



REPORT ON THE CREW OVERBOARD INCIDENTS AND FATALITY ON MONTEREY BAY (MORPHEUS), 3/13/2019

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Morpheus Working Party Report

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Morpheus Working Party Report

Summary

On March 13, 2019, Rick Srigley fell off his Moore 24, *Morpheus*, while racing in Monterey Bay. Unfortunately, he drowned before he could be recovered

The event was the opening race in Monterey Peninsula Yacht Club's Wednesday evening race series. Winds were in the 20-25kt range with seas estimated in the 5-6 foot range. The remaining crew of *Morpheus* made a MAYDAY call and attempted a "Figure 8" recovery. They fell short on their first attempt and were unsuccessful in retrieval on the second, although there was brief hand-to-hand contact and Rick was reported to say "hurry."

During the retrieval efforts, another crewmember from *Morpheus*, Dale, fell in but was recovered.

A fellow race boat, *LocaMotion*, noted the events and broke off racing, motoring over to assist. At first heading toward Dale, they were directed toward Rick to try to retrieve him. As *LocaMotion* approached Rick, they saw he was floating face-down. During this approach, *LocaMotion* went head to wind and the flailing boom tackle contacted crewmember David briefly stunning him and sending him into the water.

David was retrieved easily. Another crew, Fredo, was a strong and experienced swimmer. He volunteered, and with the skipper's permission, entered the water. Fredo reached Rick and swam him over to *Morpheus*.

The crew of *Morpheus* was unable to bring Rick aboard but kept him by the stern until USCG arrived and brought him onboard.

Rick was pronounced dead at a local hospital. He had succumbed before *LocaMotion* had reached him. The immediate cause was drowning, "in minutes" per the Coroner, caused by cervical trauma and cold water shock.

Note: To respect privacy in the face of Internet searches, crew members are referenced by first name only in this report.

Procedures

Immediately following the event, Jerry Stratton and Jean DuPreez of MPYC contacted the participants to ask them to record their observations and actions as close to the event as possible. In addition, the remaining crew of *Morpheus* recorded a discussion among themselves of the events.

US Sailing contacted the MPYC to offer support and to write this report, and the two organizations agreed to combine their efforts. This collection of data by MPYC was very valuable to the investigation.

Additional information was collected, and seven more formal interviews were conducted and transcribed. The US Coast Guard designated our Working Party as a "Party in Interest" under 46 C.F.R. § 4.03-10, allowing our organizations to consult with each other and share information transparently. The cooperation of the Coast Guard in this report, as well as their on-the-water response, is acknowledged with our thanks. Certain details, not inconsistent with this report, have been shared with us but are not disclosable until they have completed their own investigation and report.

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1. The Race

Starting in March of each year, the Monterey Peninsula Yacht Club runs a Wednesday Night Race series in Monterey Bay offshore from the club's location on Monterey Harbor. Run under the *Racing Rules of Sailing*, the event is a small regatta with handicapped and one-design divisions.

Courses for the race are short, and on March 13 were set to be 3 miles from the starting area to "Mile Buoy" and back. The finish was set as a line between the MPYC clubhouse and a fixed mark in the bay.

Typically, the start is run from a committee boat. On March 13, the normal cabin cruiser was not available for use, and the committee used a club Whaler. There were three experienced MPYC members on board the committee boat, and they carried two handheld VHF radios: one on Channel 16 and one on Channel 68.

The Sailing Instructions include several provisions relating to safety and communications:

16. SAFETY REGULATIONS

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16.3 Boats shall be equipped in accordance with Federal Equipment Requirements for Recreational Vessels.

16.4 Boats shall carry a VHF marine transceiver in working condition, ground tackle sufficient for anchoring offshore of hazards in the racing area, a bucket, a compass and a first aid kit. It is recommended that boats carry a working flashlight.

16.5 All participants shall wear a PFD while racing.

16.6 California State law and boating regulations, it is recommended that all boats stay at least 200 feet clear from a dive boat displaying the Divers, and or Alpha flags. Boats should also exercise precaution in proximity of bathers and kayakers.

17. EQUIPMENT AND MEASUREMENT CHECKS

17.1 A boat or equipment may be inspected at any time for compliance with the class rules and sailing instructions. On the water, a boat can be instructed by a race committee official to proceed immediately to a designated area for Inspection.

2. Weather

On March 13, approaching the start time for the race, winds were in the range of 20-25 knots. The PRO visually scanned the race area, and forecasts, and consulted with the race chair (also working party member) Jean DuPreez before deciding to go forward with the race. MPYC Wednesday Night races were frequently held in similar conditions. The Shields one-design fleet elected not to race, as their boats are not suitable for the conditions. Other individual boats also declined to sail or retired after heading out.



Morpheus, seen from clubhouse, March 13, 17:50

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All participants interviewed consistently reported winds generally in the low 20 knots, with occasional higher gusts, and waves in the 5-6 foot range. These reports are consistent with buoy reports. All interviewed participants and the RC reported that racing in these conditions was common and generally not viewed as a cause for alarm.

3. *Morpheus* and Skipper Rick Srigley

Morpheus is a Moore 24 owned by Rick Srigley. Rick was a 77-year-old man with extensive sailing experience in a variety of boats. His experience includes over 40 years of racing and numerous coastal passages.

The Moore 24 is a highly capable ocean boat, weighing 2150 pounds and classified as an “ultralight displacement boat” or ULDB. Sisterships have crossed oceans and are frequently seen in the Pacific Cup race to Hawaii. Sailing great Webb Chiles recently completed a circumnavigation in his Moore 24, *Gannett*.

Our inspection of *Morpheus* and discussions with the crew showed that the boat is a largely stock boat. Around 2011, Rick, as did many other owners of similar boats, removed the lifelines from *Morpheus*. The boat was also equipped with a throw-line and a horseshoe buoy on a bracket on the aft railing. The horseshoe buoy was attached to a line in a plastic jar, intended to serve as a sort of “Lifesling” equivalent offered to satisfy coastal sailing rules (not applicable to this race).

Generally, Moore 24 drivers sit near the end of the tiller, holding it with a tiller extension. They hook a foot under the mid-cockpit traveler bridge for security. Rick is reported generally to sit rather further aft and not far outboard. It's not known if his foot was hooked under the traveler on this race.

Morpheus carried a handheld VHF. It did not carry a motor for this race, though this is apparently a requirement of local PHRF (rating) regulations.

Rick was wearing jeans, flannel or a fleece, and a “club” jacket, dark blue in color. He wore a black high-end equestrian helmet.

Rick also wore, in compliance with the rules, an inflatable life jacket. This was discarded by the Coast Guard, but testimony and pictures helped us identify the device as a West Marine model sold around 2003. The jacket was sold in automatic inflation and manual versions (same price). The automatic version can be converted to manual by using a cap that replaces the water-sensing bobbin fixture. It is not known whether Rick's life jacket was configured as automatic or manual, or whether he performed any scheduled maintenance or inspections as an inflatable requires. Casual comments from fellow club members lead the working group to conclude that the jacket was either manual or converted to manual. The life jacket did not appear to have inflated during the incident.

4. Rick overboard

Morpheus crossed the starting line at around 6:02 pm. The race start had been postponed till 6:05, but the crew was not aware of this. Crew for the day were Rick (owner/skipper), Jeff, Ryan, and Dale. All were experienced sailors and regulars on the boat.

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Rick was on the helm, likely sitting in his typical position, rather far aft, but not at the extreme outboard edge. One crew (Dale) was down in the cabin, shifting position with each tack, two others were seated on the windward deck holding on to a shroud or a sheet to stay secure.

Sailing to the weather mark, Mile Buoy, *Morpheus* executed a few tacks. Following one tack, after the crew had changed sides, Ryan looked back to note that Rick was not on board and was about 100 feet behind the boat. Ryan notified Jeff, who was closer to the cockpit. Jeff immediately notified Dale in the cabin and moved to take the helm. Nobody saw Rick fall off. At this point, Rick was floating head up, with only head and shoulders above water. *Morpheus'* crew reports that they could not see whether he was treading water or moving his hands, but the dark jacket would have made seeing that difficult.

It is not known whether Rick fell to leeward (over the tiller) or backward, or even over the transom. We believe that he likely fell backward. Had he fallen forward, he likely would have disturbed the tiller. The crew reported that the boat did not experience any noticeable course change in the seconds before they noticed Rick was gone.

Although there was considerable wave action during the event, it's plausible that, if *Morpheus* was pitching (hobby-horsing), the crew near the mast would have experienced considerably less motion than Rick, near an end of the boat. Once Rick was in the water, recovery would be complicated by waves moving both the victim and recovery vessels toward and away from each other.

Dale made a quick MAYDAY call announcing "Man Overboard" on VHF 16. He did not wait to hear an acknowledgement, and he moved to the cockpit to assist in recovery efforts.

5. *Morpheus'* recovery attempts

The crew of *Morpheus* did not discuss their plan but immediately began to execute a "Figure 8" recovery maneuver. This maneuver is designed to bring a boat back to a person in the water while moving at a slow enough speed to be able to recover the person safely.

At the end of their maneuver, *Morpheus* went head to wind, and came to a stop about five feet from Rick before falling away. Jeff, on the helm, had intended more of a reach on the approach. This is the recommended approach on a Figure-8 recovery, and Jeff had recently completed a course that included this technique, but the weather and being "a bit rusty" on handling the boat forced him into a less favorable course, missing Rick in this try.

Morpheus made a second attempt, returning to Rick's position. This time, *Morpheus* made the approach with more speed. Dale, on the leeward side, lost sight of Rick behind the bow. Jeff maneuvered to bring Rick close aboard on the windward side of the boat. As Rick passed by his position, Jeff reached down and took Rick by the hand. He lost his grip and reports he heard Rick say "hurry."

As *Morpheus* sailed away from Rick, Dale attempted to throw a line to Rick, but this was directly into the wind, and the line blew back. The horseshoe buoy was thrown as well, but also fell short. It was not attached to the boat.

The next time Rick was seen, he was floating face down.

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Dale Falls in

Dale was coiling the throw line for another (third) attempt when he fell into the water. He felt the line pulling out of his hand and realized it was somehow still attached to the boat. He fastened the line around himself. His life jacket automatically inflated.

6. *LocaMotion* comes to assist

The next boat on the course was *LocaMotion*, an Express 37. Prior to the start, the skipper had conducted a safety lecture. Due to the weather, they did not plan to fly a spinnaker, but they had expressed no reservations about sailing in the windy conditions.

The crew of *LocaMotion* noted that *Morpheus* was not sailing normally and had a person in the water (visible from Dale's bright PFD bladder) and a horseshoe buoy in the water. They immediately dropped their headsail and motored over to assist.

As *LocaMotion* approached the scene, they first noted with relief that the person in the water was being retrieved, but the crew of *Morpheus* hailed them to indicate there was another person in the water: Rick. *LocaMotion* had passed Rick at some distance and some crew had seen him but not realized he was a person in the water. The crew on *Morpheus* pulled Dale back to the boat and helped him aboard.

LocaMotion tacked around *Morpheus* and headed toward Rick, going head to wind, under power, about ten feet from Rick. The crew was shocked to see that Rick was now floating face down and motionless. A crewmember on *LocaMotion*, David, asked if he should go in to retrieve Rick.

David Falls In

Because the boom was flailing, the mainsheet tackle struck David, stunning him. He slipped under the lifelines and quickly fell into the water, stating that "he felt woozy". *LocaMotion* continued forward and was no longer between Rick and David. David swam toward Rick and may have attempted to turn him face up (testimony varies) but was called back to come on board. Another crew streamed the horseshoe buoy on a tether for David to grab. They quickly got David aboard and took him below to tend to a gash in his forehead.

Fredo Dives In

Another crew, Alfredo ("Fredo"), asked the skipper for permission to enter the water to get Rick. "Are you a strong swimmer?" asked the skipper. "Yes," said Fredo. His response was well-justified, as he was experienced as an ocean swimmer in local waters. Fredo stripped off his life jacket and entered the water. He swam to Rick and took him to *Morpheus*, thinking that this would be easier to board him due to *Morpheus'* lower freeboard.

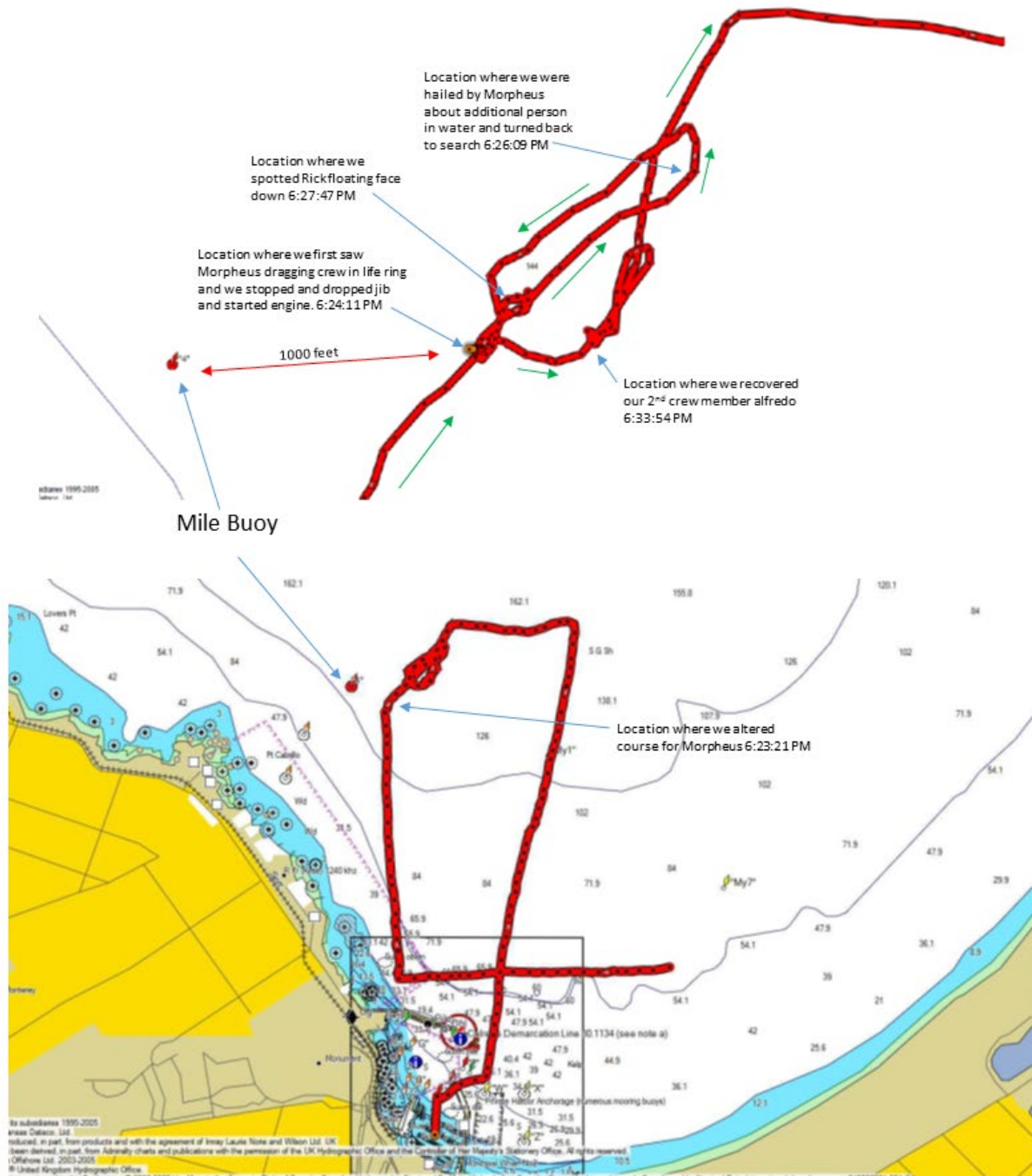
The crew of *Morpheus* was not able to get Rick aboard and held him in position at the transom till further help arrived.

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LocaMotion GPS Track

Top, Close-up of the track during rescue attempt. Below, *LocaMotion's* track that day

GPS Track and Notes of Loca Motion 3/13/19



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7. Transfer to USCG

The first government boat on scene was a Coast Guard vessel. As that vessel prepared to address the situation, a Monterey Fireboat approached, but was waved off out of concern that, coming from upwind, the boat would cause damage to *Morpheus*.

The USCG crew sent a throw line, requiring two efforts to get the line to the crew of *Morpheus*. With the line in hand, the *Morpheus* crew tied the line around Rick's chest and released him to the USCG vessel.

Although the crews of the sailboats were occupied with boathandling, they observed that getting Rick aboard the USCG vessel was not easily done, and that the crew had to bring his body around the bow of the vessel to the other side where he was presumably hoisted aboard and transported to shore for transfer to a waiting ambulance.

Rick was transported to the Community Hospital of Monterey Peninsula where, after attempts to revive failed, he was pronounced dead at 19:33.

8. Post-Mortem

The coroner has preliminarily reported several observations. There was no sign of alcohol or other similar toxicity. Rick had injury to his C1 vertebra and had several broken ribs. The Coroner concluded that the cause of death was drowning incident to cervical trauma. Our medical consultant adds that "incident to cold water shock" would also be a pertinent comment in the 54 degree water. Examination did not include inquiry into, or conclusions about, any sort of cerebral or cardiac event that might have precipitated Rick's fall.

The Death Certificate lists, in order, the causes of death, sequentially (final to first) as Drowning, Cervical Spine Injury, and Blunt Force Trauma, all within minutes. Description of injury is "DECEDENT SUFFERED A FALL FROM BOAT STRIKING HIS CERVICAL SPINE CAUSING INJURY AND DROWNING."

There is no direct evidence as to when Rick suffered his cervical spine injury, though medical evidence shows that it happened while he was still alive. Possibilities for when and how he got the injury include an impact from the hull or deck as he fell, contact with the rudder on his fall, or contact with the hull of *Morpheus* during recovery efforts, possibly a result of being tossed about by wave action, or contact with some unknown object.

9. Discussion: Causes of Incidents

In all, there were four sailors in the water (one intentionally) and one fatality. This inter-related set of incidents arose from a constellation of factual causes. These can, without implying any fault or criticism, be grouped in a few classes:

Decisions. Each individual boat, and each individual person for that matter, made the decision to sail that day. The Racing Rules of Sailing and the customs and law of the sea place the final and inescapable duty to decide whether to sail or not on the master (skipper) of each boat. Secondarily, the Race Committee considered whether to run a race that day and, finding conditions not inconsistent with prior successful races, decided to run the race.

Weather. Winds of 20 knots are not uncommon and are known conditions for sailing and racing in San Francisco and Monterey Bays. Open to the sea, the winds drove waves in the range of 5-6 feet. This

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made for challenging sailing conditions and, once there were people in the water, challenging recovery efforts. In addition, the higher winds made hearing radio transmissions difficult.

Equipment. The Moore 24, designed as an ocean-going boat, was originally equipped with lifelines. These were removed by Rick in 2011 or 2012. Many owners of similar boats do this to make handling of the headsails easier. Lifelines might have prevented Rick (and Dale) from falling off the boat. Boats are sometimes equipped with other means to keep crew aboard: jacklines or padeyes coupled with tethers attached to the crew can also keep crew on or at least near the boat.

Morpheus did not carry a Lifesling. There was no race requirement for one. This device, or equivalent, can facilitate retrieval of a person in the water by circling the victim with a sling on a tow rope, contacting him with it, and subsequently bringing him aboard, reducing the need for maneuvering close to the victim. *Morpheus* DID have a sort of jury-rigged substitute, which was that Rick had attached a floating line to the boat's horseshoe buoy and stuffed it in a plastic jar for similar use. This arrangement was not known to Jeff when he threw the buoy, and it was not attached to the boat so it did not function as a Lifesling would.

None of the boats involved had VHF radio communications available in the cockpit. Audible VHF in the cockpit of *LocaMotion* might have led them to find and rescue Rick more rapidly if they had been aware of his situation before Dale was in the water.

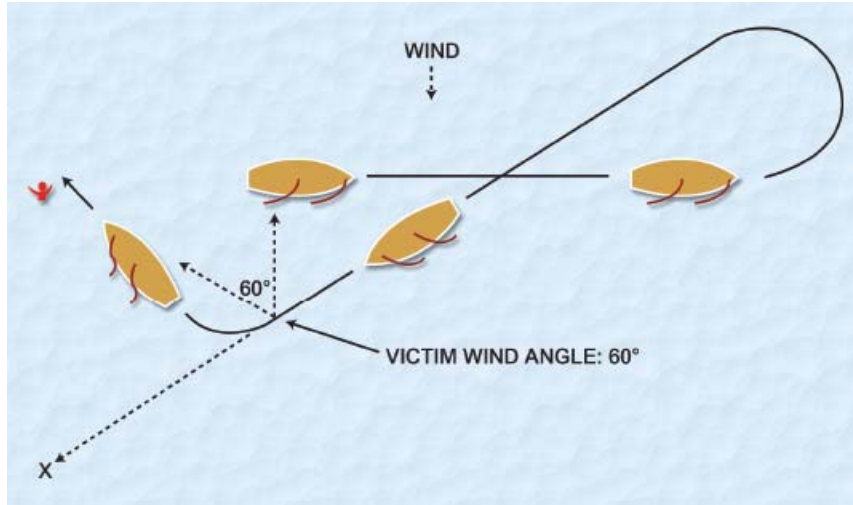
Non-Inflation. Rick's life jacket did not inflate. Had it been inflated, it might have kept his face out of the water, stabilized his head, and made him more visible. Rick's life jacket was on the order of 15 years old, likely purchased in 2003. It is believed that this may have been configured as a manual inflation jacket. Since the jacket was discarded, it was not available for inspection, and a cause of non-inflation cannot be proven. Experience with other jackets offers several plausible causes:

- Rick never pulled the tab, or
- The screw-in CO₂ cartridge had backed out (this is common), or
- There was a hole in the air bladder, or
- The cartridge was empty, or
- (if automatic) The automatic inflation pellet was old and failed to dissolve, or
- Some other unknown cause, such as mechanical failure of the inflation mechanism.

Crisis Stress. Both sailboats experienced additional accidental persons in the water, and each of these could have been disastrous but for good fortune. Dale was retrieved from a snagged line, and David, who was stunned when the main tackle hit him, came to when he hit the water. Each boat experienced periods of lack of focus and evidence of the impact of high stress on performance. Distracted by immediate events: David was struck by the main tackle, Dale fell off the boat for unclear reasons, and *Morpheus* fell short in its figure-8 maneuver.

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Retrieval Attempts. On their first retrieval attempt, *Morpheus* attempted a classic “Figure 8” retrieval. Unlike the more-current “Quickstop” maneuver, the Figure-8 does not require a gybe, which made it more attractive under the weather conditions. When *Morpheus* went head to wind as she approached Rick, she rapidly lost way and stopped about 5 feet short.



Ideal Figure 8 recovery diagram per US Sailing

Ideally, one approaches a person in the water on a close reach (about 60 degrees off the wind),

controlling speed by luffing the sails and adjusting course as needed for a safe approach. Both the Quickstop and Figure-8 maneuvers are classically describe as concluding with that approach. In the weather conditions, and with Jeff describing himself as a little “rusty” on the feel of the boat, he was not able to accomplish this maneuver on his first try.

The second approach brought *Morpheus* alongside Rick with a more conventional point of sail. Unfortunately, *Morpheus* had sufficient way on that Jeff could not, when he had Rick’s hand, maintain his grip. With attention divided between the helm and Rick, the effort failed. Dale tried to throw a line to Rick; it blew back. Jeff tried to throw a buoy to Rick, it also blew back.

Dale, on the other side of the boat, lost sight of Rick in this maneuver. This is consistent with Jeff bringing Rick alongside his side of the boat. Had Dale been able to assist on Rick’s side of the boat, retrieval might have been effected.

Age. Rick was 77. He was reputed to be in generally good health, with good balance and a high activity level. Nonetheless, medical opinion is that his age made him less resistant to the hazards of falling in.

Trauma. After retrieval, medical examination found that Rick had suffered some impact-related traumas. His C1 vertebra was fractured. It is not clear when this happened. At least three boats were in proximity to Rick at various times, and the injury could have happened as he fell off, or as *Morpheus* approached, or from some other impact. The Coroner has opined that the trauma led to drowning. Rick also had broken ribs, believed to have been incident to CPR efforts.

Time. Had *Morpheus* been able to retrieve Rick more immediately, or had *LocaMotion* gotten notice by radio and arrived on scene sooner (and perhaps changed the sequence of events including his injury), there might have been a greater chance of survival. Coast Guard and Monterey Fire Department responses were fairly close in arrival time, but after Rick had expired. It is beyond the scope of this report to review Coast Guard procedures.

Communications. On the date in question, on-water communications were almost nonexistent. The race committee could not hear communications from other boats. *Morpheus* and *LocaMotion* relied on a

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person below deck for their communications. *Morpheus'* Dale did not wait for or receive an acknowledgement of his MOB Mayday call, but subsequent facts show that the call was received and acted upon with a full response by the Coast Guard.

An unknown person made a 911 call, which was routed to Monterey Fire, who acted on it.

10. Recommendations

MPYC: Independent of this review, the organizer of this race, the Monterey Peninsula Yacht Club, has already taken a number of decisive steps to improve safety without substantially burdening participants in the events they manage. These include:

- Improved race committee communications capabilities: multiple radios required, with provisions for higher-wind audibility (enclosed cabin and/or earpiece)
- MOB training: scheduling US Sailing safety courses locally. Ongoing discussion of adding MOB practice to one or more club activities.
- Gear requirements: PFD already mandatory. Require lifelines for certain longer races. Exploring RC ability to require tether use (as discussed below)

General: Our general recommendations are as follows:

Overall, and as illustrated in part by this incident, primary responsibility for personal and a boat's safety must rest with the people on the boat, beginning with the skipper. They alone are in a position to judge whether a boat should venture out or stay home, and they alone are in a position to take the most critical steps in improving their own safety. Our recommendations, therefore, are directed first toward the individual sailor and secondarily toward other organizations.

Many of the recommendations below may be appropriate for similar conditions as experienced in Monterey Bay on March 13 – brisk winds, challenging waves, and a likelihood that a person in the water would need to be rescued by their own boat, rather than in reliance on some supervisory or “lifeguard” function as might be present in other on-the-water activities. In every case, however, both the individual sailor and any sponsoring organization must judge whether any or all of these recommendations is suitable. There is no “one size fits all” in this aspect of sailing.

Life Jacket Maintenance. A functioning life jacket would likely have saved Rick's life. Sailors *must* check their gear at each outing, and perform full inspections, including inflation, annually or as specified by the manufacturer. Automatic jackets must have their mechanisms replaced, again, as specified. Where feasible, organizations should promote this message, perhaps with well-publicized and freely-available videos, but the duty remains with the user and the “Person in Charge” of the boat. Some race organizers impose an explicit duty on the boat's PIC to inspect life jackets at a specified interval, and this or some other mandatory inspection may be appropriate.

Life Jacket Procedure. If possible, sailors should accustom themselves to pull the tab on their life jackets rather than expect an automatic inflator to do the job. An automatic inflator may fail for any number of reasons, and the manual action should be the primary method. We are informed that this is the training given to Coast Guard personnel.

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MOB Practice. A boat retrieving a person in the water can injure the person, or fail to retrieve them in a timely manner. *Regular* practice, in realistic conditions, including the use of a person-weight dummy victim, can give crews the skills and confidence to approach and retrieve a person in the water successfully. Skippers and crew should demand this practice of each other annually at a minimum. Such practice should include:

- Theory and practice of the use of a Lifesling®-type retrieval device
- Quickstop and/or Figure 8 maneuver to return to victim in a controlled manner
- Reboarding a victim (but, if with humans, only in appropriately safe water)

An organization may promote this sort of practice in any of a number of ways, including race requirement (as does Pacific Cup and Transpac), inclusion as an on-water activity such as a “tune-up” race, or staging a formal training/practice event.

MOB Reboarding Gear. Simply reaching over the side and pulling the MOB up is unreliable and can further injure the victim. The thrown horseshoe buoy does nothing to get a victim aboard. US Sailing’s SER require a Lifesling® type device for Ocean and Coastal races. Sailors (and organizers) should consider including or requiring this device on boats in any situation where recovery may be challenging. Depending on the boat design, features to assist in reboarding should be considered and implemented, including a halyard that reaches to the water, a swim step, low transom, or boarding ladder, and the like.

Bright Clothing. Nautical blue may be fashionable, but it makes a person in the water very hard to find. Bright colors such as red or yellow will make a person in the water visible to potential rescuers. Wear these. Avoid blending in.

Staying On The Boat. Again, referencing the SER, various means, including lifelines, jacklines, padeyes, toe rails, and tethers can be prescribed in various circumstances as appropriate. We believe that these, in all likelihood, would have kept Rick on the boat (though they did David no good). Whether or not “required,” skippers and crew should insist on the use of tethers, particularly where conditions make going overboard more likely or more consequential (heavy weather, cold, night). Consistent with the SER and sound judgment, organizers may wish to make such measures mandatory for their event. An innovative approach, regarding tethers, would be to include in the Sailing Instructions a signal that indicates “tethers must be used” in the same manner as RRS 40 prescribes for life jackets under the Yankee flag. MPYC is experimenting with this.

Improvised and Old Safety Gear. Old gear may become unreliable, particularly if maintenance has not been performed. Sailors should consider replacement of older gear or should increase their inspection frequency of such gear. A separate issue is highlighted by home-made or improvised gear, such as using old sheets as lifelines or tying a line to a horseshoe to serve as a Lifesling®. These measures may lack the reliability and functionality of the items they “replace,” and, moreover, may not be recognized by crew on the boat as intended to serve a particular safety function. These should be adopted only with careful consideration.

Communications. A proper watch on VHF 16 is part of a sailor’s obligation to maintain situational awareness. Absent other considerations, boats should maintain such a watch. A boat in an organized

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event, such as a race, might rely on a race channel if the race committee is maintaining such a watch. Boats should have VHF audible to the helm.

Where participants sail beyond the immediate starting area, It is advised that participants switch to VHF 16. If the race committee needs to make a fleet announcement, they can make the initial hail on 16 and switch to the race channel.

- In any case, where a race committee is on station, they should monitor the race channel as well as VHF 16 and a vessel traffic channel if applicable. It may be necessary, as often happens in San Francisco Bay, to relay safety messages between channels. Committees should assure that their radios are audible to them. If wind exposure makes this difficult, an earpiece is recommended.

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Exhibits

Time Line

Morpheus (M): Rick (Skipper/Owner), Jeff, Ryan, Dale

LocaMotion (L): Mark (Skipper/Owner), Dave, Sherry, Fredo, Keith, Marguerite, more

*Asterisked times are inferred or estimates

Time	Event	
17:00 *	LocaMotion conducts safety lecture	L
17:00 *	Shields fleet decides not to race	RC
17:00 *	RC consults with DuPreez on weather.	RC
18:00	Scheduled race start, but postponed to allow boats to arrive	RC
18:02	Morpheus crosses start line alone	M
18:05	First start, per RC	M
18:05	LocaMotion Starts	L
18:15 *	Ryan looks back, sees Rick has fallen off boat	M
18:15 *	Jeff alerts Dale. Jeff takes helm. Dale (Morpheus) radios USCG.	M
18:17 *	Morpheus tacks to port, heads off toward MOB. When abeam, commences a figure 8 approaching from downwind. Stalls short of MOB	M
18:20 *	Second figure 8 attempt. Jeff has Rick's hand briefly and hears Rick say "Hurry."	M
18:21 *	Dale throws line toward Rick, into the wind. It blows back, falling short. Jeff throws horseshoe buoy with same result	M
18:21 *	Jeff orders jib backwinded to bring bow over. Sheets are snarled.	M
18:22 *	Dale, coiling throw line, falls overboard from Morpheus	M
18:23 *	Line Dale is holding remains affixed to boat, somehow. Towed behind boat.	M
18:24	LocaMotion spots Morpheus with person in water, dragging "in life ring"	L
18:24	LocaMotion starts engine, drops jib, heads toward Morpheus	L
18:26	LocaMotion hailed by Morpheus about additional person in water	L
18:26 *	Dale recovered by Morpheus	M
18:28	LocaMotion Spots Rick, face down in water	L
18:29	Monterey Fireboat approaches. Waved off by Morpheus	F
18:29 *	Sherry goes to VHF. Makes no call because hears traffic	L
18:29 *	LocaMotion goes head to wind. Mainsheet strikes Dave. He is knocked into water	L
18:30 *	Dave, still near LocaMotion, reaches MOB Rick and tries unsuccessfully to turn him face up	L
18:31 *	Dave recovered using part of MOB gear	L
18:33 *	Fredo volunteers to go in for Rick	L
18:33 *	Fredo swims Rick to Morpheus	M
	LocaMotion hails USCG "everyone is out of the water"	L
18:34	LocaMotion recovers Alfredo	L
18:35 *	Morpheus unable to reboard Rick. Hold him at transom. Unresponsive	M
18:35 *	USCG arrives. Takes Rick	CG
18:54	Rick transferred to ambulance. Seen on gurney with no helmet or jacket. "Asystole"	CG
	Life Jacket (and presumably helmet) disposed of by USCG because fouled with fluids. Later retrieval effort fails: jacket is gone.	CG
19:33	Rick pronounced.	

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Medical Report

Submitted by Dr. Kent Benedict

A. Preliminary Coroner's Report - Sources

- Deputy Coroner, Detective Diana Schumacher
- Dr. Venus Azar, autopsy pathologist
- Monterey County Sheriffs Office
- Re: Preliminary Coroner's Report of Rick Srigley

1) Telephone Interview with Detective Schumacher

3/27/2019, 11AM to 11:30AM, not recorded, took notes

2) Telephone Interview with Detective Schumacher

4/8/2019, 10:50-11:10 AM, not recorded, took notes

3) Telephone Interview with Detective Schumacher

5/13/2019, 3PM – 3:30PM, not recorded, took notes. Detective Schumacher also emailed a copy of the Death Certificate.

4) Telephone Interview with Dr. Azar

5/20/2019, 3PM – 3:30PM, not recorded, took notes.

B. Summarized Preliminary Information from Interviews

Detective Schumacher advised me that it is highly unusual to release any Preliminary Reports. The usual practice is that the Coroner's Reports are released only after the Final Report is completed – often many months after the incident. I found Detective Schumacher and Dr. Azar extremely helpful in my interviews and discussions with them. I took notes but did not record the conversations. They both agreed to make themselves available to discuss this further by telephone and email with follow-up questions and to confirm the accuracy of my notes and comments.

The victim, a 77 y/o male, fell off a sailboat into the Monterey Bay, sustaining significant blunt force trauma to the neck leading to drowning within minutes. There was no witness to the fall. There was no way to determine from the autopsy alone if his fall was precipitated by vertigo, syncope(fainting) or a cardiac dysrhythmia. No brain autopsy was performed, thus no way to determine if he had suffered a stroke.

He sustained a considerable blunt force injury to the neck resulting in soft tissue(neck muscle) hemorrhage and spinal cord epidural(tissues covering the spinal cord) bleeding, especially along the right side of the neck. Based the extent of soft tissue damage and the pattern and amount of bleeding, the pathologist's opinion was that the trauma occurred in the minutes before he expired (drowned), not post mortem.

The pathologist was aware that the victim was under treatment for a heart condition - atrial

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fibrillation – and was taking medication, including an oral anticoagulant(blood thinner) to reduce the risk of stroke. His atrial fibrillation once required treatment by electro-cardioversion at the hospital.

There were multiple rib cage fractures - bilateral anterior 2 through 7, medial 2 through 4, bilateral posterior rib fractures, and a sternum fracture – a pattern which is consistent with fractures seen after CPR. He aspirated gastric contents, also consistent with drowning and/or CPR.

His wife described him as a very active man, participating in competitive sports and who enjoyed physical challenges. She did encourage him to start wearing a helmet(a cross country equestrian model) after two minor blows to his ears while sailing, which produced significant swelling "cauliflower ears".

The toxicology blood findings were negative for alcohol or drugs.

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Life Jacket Report

Witness testimony is that Rick was wearing a Life Jacket described as a blue West Marine with a name patch on it. Witness review of photos and exemplars helped identify the model described below.

According to comments from fellow sailors, it is believed that this was not a self-inflating model. This vest did not, in any case, inflate on March 13, 2019.

A visit to a local West Marine to look at their older catalogs shows this model available for sale in 2003 and not in 2006.

According to the catalog from 2003 (pictured). This jacket came in manual and automatic versions. The automatic version came with an adapter to convert it to manual.

The automatic vest was model 1259894, and product number 8030279. The manual vest was model 358871, product number 8030282. The price for either model was \$159.

A manual for the vest can be found at this link:

<https://s7d1.scene7.com/is/content/Coleman/Web/Stearns/Stearns%20Content%20Pages/product%20manuals/pdfs/stearns-1220-1230-manual.pdf>

That manual calls for a manual inflation test every two months and notes that the bobbins on the automatic vests are to be replaced every three months. No replacement interval appears to exist for the CO2 cartridges.

According to a report, the specific vest worn by Rick was initially discarded by USCG rescue personnel because it was fouled with body fluids (presumably vomit). Later, the crew went to retrieve the vest, realizing its investigative value, but it was gone by then.



Rearming Kit 374225V 8030221 .46

B. Automatic Inflatable Vest
Features traditional water-activated inflation with a manual inflation backup system, 210 denier oxford nylon cover and cap for conversion to manual inflation. USCG Type V with Type II performance.

Description	Model	WMPFD#	ShWt	0i
Regular Vest	1259894	8030279	2.91	159.
Rearming Kit	374225	8030221	.46	19.
CO2	251886	8030239	.36	10

C. Manual Inflatable Vest
Features a manual inflation system with an oral inflation tube backup system, 210 denier oxford nylon cover. USCG Type III vest. 35 lb. of buoyancy.

Description	Model	WMPFD#	ShWt	(
Regular Vest	358871	8030282	2.4	15!
Rearming Kit	121652	8030220	.85	1!
CO2	251886	8030239	.36	

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Working Party Biographies

The working party was appointed by Chuck Hawley acting on behalf of US Sailing Safety at Sea Committee chair Sally Lindsay Honey, who was offshore at the time.

Michael Moradzadeh, Chair: Currently Commodore of the Pacific Cup Yacht Club and a member of the US Sailing Safety at Sea Committee and Cruising Club of America's Safety and Seamanship Committee. Chaired Northern California Offshore Racing Council to develop local equipment rules and procedures following the *Low Speed Chase* incident, which he was also involved in (distress call only). Member of CCA, Corinthian YC of SF, Saint Francis YC, and RORC. During the drafting period of this report, experienced an MOB from his boat offshore at midnight in heavy weather. Crew was safely recovered. An informal report will follow.

Jean DuPreez, Rear Commodore MPYC: MPYC Rear Commodore and Race Chair. An experienced sailor with close to 40 years of sailing experience racing and cruising in South Africa, off the coasts of Connecticut, New York, California, Florida and Mexico, as well as all over the Caribbean. He is US Sailing certified in Offshore Cruising and Navigation and has owned and/or raced several boats ranging from 18 to 38 feet. He currently campaigns a 26ft J-80

Craig French: Craig French has been sailing on Monterey Bay, San Francisco Bay and in Coastal races for 47 years. Starting in Laser class, then sailing in a Santa Cruz 27 for 15 years and for last 19 years owner of a Sydney 38 sloop. He is a Staff Commodore of Santa Cruz Yacht Club, and in addition to racing in SCYC sponsored events, has been the rabbit boat for Wednesday night races for 19 years.

Bill Lee, Yacht Designer: Bill Lee has 60 years experience sailing from gaff schooners, to capsizable dinghies, to offshore boats. He is a retired designer and builder the "Santa Cruz" series of performance offshore racing yachts and a Transpac course record holder for 20 years. He is a member of the Santa Cruz and St Francis Yacht Clubs, and past Commodore of the Transpacific Yacht Club. He is an Offshore Racing Association director and a past member of the US Sailing Safety at Sea Committee.

Jerry Stratton: An experienced sailor and racer with 48 years of on the water experience racing and cruising off the California and Florida coasts, throughout New England and in the eastern Mediterranean. He has owned and/or raced handicap fleet boats from 27 to 50 feet and currently campaigns a 30-ft Shields yacht in regional and national one-design events. He is an experienced PRO and a US Sailing judge.

Kent Benedict, MD, FACEP, Medical Consultant: Fellow of the American College of Emergency Physicians, and a USCG Licensed Master (100 tons). For 22 years he was the Chief Medical Officer for the California Maritime Academy's training ship, USTS GOLDEN BEAR. He has held clinical teaching appointments at Stanford and was Medical Director of Emergency Medical Services in Santa Cruz and San Benito Counties for 30 years. He has taught Emergency-Medicine-at-Sea courses and US Sailing's Safety-at-Sea courses locally and nationally, written articles for *Latitude 38*, assisted in rewriting the World Health Organization's *International Medical Guide for Ships* and is one of the five principle authors of the US Sailing Independent Review Panel Inquiry into the Low Speed Chase Capsize during the Full Crew Farallones Race on 14 April 2012. He has cruised extensively on his own vessel, the *San Juan*. In his spare time, he is a Caribbean charter captain.