

Optimist Preparation

For boat inspection and season

Personal Buoyancy Aid - Must be sound, correct for child's weight and fastens correctly

Boat's Buoyancy – Three sound buoyancy bags of 30 litres capacity or equivalent tank capacity, bags must be firmly strapped and secured in the boat.

Painter – Minimum 4 meters long (from front of boat) securely fixed to boat, not mast, with bowline loop hand hold at end.

Bailers – Large, best made from plastic petrol can. Small, cut down plastic bottle or purpose made plastic bailers. Both to be tied to boat with a length of cord which allows use on both sides of boat. A large sponge is very useful

Paddle - The only suitable paddle is the 'Praddle' must be tied into boat with length of cord which allows use over both sides.

Mast – Must be sound, fits securely in mast foot and be free to rotate, must also float without taking in water. The mast must be securely fixed in the boat so that it does not come out of the mast foot during a capsize or other manoeuvres. The best way to do this is with a 'mast lock'.

Dagger Board - Must be attached securely to the boat with cord/elastic and have an elastic arrangement to hold in all positions.

Rudder Assembly – Pintles and gudgeons must be firmly fixed to boat and rudder. The top pintle should be shorter than the bottom one to ease fitting rudder. The tiller should not make contact with the boat. A tiller extension of a size to suit helms experience should be fitted.

Rudder Clip – An effective rudder clip must be fitted to prevent the rudder becoming detached but must be easy to operate when required.

Burgee – Fit securely to top of mast, must be long enough to clear the sail and top of mast.

Kicking Strap – Firmly secured to boom, cleat on mast must hold rope without slipping.

Sprit Halyard - Should be easy to adjust, and hold in cleat. Arrangement should tension the sail correctly.

Boom – If the boom has a mainsheet strop fitted the gap between the boom and lowest part of the strop must not be more than 100 mm

Main sheet. – The sheet should run freely through the blocks and be thick enough to grip easily. When threaded through the blocks it should be long enough to allow the boom to make an angle of 90 degrees to the centreline of the boat with enough left to allow the helm to sit on the gunwale . A figure of eight knot should be tied in the sheet to stop the boom just before it reaches the 90 degrees position. A further figure of eight knot should be tied at the end of the sheet.

Mainsheet Clip – An approved quick release clip must be used to attach the mainsheet to the boom.

Sail – The sail should be in sound condition with battens in place.

Sail Ties – The must be attached to the mast and boom with ties through all eyelets. The ties should attach the sail so that it just touches the mast and is about 8mm from the boom. Particular care should be taken in attaching the sail to the top of the mast the top tie must be tight and the diagonal tie must prevent the top tie coming off the mast when the sprit is tensioned.

Identification – All clothing must have to owners name on it. All parts of the boat, spars foils, bailers, praddle, trolley, cover etc must be indelibly marked with the boat number or owners name, or both.

Clothing – It gets cold in the evening so adequate clothing is essential. It is colder on the water than on the shore

Hints

Wind cools you so wind proof clothing over warm clothes is the basic requirement.

Drysuits do not keep you warm so wear adequate clothing under them.

Wet suits keep you warm until they get wet so use windproof clothing over them.

Shoes need to be soft and grip the floor in the boat. no wellies.

A woolly hat keeps you warm.

Hair - Girls and boys with long hair should ensure that it is restrained to prevent it getting caught in the mainsheet block on the boom and other bits of the boat.