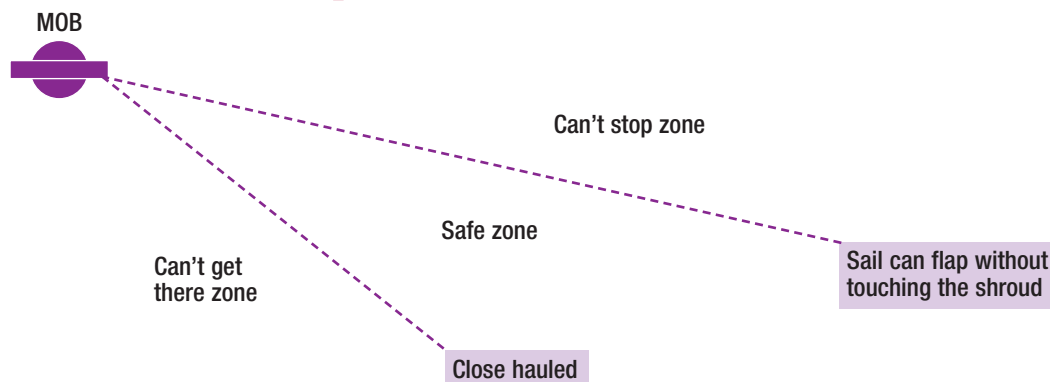


## MOB recovery Basic steps to success



This is the first in a series of articles which looks at some of the finer points of instructor and senior instructor training. I hope that you will all feel able to contribute to this. The first contribution is from experienced RYA Coach/Assessor, **Colin Ridley**.

MOB recovery is an exercise that appears on a number of RYA dinghy sailing courses from Level 1 to the instructor pre-entry test. It is an important safety exercise, but there's a bit more to it than that – it brings together a variety of aspects of boat handling, boat control and wind awareness.

Whilst a suggested method is outlined in the Instructor Handbook and Logbook and in both the Start Sailing and Advanced Sailing Handbooks, it is apparent that a number of other methods are commonly taught, with differing degrees of success. Even at instructor pre-entry level candidates seem to struggle. The two most common faults are trying to approach from within the no-go-zone, or being unable to stop.

To deal with these problems we'll start by looking at the end result and then work out how to get there...

Basically we need to approach in the safe zone, shown above. From within that zone we need to steer a straight line to the MOB and control our speed at a steady pace (by "filling and spilling" the mainsail). A steady but slow speed is preferable to a gradual slow down as slowing down the wind gradually has an increasing

effect, and tends to push the dinghy sideways. Adopting a slow but constant speed ensures the wind has a fairly constant effect throughout. So, with that as the end result, how do we get there? The Instructor Handbook and Logbook (G14) outlines the basic essentials as follows:

- 1 Regain control of the boat and turn onto a beam reach. Let the jib flap.
- 2 Maintain visual contact.
- 3 Sail away on the beam reach for about 10 boat lengths, or enough to get the boat under control.
- 4 Tack and point the boat at the MOB.
- 5 Check the main will flap.
- 6 Bear away slightly if necessary so that the final approach is on a close reach. Spill and fill the mainsail to control boat speed.
- 7 Stop to leeward and immediately beside the MOB.
- 8 Helmsman goes forward and retrieves the MOB by the windward shroud.
- 9 A flick of the tiller helps prevent the boat tacking on top of the MOB and keep it in the basic lying-to position.

Look at steps 5 and 6 very carefully as these are critical. After tacking, point the boat at the MOB. If you let the mainsail out, will it flap or touch the shroud? If it touches the shroud you are in the "can't stop zone" and so need to bear away sharply and then point at the MOB once again. Repeat this bear away and point exercise until you can point at the MOB with the main flapping clear of the shroud.

If you overdo the bear away and point up a little there's no problem so long as you are still in the "safe zone". As soon as you have to be close hauled to point at the MOB you are on the edge of the "can't get there zone" and should consider your escape route and go around again!



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If you are committed to introducing others to the sport, passionate about sailing and you would like to train the next Olympic champion, then send a CV and covering letter indicating your previous instructor experience to: Matt Bridge, Centre Manager, SailLaser, WPNSA, Portland, Dorset DT5 1SA. Email: [matt.bridge@sail-laser.com](mailto:matt.bridge@sail-laser.com)

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## Keelboat Senior Instructors

One question I have been asked since taking up the post of National Sailing Coach is 'why don't we have a senior instructor course for keelboats?' In trying to answer this question I examined some of the issues.

Who might want the award? There are some training centres who only operate keelboats, either on inland waters or tidal waters. Their instructors may have little or no dinghy sailing experience, but having passed the Keelboat Instructor course, should be perfectly competent instructors with

good communication skills and the potential to organise effective group sailing on the water. This kind of instructor would never pass a standard dinghy SI course, which is currently the only option open to them.

The question has come from a variety of organisations ranging from sailing clubs who use Broads cruisers, to Sailability groups who use a variety of accessible keelboats.

If you have a view on this subject why not let me know. You can email me on [john.thorn@rya.org.uk](mailto:john.thorn@rya.org.uk).