine**
Use of the engine may not be necessary, although it’s always advisable to have it running in neutral, in case it is needed in the final approach. Check first for trailing lines!

**SHORTHANDED CREWS**
When there are only two people sailing together and a man-overboard accident occurs, the remaining crew member may have difficulty in handling the recovery alone. If the victim has sustained injuries, getting him back aboard may be almost impossible. The Quick-Stop method is simple to effect by a singlehander, especially with the use of a rescue sling (OSR para 4.24.c), a floating horsecollar device that doubles as a hoisting sling. When a crew member falls overboard the scenario should proceed as follows:
1. A cushion or other flotation is thrown while the boat is brought IMMEDIATELY head-to-wind, slowed and stopped.
2. The rescuesling is deployed by opening the bag on the stern pulpit and dropping the sling into the water. It will trail astern and draw out the line.
3. Once deployed, the boat is sailed in a wide circle around the victim with the line and sling trailing. The jib is allowed to back from head-to-wind, increasing the rate of turn.
4. Contact is established with the victim by the line and sling being drawn inward by the boat’s circling motion. The victim places the sling over his head and under his arms.
5. Upon contact, the boat is put head-to-wind again, the headsail is dropped to the deck and the main is doused.
6. As the boat drifts slowly backward, the crew begins pulling the sling and the victim to the boat. If necessary, a cockpit winch can be used to assist in this phase, which should continue until the victim is alongside and pulled up tightly until he is suspended in the sling (so that he will not drop out). But see following page for advice on a horizontal lift, which is preferable when there’s a choice.

GETTING THE PIW BACK ON BOARD

1. By far the simplest way is if the PIW can reboard from the water unaided using a specific means provided for that purpose. (ISO 15085 specifies the means of reboarding which will be mandatory for all EC recreational craft)
2. If the PIW is conscious but unable to reboard unaided, he may be able to attach a halyard to his harness or the lifting loop of his lifejacket. Instead of a halyard, a designated set of blocks and ropes to be hooked on the boom and a winch may be satisfactory.
3. If the PIW is unconscious, the Swimmer of the watch will have to go in the water, secured with a rope and possibly supported with a 50 N life vest.
4. If the PIW has no life vest or any hooks to attach to, the crew will have to arrange a temporary rope sling to tighten under the arms of the PIW.
5. If the PIW is suffering from or is likely to suffer from hypothermia, he should if possible be lifted horizontally in a Parbuckle device or a Hoisting rig method as described below. Both these however require either dedicated equipment and/or considerable skill of the crew. These methods may also be difficult to perform in heavy weather and on small boats.

PARBUCKLE DEVICE
This is an alternative to the hoisting rig. A patent version is known as the Tri-buckle. Another version is rectangular, like a climbing net. The net, or triangle of strong porous material, is clipped to the toe rail, the triangle top or net extremity clipped to a halyard extension. The casualty is manoevred or dragged alongside into the triangle or net then rolled onto the deck by hoisting the halyard.
Hypothermic aftershock may be minimised by this method which keeps the casualty essentially horizontal.

THE HOISTING RIG

Note: Since the hoisting rig was developed, more evidence has emphasised the value in keeping a victim horizontal particularly after long or hypothermic immersion. A parbuckle or horizontal lift is highly desirable (see below).

1. With the floating tether line, haul the victim alongside, preferably on the windward side, from amidships to the quarter, wherever there are available cleats and winches.
2. Pull up on the tether line (with winch assistance, if necessary) to get the victim’s head and shoulders out of the water and cleat it. The victim is now safe.
3. Attach a three-or four-part tackle to the main halyard, haul it up to a predetermined point, about 10 feet above the deck or high enough so that the victim can be hoisted up and over the lifelines. Cleat off the halyard.
4. Attach the lower end of the tackle to the (previously sized) loop in the tether line that passes through the D-rings of the sling.
5. Reeve the running end of the tackle through a sheet block or snatch block on deck and put it on a cockpit winch. Hoist the victim aboard by winching it on the running end of the tackle.