

## Boat Handling in Rough Water

Boats and crews are at maximum danger when launching and getting ashore. Speed and helpers are essential.

### The Launch

- Ensure whilst on beach that oars are in, gates are tight, bonnets watertight etc...
- Fix shoe positions beforehand
- Crew should be opposite riggers
- At least one helper holds bows - 2 at stern to avoid hitting beach as crew boards
- If the cox is light - lift into boat while it is still ashore
- Watch wave pattern to decide best moment to launch
- When launching - lift/push boat - run directly into direction of waves
- Once the bow is supported by water, bow and 2 jump in (preferably bottom first, swinging their legs in after)
- Bow and 2 push blades out to buttons and start rowing – don't stop for shoes
- Bow handler - ensure bow is lifted directly into waves – when bow pair start rowing – stay clear of blades – monitor rest of launch
- When bow pair row, stroke and 3 (and cox if not already in) board - start rowing to avoid breaking surf
- Stern launchers - release stern hard (shove) when rudder's clear of the beach
- When cox decides boat's clear of breaking surf - order crew to paddle light - keep pointing bows into the waves
- Cox then tells stroke and 3 to easy - they sort shoes/get comfortable
- Bow and 2 - continue paddling light
- Stroke and 3 - then start paddling when bow and 2 can easy/get comfortable
- Crew ensures self-bailers don't flood back when boat's stationary/doing buoy turns
- Keep the boat as dry as possible (shoes = good bailers)
- Cox - avoid getting directly broadside to the waves
- Cox – when the bow begins to rise to wave, pull on rudder into the wave - release as wave passes down boat - rides over wave better

### Coming Ashore

- Don't approach the beach broadside - risks a broadside wave capsizing boat
- If a gentle sloping sandy beach e.g. Bournemouth – you can approach the beach bow first in direction of the waves
- Loosen gates - on cox's order 'Out bow' etc...bow pulls oars into boat, laying them down sides of boat if possible or allowing shore helpers to take them
- Repeat until whole crew and cox are out
- Speed is essential
- If the beach is steep shingle/shelving - turn the boat outside surf line - back in gently so bow points directly into waves
- Loosen gates – when near beach, stroke and 3 take oars out – hand to shore helper or lay down sides of boat
- Bow and 2 - keep backing - be ready if needed to pull the boat back out to sea
- Bow and 2 take oars out – hand to shore helpers or lay down sides of boat.