

Skipper Certification & Review Board – Safety & Incident Report

Incident Date: May 2026

Vessel: J/24 - Boat #6

Location: Buoy 35 off Ellis Island

Environmental Conditions: Wind SSE at 10–20 knots; flood tidal current of ~1 knot

Skipper Review Board: Rob Goldstein, Mac True, Caner Dinlenc, Sara Burke, Chris Gizzi, Scott Crow

1. Incident Overview

During the second race of a Lucky Dog Race, a J/24 attempted to round Buoy 35 off Ellis Island as a windward mark. With only a three person crew, the skipper and bow were focused on raising the spinnaker when the helm drove the vessel into the buoy causing substantial damage amidships.

2. Damage & Repair Assessment

Contact with the buoy fractured the hull and deck of Boat 6, destroying both the interior and exterior structural fiberglass skins.

- **Repair Scope:** Extensive structural fiberglass repair, fairing, Awlgrip painting, and installation of a new toe rail.
- **Labor & Cost:** The total cost of this repair is estimated at over \$3,000. Based upon the circumstances of the incident, the board decided the skipper should reimburse the club for the full amount.

3. Critical Seamanship Takeaways

- **Skipper Control of the Crew:** Every skipper must put themselves in a position to oversee their crew, especially the helm. Thus, the skipper must be extremely cautious when taking on crew responsibilities that distract from this oversight.
- **Increased Rounding Distance:** When racing on a course that includes harbor infrastructure such as buoys, barges, etc. skippers must properly weigh the consequences of contact against the potential advantage in seconds gained.
- **Maintain a Proper Lookout:** In this case, both crew members were certified skippers at MYC. They should not have lost sight of a nearby hazard for the less important task of raising a spinnaker.
- **Zero Contact Policy** - Members are reminded that MYC fleet vessels must never touch a buoy or fixed structure under any circumstances.