



# Race Officer/Mark layer interface

How can we help each other?

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## Objectives of this session

- Better understand how the Race Officer and his assistances should work with the Mark Laying team
- Learn how working together you can deliver better racing for the competitors
- How to make it more fun for all involved



## Topics we will cover

- On shore preparation
- Prestart and laying the course
- During the race activities
- After you have finished
- What really annoys you?
- Summary



# On shore preparation





## On shore preparation

- Whole team briefings
- Establish capability levels – agree roles
- “Art of the possible”
- NoR and SI understanding
- Check equipment
- Communication protocols
- Agree daily schedule



# Pre-start and laying the course





## Things to think about

- How many mark layers?
- Equipment
- Course configuration
- Communications
- Planning
- When to lay the course?



## How many mark layers?

- Club Level
  - 1 or 2 mark layers
- Open Events / Small Nationals
  - 2 or 3 Mark Layers
- Large Nationals / International Events
  - 3 or more Mark Layers



# Equipment

- Suitable Boat & Engine for local sea state and weather
- Suitable clothing for day on the water
- VHF radio & spare, mobile phone
- Burgee / wind indicator, compass
- GPS, Depth gauge
- Suitable anchors and warp for bottom and depth
- Spare anchor and warp.
- Jersey Ring
- Required flags / course bearing boards, sound device etc
- Food and Water



## Course configuration

- Windward / Leeward
- Triangle / sausage
- P course
- Trapezoid
- Multiple Windward marks
- Gates or spreader marks



# Planning

- Have a plan to match your resources
- Know your teams capabilities
- How much input does your RO want?
- How much time do you have to work with?





## Pre Start

- Chat with RO
  - Wind and tide readings/tracking
  - Course length
  - course axis
  - Start line agenda and communications
- Work the plan
  - Check RO is happy
  - Mark or Marks go in



## When to Lay the Marks

- How much time can the RO spare?
- Which system to lay are you using?
  - 1 boat all the marks
  - Daisy Chain
  - The reference system
- How steady is the breeze?
- Tide?



# During the race activities





## During the race activities

### Race Officer

- Overview of race course
- Wind tracking
- Mark roundings
- Race length tracking
- Course move decisions
- Safety overview
- Abandonment
- Finishing
- Kettle on!

### Mark Layers

- Wind and tide readings/tracking
- Mark roundings
- Moving marks – quickly!
- Signalling course changes
- Drifting marks
- Shorten/finishing
- Drink tea and lunch



## How can we make all this happen easily or automatically

- Keep looking around
- Regular but controlled input from around the course
- Wind shifts and changes - discuss what can be achieved with Head mark layer
- Watch the time – target times
- Don't over complicate or push too hard
- Clear and decisive communication to all involved



## After the race has finished





## After the race has finished

- Check the last boat has rounded the marks
- Pick up all the marks and anchors
- Prepare and check the kit for next day (correct boats)
- Collate all recording sheets and pass to RO.
- Debrief whole team – review what did/didn't work
- Learn lessons
- Confirm tomorrow schedule and team



# What really annoys you?





# What really annoys a mark layer?

- Cold Tea and Coffee
- Not enough time to prepare
- Rope round props
- Bad equipment or losing kit
- Race officer who likes to micromanage
- Not being able to raise the CB on radio
- Not knowing the sequence had started
- CB always wanting a reply
- Confusing radio messages
- RO trying to over complicate the issue





# What really annoys a Race Officer?

- Bad equipment
- Ropes round prop
- Radio silence
- Talking during the sequence
- Too slow
- Over ambition - not bailing out!
- Swearing the GPS is right
- Not doing what is asked
- Hung over mark layers!





# Summary

What really are the most important factors?





## Summary

- Never stop communicating
- Involve everyone, but agree decision making process
- Know what is possible
- Think ahead – small windows to change course
- Learn lessons – debrief
- Keep smiling and make it fun
- **Good mark layers can make weak RO's look good!!!!**
- **Bad mark layers will make a great RO's look bad!!!!**
- **The team works.... Use it!!!**
- *Always wear sunscreen - unless you are Paul Carpenter!!*