

Water Rescue Inflatable Boat Guidelines

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References:

“Rescue Boat Operations, Instructor Guide”, Office of State Fire Marshal / State Fire Training, Sacramento, CA, September 1998.

Information Sheet #1

TOPIC: GUIDELINES FOR BROACHING INFLATABLE BOATS

INTRODUCTION: Method for safe flipping of 10' boats (Firby 1 and Firby 2).

Before Potential Broaching – Consider What If Effects Early
Mitigate Effects by Limits To Area of Operations, PPE, Contingency Plan
Keep Self Clear of Lines and Equipment Tied Into Boat

Intentionally Broaching – Training
Position Boat in Safe Area
Appropriate Depth of Water, Controlled Environment
Absence of Hazards - Side of Pool, Overhead Hazards, ...
Personnel Sits on One Side of Boat
Lead Checks that Everyone Is Ready and No One in Line With Transom
Pull Flip Strap and Lean Back

During Broach – As Boat Is Flipping
Driver Preps Boat for Flipping
Shout “Broaching” to Warn Passengers of Boat Flipping
Stop Motor if Under Power (Pull Lanyard)
Push / Move Clear of Boat as Able To
Watch Special Hazard Areas of Prop and Transom
Try to Deal With Immediate Water Hazards (e.g. Rocks)

After Broaching – Everyone in the Water
Stabilize Self in Water (Self Rescue Is Top Priority)
Use Survival Swimming Techniques
If Trapped Under Boat – Do Short Wait, Take Breath and Exit
Stabilize Group in Water (Other Rescue Team Members Second Priority)
Located All Other Members of Team – Signal “OK” to Each Other
Stabilize Any Other People Thrown Out of Boat
Swim to Safety or Reright Boat
Stay With Boat If Safely Able To
May Be Able to Continue Operations After Rerighting Boat

Information Sheet #2

TOPIC: GUIDELINES FOR RERIGHTING INFLATABLE BOATS

INTRODUCTION: Method for safe rerighting inflatable boats after broaching.

Determine if Safe to Reright Boat

May Be Easier to Pull To Bank and Deal With It Then
May Be Best To Ride Out Through Rapid Then Attempt in Fast Moving Water
Check for Obstructions / Adequate Depth for Maneuver

Prep Boat for Righting

Pull Out Flip Strap (Orange Webbing) From Port Side Storage
Pull to Full Length and Throw Loop Over Bottom of Boat

Rescuer(s) Positioned for Flipping Boat

1st Rescuer Climbs Onto Bottom of Boat
Easiest To Climb Onto Transom Area of Boat (Side Can Use Flip Strap)
Hold Flip Strap At Loop and Stand Up
Will Be Standing on Opposite Side Strap Is Attached To
Lean Back Slightly Against Strap and Spread Legs Shoulder Width
2nd Rescuer May Provide Counter Moment on Boat and Be Pulled Into Boat
Hold Grab Line on Opposite Side to 1st Rescuer
Position Feet Under Boat on Far Tube Where Floor of Boat Meets Tube

Reright Boat

1st Rescuer Flips Boat
Calls Out "Rerighting" Shortly Before Starting Boat Flip
Lean Back And Pull on Flip Strap – Keep Legs Straight
Boat Will Flip Upright as 1st Rescuer Falls Back Into Water
Push Away From Boat As It Flips So Will Not Be Struck By Keel In Knees
2nd Rescuer (If Used)
Lower Weight Into Boat As 1st Rescuer Flips Boat (Less Counter Moment)
When Boat Flips 2nd Rescuer Will Be Inside of Boat

After Boat Is Upright – Get Everyone Back Into Boat

Get Control of Boat As Soon As Possible – Paddle to Safe Area / Route
Self Rescue Into Boat or Rapid Extrication of Uninjured Personnel
Extrication of Injured As Per Medical Operations
Go to Safe Area to Regroup
Paddle to Bank (Eddy Out) or Calm Water
Assess Situation and Determine Next Step

Information Sheet #3

TOPIC: GUIDELINES FOR PREPPING INFLATABLE BOAT FOR USE

INTRODUCTION: Method for preparing Firbys for use.

Typically Firby Will Be Launched With Boat, 2 Paddles, Throwbag, Foot Pump, 9.9 HP Engine, 3 Gallon Fuel Tank

Position Uninflated Boat – Boat Initially in Green Bag

- Carry Packaged Boat to Location for Inflation (2 Person Carry Preferred)
- Letting of Bag Can Be Read When Facing Water
- For Dock or Bank Launch - Position Bag About 5 ft From Edge of Water
- Unclip Straps and Unroll Boat – Transom Should Be Located at Edge of Water

Inflate Side Tubes of Boat – Foot Pump Stored in Top of Green Bag

- Turn All 3 Inflation Valve Stems So Boat Will Hold Air
- Use Foot Pump to Inflate Side Tubes (Do Not Inflate Keel Area Yet)
- Lean Against or Hold Support as Needed for Balance
- Inflate Until Pump Barely Adds Air to Tube or Pressure Valve Releases

Attach Motor to Boat (If No Motor Lay Paddles in Boat)

- Carry Motor to Boat, Motor Originally in Down Position
- Store Paddles on Each Side of Boat Under Pocket In Strap Loops
- Unscrew (Open) Holding Clamps for Easier Placing on Boat
 - May Need to Wade Behind Launched Boat to Safely Attach
 - For End of Dock Launch – Carry Motor Into Boat
 - Motor Will Hang Off Transom Beyond End of Dock
 - Watch Stepping Into Boat – May Pass to Another Rescuer
- Seat Motor on Transom and Tighten Holding Screws (Center Motor)
- After Motor Secure, Raise Motor to Up Position (Switch Up First)
- Secure 3 Gallon Fuel Tank With Yellow Webbing in Front of Boat
 - Run Fuel Line Down Port Side and Attach to Motor

Finish Boat Prep for Launch

- Add Bow Bag to Bow of Boat as Needed
- Store Throwbag in Starboard Pocket
- Inflated Keel Area of Boat
- Store Foot Pump and Hose in Port Pocket
- Undo Bow Line and Pull Out In Front of Boat (If Need to Secure Boat)

Information Sheet #4

TOPIC: GUIDELINES FOR LAUNCHING INFLATABLE BOATS

INTRODUCTION: Method for launching Firbys

May Need to Wade Out In Water for Launching Boat in Some Instances

Position Rescuer on Each Side of Boat

Location Near Stern – Near Center of Balance of Boat
For End of Fuel Dock – Put On Foot on Rope Cleat and One on Dock Ring
Grasp Black Grab Line With Hands Spread Over Shoulder Width
One Rescuer May Hold Bow Line As Needed to Secure Boat After Launch

Launch Boat Into Water

Pickup Boat Together
Slowly Swing Boat Stern Out Over Water – Lower Stern Into Water
Raise Bow of Boat As Needed and Push Boat Out Into Water

Ready Boat for Use

Tie Off Bow Line as Needed (Can Pull Keel of Boat On Shore As Needed)
For Motor On Boat – Start Motor and Warm Up Boat (Operations Guidelines)
For Motor Not On Boat
Loosen Paddles from Holders and Stage for Use

Information Sheet #5

TOPIC: GUIDELINES FOR RETRIEVING INFLATABLE BOATS

INTRODUCTION: Method for pulling Firbys out of water

May Need to Wade Out In Water for Retrieving Boat in Some Instances

Prep Boat For Takeout

- Tie Off Bow Line as Needed (Can Pull Keel of Boat On Shore As Needed)
For Motor On Boat
- Close Pressure Release on Fuel Tank (Small Center Screw In)
- Raise Motor to Up Position (Switch Up)

Position Rescuer on Each Side of Dock / Bank Next to Where Boat Goes

- Location at End of Dock / Bank
- For End of Fuel Dock – Put On Foot on Rope Cleat and One on Dock Ring

Raise Boat Out of Water Into Water

- Grasp Black Grab Line at Bow and Tilt Up (Stern Sinks Into Water)
- Pull Boat Toward Dock / Bank Till Keel Touches Edge
- Grasp Grab Line With Hands Spread Over Shoulder Width
- Hold Line As Close To Center of Weight As Able To
- Check Foot Position for Secure Hold
- Lower Bow and Raise Stern While Pulling Boat Onto Dock / Bank
- Check Position of Transom and Readjust As Needed (Same Place as Edge)

Information Sheet #6

TOPIC: GUIDELINES FOR REPACKAGING INFLATABLE BOATS

INTRODUCTION: Method for putting away Firby boats after cleaned and dried

Prep Boat for Storage

Inspect Boat – Dry, No Repairs Needed (No Air Loss in Tubes, Lettering OK, ...)
Daisy Chain Bow Webbing and Fuel Tank Webbing (Pulls Out by Free End)
Daisy Chain Flip Strap, Store in Port Pocket (Loose and Pulls Out by Free End)

Deflate Boat – Boat in Upright Position

Open 3 Inflation Valves (Push in And Turn Valve Stem)
Allow Side Tube to Deflate About Half Way
Arrange Side Tubes as Boat Continues to Deflate
Position Grab Line to Center of Boat (Folds Tube to Center)
Ideally Grab Lines from Sides of Boat Will Meet Along Midline
Fold Transom Down and Arrange Aft Sections of Side Tube
Pull End Points of Tube to Center of Transom
Smoothly Fold In Tube on Sides for Minimum Width of Packaged Boat
When Boat Is Fully Deflated – Ready to Be Rolled Up
Transom Has No Creases Visible and at Minimum Width
Width of Middle to Front of Boat Slightly Less Than Transom Width

Roll Up Boat – Continue to Fold Transom Up Rolling Up Boat

May Need to Realign Sides of Boat (Black Line Along Center of Boat)
Weight of Boat Will Deflate Remaining Parts of Boat
Last Fold Over on Boat Will Put Bow of Boat At Bottom

Package Boat – Repackage in Appropriate Green Bag

Position Green Storage Bag So Ready for Deployment
Letters of Bag Readable From Bank Side With Bow of Unrolled Boat
Opened Bag About 2 ft Behind Rolled Up Boat (Side Just Rolled Up)
Top of Bag Lettering Toward Rolled Up Boat
Turn Rolled Up Boat Over and Into Package – Center as Needed
Pull Up Sides Of Bag Around Boat, Clip and Snug Side Buckles
Place Inflation Pump and Hose Between Top of Boat and Storage Bag
Clip and Snug Front to Rear Buckles
Restage Boat in Shallow Water Trailer

Information Sheet #7

TOPIC: GUIDELINES FOR OPERATING MOTORS ON INFLATABLE BOATS

INTRODUCTION: Method for starting, running and stopping 9.9 HP motors

Prior to Starting Motor Boat – Only Start Motor When Cooling Vents Are in Water
Open Pressure Release on Fuel Tank (Small Center Screw Out)
Pump Fuel to Motor (Fuel Bulb In Vertical Position)
Motor In Down Position (Switch Down First, Starboard Side of Engine)
Check Depth of Water and Clearance of Prop as Needed

Start Motor - Check for Safe Conditions (No People Around Prop, Fuel In Water,...)
Attach Lanyard to Kill Switch to Life Jacket
Kill Switch Holds the Stop Button in Out Position
Stop Button Is a Red Button Located Just Behind Throttle
Pull Choke to Out Position (Black Plastic Knob on Engine Front, Starboard Side)
Pull Starting Cord on Top, Front of Engine

When Motor Starts – Initially Warm Up Engine
Rotate Throttle Counterclockwise Slightly
Push Choke In
Hold Throttle in Slight Rotated Position So Motor Runs in a Fast Idle
After About 3 Minutes Of Fast Idle, Boat Will Be Able to Do Slow Idle Smoothly

Motor Operation – Driver Sits on Port Tube With Right Hand on Throttle
Shift Into Gear Firmly (Do Not Slowly Ease Motor Into Gear)
Shift Lever On Front, Starboard Side of Engine
Lever Away From Motor for Forward, Towards Motor For Reverse
Do Not Shift Motor At High RPM
Twist Throttle Counterclockwise For Higher Motor RPM (Boat Speed)
Steering – Can Move Weight of Driver or Deckhand and / or Turn Motor
Turning Motor Moves Boat by Pushing (Pulling for Reverse) Stern of Boat
Changing Weight Distribution Changes Handling of Boat
Weight Forward for Getting Boat on Plane Easier
For Shallow Water Operation – Refer to Tactical Operations SOP
Stopping Motor – Push in Stop Button (Emergency – Pull Lanyard to Kill Switch)