

Solo+One- a new CHESSS Service The ‘Solo+One’ program is intended to help more people start to single-hand their boats. We all have been here, at the very beginning, thinking that starting to single-hand our boat is frankly daunting.

But getting the courage to single-hand our boats is a little like the Scarecrow from the Wizard of Oz, often it’s only about having been conferred a degree as a “Dr. of Thinkology”, or in our case, becoming aware that we are an experienced single-hander. The idea of Solo+One is to provide an opportunity for people considering single-handing to have an experienced CHESSS single-hander on board as an observer while they are getting into and out of their slip and while sailing their boat. Think of it as a buddy system to start single-handing.

But also, there are people who say. “I’d like to single-hand my boat, but it is not set up for it.” As it turns out, often the relative ease of short-handing is not about how the boat is set up, but often it is more about preparation for a maneuver, knowing where to stand and how to move when doing specific tasks, and the sequence in which the individual steps are performed.

How does SOLO+One work? The CHESSS member observer will be there to lend a hand only when one is asked for. The main goal is to watch how the new single-hander does basic operations. The goal is in part achieved by talking through options that make each maneuver safer and easier for that individual and that particular boat. A typical Solo+One will start by evaluating the docking situation, reviewing the sail plan and sail handling gear on the boat, will perhaps practice leaving and entering the slip, and if there was still time, go sailing and practice typical maneuvers. Along the way, the observers will make suggestions on how to make short-handing safer and easier.

Parameters and Limitations

SOLO+One is not meant to replace basic sailing education such as that found in the ASA 101 and 103 courses. The singlehander should already have a basic knowledge of sailing and have at least a minimal experience sailing with crew. The SOLO+One Observer will not modify any hardware, troubleshoot or repair equipment. The vessel should be seaworthy and functional at the time of the lesson.