



Heavy Weather Skippering

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As the temperatures continue to drop, we need to focus now on skippering in heavy weather - because it is coming. This column is about that.

Heavy Water

Why is heavy weather more dangerous as we move into the Fall? Well, putting hurricanes aside, which are in their own class, heavy weather in the colder months has its own set of challenges. First, hypothermia is but a small slip away (see last week's column in SSP, "Cold Water Survival, Hypothermia, Rescue & Recovery"). Second, as the water chills, it gets denser per cubic foot. Denser means more "oomph" behind those chops. Third, it gets darker sooner. What used to be an all daylight trip out to a favorite fishing spot is now a return under the cover of night. Believe me, once one thing goes wrong, the chances of something else going wrong before you can focus on and fix the first problem just went up. Now you have a spiraling and accelerating danger curve on your hands. So, what to do if caught in heavy weather...?

1. Put Your Life Jackets On - Right away, the skipper has to direct everyone to don their life jackets. On my vessel, I have a heavy weather/type-1 life jacket on the back of my helm seat. Across the back, where the crew can read it, it says, "If you see the captain put this on, try to find one for yourself."

2. Take Waves at an Angle - Those



waves that you are trying to muscle through pack tremendous power within them. Did you know that one out of every 20 boats that sink at sea does so when the hull comes apart under the force of pounding seas? If that statistic was adjusted for heavy weather sinkings, it would go up dramatically, I'm sure. Cross the waves at a 45-degree angle and "tack" across the storm like a sail boat moving to windward. And slow down! Your 20 knots and five knots of wave speed multiply the force of the pounding. Slow down and divide the forces.

3. Don't Be Bashful - If things start to get dicey, get on the radio and call the USCG. Tell them where you are, where you are heading and why you are concerned about the situation. Most likely, the watch stander will take that infor-

mation and ask you to check in with him or her every 15 minutes. Don't be late in checking in or you may find a red-and-white helicopter hovering over you. But if you are in trouble, the USCG will know where you were just 15 minutes prior. You started the "rescue starts now" clock the last time you communicated your position.

4. Any Port in a Storm - OK, you told your spouse you'd be back by 4pm and it is now 6pm and you are struggling against the nor'easter that is keeping you from operating at speed to get in. Don't bet your life on a perceived deadline. Your spouse would rather you survive. Head to the nearest harbor you can safely make, even if that means turning and putting the storm on your stern. Arriving safely in New Jersey is better than not arriving at all.

5. Surf - If you find the sea is going where you are, consider getting on the back of one of those growlers and staying there, all the way home. It takes considerable seamanship and helmsmanship to ride the back of a wave but consider this. If you have an outboard engine with a transom cut-out, your "free board" is only that little distance between the water line and the lowest part of that cut-out, probably 6"-10". If you have a following sea and one of those growlers catches up with you, he will swamp you from astern. Stay ahead and he can't...

6. Create a Ditch Bag - If things really get dicey, don't leave the boat until it sinks out from under you. But have a "ditch bag" ready - cell phone, handheld radio, fresh water, dry clothes, medical kit, flashlight, flares, etc come immediately to mind.

I spent five days at sea in Hurricane Alberta over 30 years ago. I have a healthy respect for the sea and how fast things can go from bad to absolutely awful. Don't be a statistic. Be the skipper who can say, "I always bring my crew back."

BTW, if you are interested in being part of USCG Forces, email me at JoinUSCGAux@aol.com or go direct to the D1SR Human Resources department, who are in charge of new members matters, at DSO-HR and we will help you "get in this thing..."

Tides for Moriches Inlet starting with October 16, 2013

Day	High/Low	Tide Time	Height Feet	Sunrise/Sunset	Moon Time	% Moon Visible	
Wed. 16	High	5:17 AM	3.4	7:04 AM	Set	4:28 AM	88
16	Low	11:27 AM	-0.1	6:09 PM	Rise	4:48 PM	
16	High	5:37 PM	3.4				
16	Low	11:44 PM	-0.2				
Thur. 17	High	6:06 AM	3.6	7:05 AM	Set	5:33 AM	94
17	Low	12:17 PM	-0.1	6:07 PM	Rise	5:20 PM	
17	High	6:26 PM	3.4				
Fri. 18	Low	12:29 AM	-0.2	7:06 AM	Set	6:38 AM	98
18	High	6:51 AM	3.7	6:06 PM	Rise	5:54 PM	
18	Low	1:05 PM	-0.2				
18	High	7:12 PM	3.3				
Sat. 19	Low	1:12 AM	-0.2	7:07 AM	Set	7:42 AM	99
19	High	7:33 AM	3.7	6:05 PM	Rise	6:30 PM	
19	Low	1:51 PM	-0.2				
19	High	7:55 PM	3.3				
Sun. 20	Low	1:54 AM	-0.1	7:08 AM	Set	8:44 AM	99
20	High	8:14 AM	3.6	6:03 PM	Rise	7:09 PM	
20	Low	2:34 PM	-0.1				
20	High	8:39 PM	3.2				
Mon. 21	Low	2:34 AM	0.0	7:09 AM	Set	9:42 AM	96
21	High	8:55 AM	3.5	6:02 PM	Rise	7:51 PM	
21	Low	3:16 PM	0.0				
21	High	9:24 PM	3.0				
Tues. 22	Low	3:13 AM	0.2	7:10 AM	Set	10:37 AM	91
22	High	9:36 AM	3.3	6:00 PM	Rise	8:37 PM	
22	Low	3:57 PM	0.2				
22	High	10:12 PM	2.8				
Wed. 23	Low	3:51 AM	0.4	7:11 AM	Set	11:27 AM	85
23	High	10:21 AM	3.1	5:59 PM	Rise	9:26 PM	
23	Low	4:38 PM	0.4				
23	High	11:02 PM	2.7				

Weather Forecast	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
	Oct 16	Oct 17	Oct 18	Oct 19	Oct 20	Oct 21	Oct 22	Oct 23
	Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Few Showers	Mostly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Sunny
	68°F	69°F	66°F	64°F	64°F	61°F	62°F	59°F
	59°F	51°F	48°F	50°F	46°F	47°F	44°F	43°F



by TONY SALERNO

FISHING WITH TONY

CONSERVING THE STRIPED BASS

Striped bass is a popular game fish and the nation's largest marine recreational fishery, contributing significantly to coastal economies along the Atlantic coast. While the Atlantic striped bass fishery has shown a tremendous recovery since the 1980s, numerous reports have noted decreased catches over the last several years and the fishery is currently threatened by several factors. Despite these concerns, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) proposed an addendum to their current management plan, which will allow for a significant increase in the commercial harvest of striped bass in state waters.

ASMFC proposed an addendum to their current striped bass management plan, which would increase commercial harvest of the species by 20 to 50 percent. This increase has been proposed at a time when several factors indicate that the population is declining. This addendum pertains to striped bass caught in state waters only; striped bass were declared a game fish in federal waters by Executive Order in 2007.

During the comment period on the draft addendum, anglers submitted comments on the proposed increase in commercial striped bass quotas through the Keep America Fishing Action Center. The ASMFC rejected the proposed increase in commercial striped bass harvest with a vote of 11 to 3.

This Executive Order directs the Commerce and Interior Departments to put regulations in place to establish game fish status for red drum and striped bass in federal waters. In his remarks, the President made it clear that he also supports improving the quality of data available for managing our fish stocks. The President said, 'We're going to count on the people who really care about the fish stocks to get good, solid, sound information so we can do a better job not only today, but tomorrow, in making sure our fisheries are strong.'

Due to intense overfishing, both striped bass and red drum were nearly decimated in the 1970s and into the 1980s. This decline led to a drive by recreational anglers to curtail the harvest of these species by imposing federal moratoriums on commercial and recreational striped bass and red drum fishing in federal waters. The President's Executive Order bans the commercial sale of red drum and striped bass caught in federal waters. A number of states already prohibit the sale of these fish caught in state waters. This comes as good news. Now if we can only get anglers to safely release big female bass to assure a tomorrow.