

Towing Multiple Optimists

Another possible scenario you may encounter



Your 4 children have drifted away with the wind and a strong tide, a sudden squall, tide stronger than the wind, as you are closer to the 200 mark, children drifting towards Cheltenham Beach, with incoming tide, or past the green starboard Mark, towards Takapuna, with outgoing tide and offshore wind. Or, no wind at all.

They haven't learnt how to sail to windward yet.

Either way you need to know how to tow your 4 optimists back to a position from which they can sail back to the beach by themselves with your PB, and without help, the other PBs may be busy too, **and you can only shunt one opti at a time.** It is worth remembering that the above situations will only occur with offshore winds, so the beach itself should have no waves, and little wind.



Plan your route, you can motor through children saying "its ok, we will pick you up soon, we will start with the furthest away opti". Go past the last opti, U turn, and approach from downwind.

Come alongside on the windward side of the opti. Instruct crew to hold on to opti so that the sailor can pull up the CB as high as possible without fouling the boom or the mainsheet and undo the figure 8, just in case the boom wants to swing.



Sailor to hold the PB whilst crew picks up the opti painter, (white) wrap round the mast once.



Then puts mainsheet through the loop at stern of PB, wraps round the seat once, sits down and holds onto the painter. Child to keep the tiller straight, steer to follow the back of PB.

It is important to note that whenever you tow small craft with people in them, one end of tow rope should be hand held for instant release. Never tie off both ends, the knots could tighten with towing, and be difficult to untie quickly. The WW painters are floating ropes, the mainsheets are not.

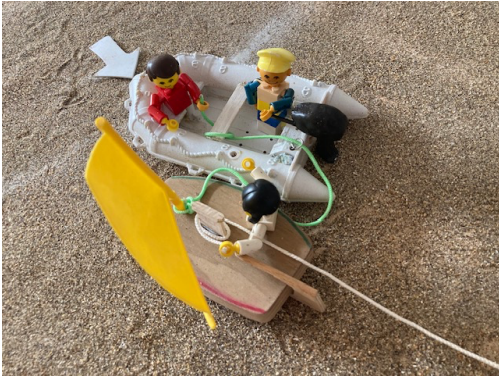


Move on to the next furthest away opti (2nd), crew keeping eye on the towed opti, skipper looking ahead, approach from downwind, same as 1st opti.



This time some different instructions are, sailor (2nd) to hold on to PB whilst crew removes the painter from the 1st opti from the PB, holds on to the 2nd opti with other hand, so the sailor can lift the centreboard as high as is safe, and undoes the figure 8.

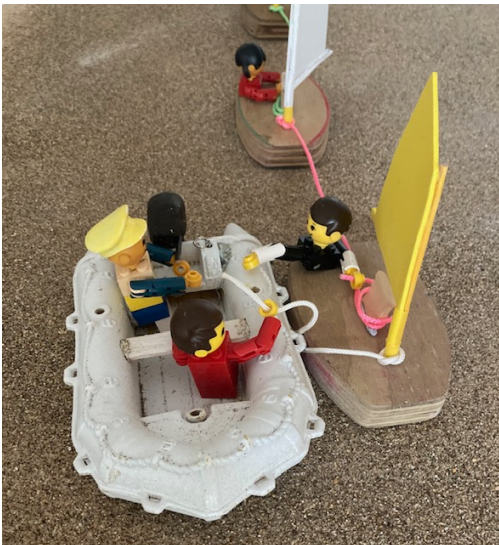
Next the crew can give the end of the painter from 1st opti, to the 2nd sailor who then wraps it around the raised CB twice and holds the end, this takes the weight off holding the towed opti.



The crew grabs the painter of 2nd opti (Green) wraps round mast once, through the loop at the end of the PB, round the seat, sits down and holds it.



Off to 3rd opti
Repeat the last instructions, this time with a pink painter (coloured painters are just to help make the visual pictures easier to understand)



Off to the last opti
Repeat again, with crew finally wrapping (white) painter round the mast, through the loop, round the seat, sits down and holds on.

Sailor to totally remove the mainsheet as this opti is closest to the motor.



Now you are ready to tow your 4 opti's back to the bay, like a **String of Sausages**.

When you are close enough to shore for the children to easily sail back on a beam reach, slowing down slowly to a gradual stop, or the opti's will catch up with you. Good chance you're not going very fast anyway, with your load.



PB to lower the anchor to windward, which should be over the bow, tie off when just long enough.

Turn off motor, skipper can now help.

Undo the 1st opti painter in PB and pull, until the opti is alongside.



Crew to hold onto opti, and puts opti painter back into opti, out of the way.

Sailor to take the pink painter off the CB and give to the skipper to hold. Push down the CB, and redo the mainsheet. Meanwhile the skipper can start pulling the next opti towards the PB.



Opti now ready to turn onto a beam reach, get child settled, sitting correctly, mainsheet in, give a push so they can sail back to shore themselves. Make sure there is someone onshore to catch them. Give clear instructions.

Repeat this process for the remaining opti's.

Lift the anchor and help the children ashore or just shadow them till they get to shore, remind them to lift the CB. PB is now free to go ashore, if no more help needed on the water.



LOTS OF PRAISE!!!!!!

It is very important for the children's confidence and self-esteem, that they sail back to shore by themselves, rather than being towed. Having already assured them that it was not their fault they needed towing in the first place, the wind changed, dropped, tide too strong etc, but you get to have a tow back with your friends. Maybe a debrief would help, for children and instructors.

Another degree of difficulty to this scenario, could be that 1 or 2 children had capsized with the others drifting off.



Plan your route.

Always pick up the child/children in the water first.

Leave the upturned hulls to pick up after the children are safely ashore, but pick up centreboard and rudder if floating off, they could be a marine hazard.

Continue as before. When it's time to push the children ashore, the extra child could double up in an opti to get ashore.

Now you are free to pull up the anchor, check all the children safely back to shore, then you can go and get the capsized opti. There is a Lego Brief on 'How to right an opti from the PB'

There are a few reasons why you might find yourself in this position, check the 'Lemons' Sheet.

How to Scull

If there is no wind and the children can't get back to shore but they can scull. You would be able to tell them from patrol boat what to do.



Sitting out of the way of the tiller, push the tiller away from you as far as possible.



Now pull the tiller all the way back quickly.



Away again.

Repeat push/pull about 3 times.



Now you have enough momentum to straighten the tiller to steer and glide.
Repeat as many times as it takes to get there.

Towing Multiple empty Optimists

Using the same basic sequence and method as for Multiple Optimists
Like a string of Sausages.

1st opti, come alongside furthest away opti, on windward side, instruct and help child remove; CB, rudder and mainsheet, leave in the bottom of the opti. Then the child can hop into PB, crew to grab its painter, once round the mast, to stern of PB round the seat, and holds on.



2nd opti, same derigging instructions, but this time, crew takes the first painter off PB and gives to child, to put through the pully block on the floor and does a figure 8 .Child hops into PB.

Crew grabs the painter, wraps round mast, through the stern loop, round the seat and holds on.

3rd and 4th opti's, same process.

Now you have 4 children on board the PB.

Towing Multiple empty Optimists Back to Shore

In preparation for going ashore, when you have the 4th opti attached, put the motor in shallow water position, take the kill cord off your leg and hold in you spare hand. Now you are ready to tow them all back to shore.



If there are any waves on the beach, a U turn before the waves is the safest option, for the children and PB, maintaining a steady speed to keep the painters taught, crew starts to unwind painter from seat ready to let go.

Note

When approaching the shore in a kayak, opti or patrol boat, with even little waves, it is impossible to see if the waves are breaking onto the beach. You can only see that from the beach. So it is always safer for patrol boats to do a U turn. Unless totally flat with no swell.



Just before skipper starts to turn, crew lets go of 1st opti painter, and even helps it leave the PB quickly. PB starts to turn, crew grabs the PB painter, and gets ready to jump off the bow side.



Skipper pulls off kill cord, drops on PB floor, and quickly lifts the motor, crew can now jump off bow and starts to pull PB round to face into the waves. Skipper jumps off on opposite side to crew and helps keep PB bow to waves.



Shore help can grab painter of 1st opti, to pull them ashore as safely as possible, whilst skipper and crew backing PB closer to shore, keeping it bow to waves.



The children can hop out of PB, and if safe to do so, can help bring opti's ashore and undo the 3 figure 8s.

If there are no waves or swell, and water is flat, you could go straight to shore, slowing down slowly, without turning. Stop and lift motor, in shallow water, (no need for the quick kill cord stop) crew and skipper hop out, help children out, and everyone can undo the 3 figure 8s, and safely bring the 4 opti's ashore.

Easy way to empty swamped opti that has just been brought back to the beach.

Easier and quicker is for the PB to tow the swamped opti back to shore, so the shore help can tip the water out quicker than they can bail it afloat. Especially if it is busy out on the water.



Remove the centreboard, opti should be head to wind or with the wind on your back, pull the mainsheet as tight as it can go, to keep the sail and the boo off the sand. Keep holding onto the mainsheet, start lifting the opti hull, you may need help if it's got lots of water in it.



Keep tipping until the top of the sprit nearly touches the sand and hold it there, until, with the help of an observer to tell you when all the water is out, you can lower it back again.