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### Modern MOB Equipment You May Not Live Without

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By Lynn Fitzpatrick

Just Marine's S.O.S. Dan Buoy caught my eye during the Annapolis Spring Sailboat Show recently. The Dan Buoy is a compact, fast-activating, inflatable, and reusable man overboard marker buoy.

Having had a bowman go overboard during Block Island Race Week, been first on the scene to search for two Star sailors separated from their boats during the 2009 Star North Americans on Long Island Sound, and having interviewed young and very capable tall ship crew after they were almost washed overboard during an "all hands on deck" knockdown squall, I view the SOS Dan Buoy as modern-day safety equipment that recreational and commercial vessels of all types and sizes should carry. It is the easiest to use, fastest to deploy, and most effective man overboard device available. It deploys within seconds of hitting the water, is highly visible, and has similar drift characteristics as a man overboard. The SOS Dan Buoy should reduce the delay, panic, mistakes, and mishaps associated with MOB's. It should be the first thing the crew reaches for in a MOB situation.

When it rains, it pours. No doubt the sea state and wind conditions that sent Clipper Round the World crew member Andrew Taylor overboard also made it difficult for the crew to strike sails, turn around, and search for him in an area growing exponentially with every second of delay. It's a miracle he survived for 1-hour and 40-minutes in the North Pacific.

Maintaining visual contact with the man overboard is far better than tracking delayed AIS and EPIRB signals. It's much more effective to have crew looking for an inflated 7-foot high green/yellow pole and 8-foot long streaming ribbon complete with reflective strips and SOLAS light, and listening for a whistle, than having their heads in the boat trying to figure out how to transmit emergency information over the radio.

A very important feature of the Dan Buoy is its extra large drogue. It does not skip across the top of waves with the wind. It holds its place making it easier for a man overboard to swim to it, grab the arm holds and gain the advantage of the approximately 20 lbs. of buoyancy in the device.

With safety inspections for iconic events such as the Newport Bermuda Race, the Race to Mackinac, and the Big Boat Series in San Francisco on this year's calendar and the growing popularity of doublehanded sailing, skippers and crews should consider mounting the SOS Dan Buoy in their cockpits and incorporating it into their man overboard drills and procedures. Navies and coast guards around

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the world, power and cruising sailors, even yachts in Sydney Hobart Yacht Race use this Dan Buoy.

For more information visit the [SOS Dan Buoy's](#) western hemisphere distributor, [Just Marine](#).

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