

# February Sailing blog

I thought writing a blog each month would be easy! But I started to write something on a Man-overboard procedure. For me its pretty simple in a rib but then I looked at the bigger boats and those big sailing boats in the yard and it all got a little complicated. I think its best to say if someone goes overboard make sure you hit the DSC button on the radio and get people coming to help you. I don't know how many times I have thrown a buoy overboard and gone to rescue it. Every time is different, what is the sea state can I see them. No mater what getting other on their way could just save a life. **(If you want to practice this procedure, I am happy to take the safety boat out and do a few drills with you. Providing we cover the cost of fuel.)**

So this month I thought I would do a bit on

## HOW TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR LIFE JACKET / LIFE VEST

You've bought yourself a life jacket or a personal flotation device (PFD). This is awesome! You take care of your safety while on the water, what couldn't make me happier! I have said it before I do not give my opinion on devices, It is your decision We can sit an argue the advantages or disadvantages of a Buoyancy aid or life jacket or if you should have a crutch strap or a spray hood.

I think the following is good advice on how to take care of your life jacket or Buoyancy aid, Personal floatation device to make it last longer.

These are the top 5 of the most important tips for you:

### 1. Rinse

Make sure you rinse off any mud, sand or visible stains after every use. Always use clean water to rinse, especially when you used it in salt water. After rinsing you can hang the jacket to dry out of direct sunlight.

### 2. Wash

It is advisable to wash your life jacket or PFD each month when in use, to keep the smells away.

The tools you need to do the washing are: a plastic bucket, a water hose, a soft bristle brush and a laundry detergent with enough enzymes to break apart stain molecules.

Cleaning process

- Fill the bucket with cold water.
- Add the laundry detergent to it.
- Scrub the jacket with the brush.

- Rinse using a hose.

- Dry.

*It's as easy as ABC But I would add this is a do as I say blog not a do as I do.*

### **3. Dry**

When your life jacket or PFD is wet make sure you hang it to dry. Avoid leaving it in direct sunlight. This can cause deterioration and fading of fabrics.

Do not try to speed the process by putting it in the dry cleaner or expose it to direct heat. This will damage the product.

### **4. Quality control**

Make sure you check your life jacket or PFD regularly for rips, tears or holes. For your safety it's important you have a properly functioning life jacket. If you take good care of it, it should last for many years. However, there will come a time when it's time to replace it. That's why it's important to test the buoyancy of the life jacket in for example a pool before every season.

### **Safety first!**

### **5. Storage**

Life Jackets should be stored in a dry, dark, and cool place. Never store a heavily soiled life jacket. Stains become food for mould and mildew growth which weakens fabrics and destroy the effectiveness of the device.

I have opened a container with numerous Buoyancy aids in and the smell is awful plus every jacket was covered in mould. Not a good advert for a training school wanting to teach young people 😞

Now is a good time to get your safety stuff in order why not give it a good inspection this weekend.

Hope these 5 tips are of use for you, and we love to see you on the water with your life jacket. (Please don't forget to put your launch card in)

For now, enjoy your time on the water!

If you are new to the club and need help launching or navigating, please ask we can always find someone willing to help.