

Coast Guard Rescue 3 After Sailboat Sinks near St. Mary's Island

By Carol A. Gasser Moore

SOUTH GEORGIA— Sunday, February 4th brought a distress call about 1:00 p.m. A 26-foot sailboat, the Last Chance, issued the alert. Its operator indicated that the sailboat was stranded north of the St. Mary's Island Inlet entrance. The call prompted the Jacksonville Coast Guard Sector to send out an "urgent" marine broadcast. They alerted all mariners in the area to the distress call.

Life jackets had been donned by the three crewing the sailboat. They prepared to board their dingy and evacuate their sailboat.

Both the Coast Guard Station boat crew as well as their Air Station helicopter crew started for the sailboat's last known location. The crews came from the Coast Guard Station Mayport and Station Savannah. Marine authorities indicate that both the Station Mayport boat crew and helpful area Samaritans were able to locate the 3-man crew, whose sailboat was now submerged.

The Coast Guard indicates that the sailboat crew was dealing with 20 MPH winds as well as a 3-5 foot seas when the boat started sinking.

The Last Chance sailboat's 3-man crew were taken to a Camden County hospital to be evaluated for their injuries.

At this time, no further information has been released by the Coast Guard. St. Mary's Island Inlet is less than 100 miles southeast of Lanier County, making it a popular ocean destination for regional residents of the Lanier County area.



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