

Building an Effective Team

Sharon Hadsell



Building an Effective Team

- Building an effective team requires thought, planning and preparation prior to the event.
- We will discuss first building a team for an event with known entities and then move forward to how some of those same techniques can be used when challenged with building a team from a group of people unused to working together.
- Respect, communication and enabling team members to function to the top of their ability.
- Anticipatory leadership, communication on the water and leading the team through stressful situations will be explored.



Getting Started

Type of event for which you are planning

Level of competition

Expected size

Assets Needed

Ideal

Minimum

And what you have



Selecting the Team

Assessing team members' skill sets

What they like to do and are good at performing

What they want to learn

What you have seen demonstrated

Assessing who can work well together

Remember that you want your team to perform well but you also want them to have a rewarding experience on the water



Prior to the Event

- Work with the equipment manager to ensure that equipment lists for each race committee boat are complete and accurate.
- Talk with the mark boat captains to find out how they normally function and agree on expectations for performance that work for both of you
- Review radio procedures and expectations
- Put together a Comms List
- Review the Safety Plan and ensure everyone knows their role



Prior to the Event

- Discuss potential course configurations and expected leg lengths. Calculate line, gate, and offset lengths.
- Be sure you know what/when they expect your guidance and what they anticipate doing independently
- Work with your Pin Boat to ensure your starting procedure and OCS calling plan are clearly understood
- Explore who else is available to be part of the team. Jury Chair, Fleet Representative, Technical Committee, Shoreside Logistics, Coaches



On the Water

- If you have done your pre-work this part should be easy
- Review with your Signal Boat team roles and organize the boat so that each person can function with the fewest distractions possible because this is where all the information that your mark boats feed you is assimilated. And that information needs to be readily available at a moment's notice.
- Do not ask your mark boats for information unless you are going to use it



On the Water

- Do not interrupt your mark boats when they are busy
- Let your mark boats do their job and thank them frequently
- Open honest communication and let everyone know what you are thinking/what's happening
- Thank each mark boat captain and their crew at the end of racing for the day
- Ensure that Race Committee boats are shadowing the fleet home



Ashore

- Put away equipment and clean the boats
- Debrief - what went well, what needs to be changed, equipment issues, personnel issues
- Correct in private, praise publicly
- Socialize with the team
- Share any complements. Remember it is all about the team, no one person can make it happen



Leading the Team Through Stressful Situations



Leading the Team Through Stressful Situations

- Having the big picture - This is where a good Recorder is invaluable
- What needs to happen and in what order?
- Communicate with your Mark Boats calmly and lower your voice one level
- Tell them what you need and repeat reciprocals and angles even if redundant.
- Ensure that they have the equipment needed to accomplish the task (flags, marks, ground tackle, course boards, placards, etc.)



Leading the Team Through Stressful Situations

- Ask them if they can accomplish it in the time left
- Do not bother them with extraneous information
- If you have information that doesn't require a reply then tell them, "No reply necessary" and then give them the information.
 - Their hands may all be very busy, and they may not have time to pick up the radio and answer you.
 - We frequently use an old Air Traffic Controller trick, and they just double click their radio to let you know they heard you and are proceeding with their task.
- Be quiet and let them do their jobs



Leading the Team Through Stressful Situations

- Your Recorder and DRO should be following the activity and double checking all distances, angles, reciprocals, etc.
- If necessary, your DRO may need to move to an alternate channel with a Mark Boat that needs to be talked into position simultaneously with your direction to the other boats.
- Are any other assets available to help with the issue?
- When the tension lessens and the tasks are accomplished, praise the team for the Rock Stars they are



Building a Team with People Unused to Working Together



Initial Questions

- Who invited you?
- What knowledge do you have of the event?
- Any history of the event that could be helpful?
- What knowledge do you have of the venue?
- Who is the venue's "go to" person?



Discussion Items

- Gear and Equipment available
- Plan for number and type of boats to be used
- Do they have the personnel needed to run the event or are they looking to import some people?
- Who is their “Weather Guru”?
- Who are their local knowledge players who will be available?
- Any advice on how the players normally interact?



At the Venue

As we discussed before:

- Work with the equipment manager to ensure that equipment lists for each race committee boat are complete and accurate.
- Talk with the mark boat captains to find out how they normally function and agree on expectations for performance that work for both of you
- Review radio procedures and expectations
- Put together a Comms List
- Review the Safety Plan and ensure everyone knows their role
- Discuss potential course configurations and expected leg lengths. Calculate line, gate, and offset lengths.
- Be sure you know what/when they expect your guidance and what they anticipate doing independently
- Work with your Pin Boat to ensure your starting procedure and OCS calling plan are clearly understood
- Explore who else is available to be part of the team. Jury Chair, Fleet Representative, Technical Committee, Shoreside Logistics, Coaches

All of the above except in much greater detail



At the Venue

- Gently ascertain how they normally function
- Do they set marks using a GPS? What is their GPS functional level? Be very careful here.
 - You don't want to be the 800 lb. gorilla, but you need to know if they need to ping reference points or if they can enter them from radioed coordinates.
 - Don't wait and be surprised out on the water. This will impact how long it takes to set a course.
- Describe for them how you normally communicate and your normal process



At the Venue

- Walk them through a normal racecourse set-up
- The last 2 bullets become even more important and need to be in greater detail.
 - Be sure you know what/when they expect your guidance and what they anticipate doing independently
 - Work with your Pin Boat to ensure your starting procedure and OCS calling plan are clearly understood
- Ask their opinions and LISTEN



Key Points

- You need to engage them to work with you
- Make them your friends and allies
- Appreciate their knowledge and expertise in whatever area you find
- Do not talk down to anyone ever. Remember that your body language also telegraphs your thoughts. Lean in, listen, engage.
- Praise every positive thing that happens every conversation ends with “thank you”



Key Points

- Make “I appreciate” part of your rhetoric
- Share the complements and praise the team
- Always tell them how much you appreciate them for asking you to come and work with them, for working with you and for helping to make the event the success it was.
- Use the Trophy Presentation to complement the Team and make it about them. Adjust your comments to the time allotted but just having the RC Team stand and be recognized with a few words does not take long.



Questions and Comments

Thank you

