

# Signal Boat and Signaling

Bruce Bingman and Taran Teague



# Hub of the Race Committee

- Key Duties

- Set up the race course
- Start the race
- Monitor the course and adjust as needed
- Monitor the weather and conditions for safety and fairness
- Finish the race
- Score the race and post the results



# Signal Boats Come in All Sizes and Types



# Be Grateful for What You Get!

- Meet Owner/ Operator of Signal Boat.
  - BE POLITE – This is their “Baby”!
  - How do they want to run their boat?
- Evaluate the Boat
  - Have they anchored the boat in 40+ feet of water?
  - What Type of Anchor and how much rode?
  - How does their boat lay at anchor?
  - Onboard navigational systems?



# Setting the Course

- Understand the Weather and Water
  - Check weather and tides/current on the AYC website
  - Look for Thomas Point and other local stations
  - What direction is the wind and current?
  - Is the Dam open?



# Setting the Course (cont.)

- Wind Patterns

- If from the south (up the Bay) may be a chop, can be hard to anchor, wind will oscillate up to 10 degrees
- If from north ( N – NW) good breeze and Bay reasonably flat but heavily oscillating breeze due to the Severn land effects
- Beginning of sea breeze usually light from SE. Clouds will build along the shoreline. Look for dark line of approaching breeze from Bloody Point. Will start 165-170°, go to 160° then settle around 180-195°.
- If from the East- go home!



# Setting the Course (cont.)

- Send Mark boats out early to get general wind direction
- Determine approximate area to anchor based on wind, anchored ships and other YC race courses
- After anchoring, get ready to begin to check in boats



# Let's Run a Race!

- PRO will determine course axis and length based on wind
- Post course and wind on Signal Boat
- We manage the course with signals



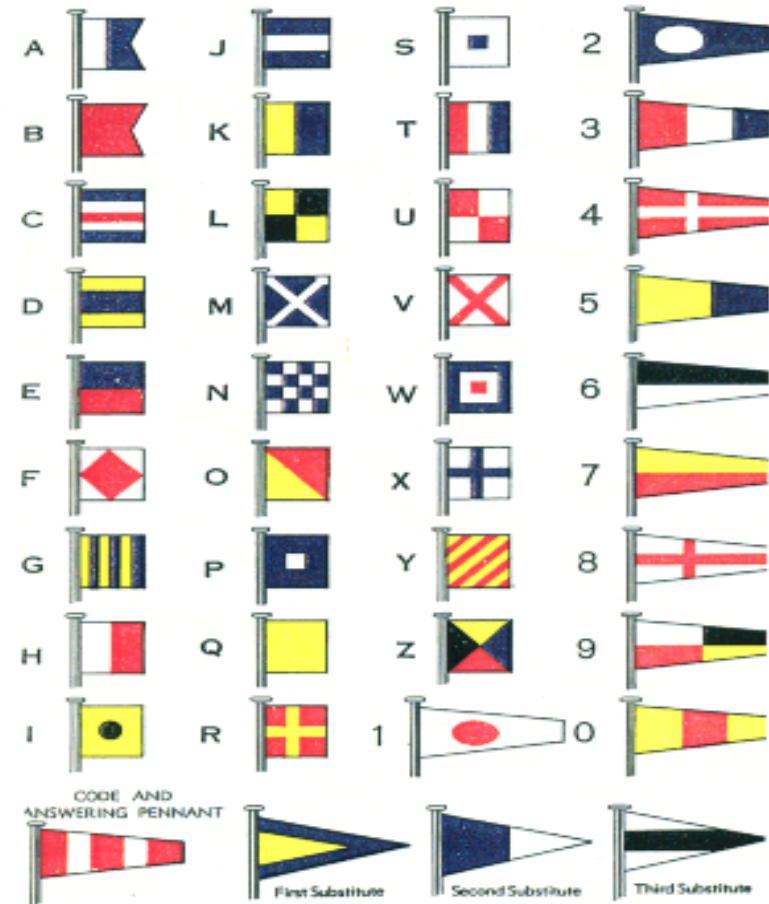


# SIGNALING

- One of the RC's key jobs
- Tells the competitors when to start
- Tells them if they are over early (OCS)
- May signal courses to be used
- Signal course changes, shortening and abandonment



# MANY TYPES OF SIGNALS



# SIGNALING STARTS

- Signaling is how we communicate with the racers
  - Depends on start sequence selected in the SI
  - AYC uses both visual (5 minute (RRS 26) and Sound (Appendix U – Audible-Sound Sequence)



# Before the Start - POSTPONEMENT



- Postponement – only **before** the start
  - If the RC is not ready at the scheduled time of the warning
  - If the RC discovers, during a starting sequence, that it has made an error
  - If there is insufficient wind to race
  - If there is a significant wind shift during the starting sequence
  - If either end of the starting line comes adrift



# STARTING SIGNALS

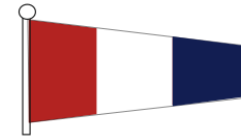
## RRS 26 (5 minute sequence)

- Normally used on weekend races
- “Standard 5 minute” Sequence
- Visual signals govern (“the absence of a sound signal shall be disregarded”)
- Raising and lowering of flags must be “snappy”
- “Quiet Time” - Starts 5 minutes before Warning



# Standard Start Sequence FLAGS

- Warning      ↑ with SOUND  
-5 minutes
- Preparatory      ↑ with SOUND  
-4 minutes
- 1 Minute      ↓ with LONG SOUND  
-1 minute
- Start      ↓ with SOUND  
0 minutes



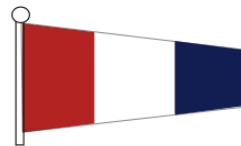
Class Flag



P Flag



P Flag

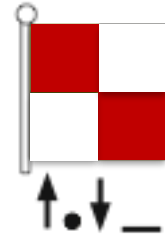


Class Flag



# Penalty Start FLAGS

- U Flag (RRS 30.3)  
Black Flag (RRS 30.4)
- U Flag = DSQ unless race is restarted or resailed.
- Black Flag = DSQ even if race is restarted or resailed after the start signal. Generally not used at club-level events
- No X-ray or sound if boats OCS







# RECALLS



- **INDIVIDUAL RECALL NOTIFICATION (X-RAY)**

- Used when boats are identified starting before their proper time
- Flag must be raised IMMEDIATELY with sound
- Leave flag X up “...until all such boats have sailed completely to the pre-start side of the starting line or its extensions...” (and have complied with **RRS 30.1**, if it applies), or for 4 minutes, whichever is sooner (**RRS 29.1**)
- **Don't dip the flag, or otherwise signal boats returning to acknowledge their status**
- No sound when lowered



# RECALLS (cont)



- **General recall (1<sup>st</sup> substitute):**
  - when called for by the PRO
  - two sounds required when displayed
  - one sound when lowered – timed signal, Warning is 1 minute after General Recall flag dropped



# APPENDIX U (Audible Signal)

- Typically used for Frostbites and Wednesdays
  - No flags used – except Recall may be used
- Courses may be posted or announced – must be done before the Warning Signal



# APPENDIX U (Audible Signal System)

Attention – Series of short sounds – before the Warning

Warning – 3 long sounds – 3 minutes

Preparatory – 2 long sound – 2 minutes

1 long sound/1 short sound – 1 ½ minutes

1 long sound - 1 minute

3 short sounds – 30 seconds

2 short sounds – 20 seconds

1 short sound - 10 seconds

5 short sounds – 5-4-3-2-1 seconds

1 long sound – 0 (START)



# SHORTENING COURSE



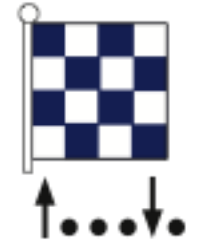
- Generally done by marks boats if they are available
- No advance notice!
- Class flag(s) if necessary (only shortening some classes)
- No finishing line flag
- Flag S and two sounds “before the first boat crosses the finishing line” (RRS 32.2)



# ABANDONMENT

## SIGNALS FOR ABANDONMENT

- Flag N (or N over A, or N over H) with three sounds
- Class flag(s) if necessary
- “N” by itself - Race Abandoned - all boats to return to start
- “N” over “A” – Race Abandoned - no more racing today
- “N” over “H” – Race abandoned – return to harbor for further instructions



# FINISHING

- Definition of “FINISH” – in RRS Definition section:
  - “A boat *finishes* when, after *starting*, any part of her hull crosses the finish line from the course side . However, she has not *finished* if after crossing the finish line she”
    - (a) takes a penalty under rule 44.2
    - (b) corrects an error in *sailing the course* made at the line, or
    - (c) continues to *sdail the course*”



# FINISHING (cont.)

- Need Spotters, Recorders and Timer
- Prepare ahead of time:
  - Finish sheets
  - Writing instruments
  - Watch(s)
  - Position so have clear view of line (Spotters and Timer) and can hear clearly (Recorders)
  - “Quiet time” as boats approach and until last boat finished





# FINISHING (cont.)

- Spotters

- Be sure you understand definition of “*finish*”
- Identify boats as they finish. Hail “Mark” or “Over” as they cross
- If a large clump, identify using any means (red sail, inside-outside, etc.)
- Note any flags on boats as they cross
- Consider using tape recorder or phone



# FINISHING (cont.)

- Recorder
  - Records boats as they finish
  - Separate recorder may be recording times
  - Record any hails or flags on finishers or any other unusual incidents at finish
  - Leave open line if miss a finisher – go back and fill in later during a “slack” time



# FINISHING (cont.)

- **Timer**
  - Ensure on proper time tic with PRO and Start time (very important for handicap racing)
  - Call out time as each boat crosses, if multiple crosses, keep order straight



# SCORING

- Usually have a separate scorer – however
  - Should be generally familiar with scoring program being used
  - Check all scores either before or as they are posted for “reasonableness”
  - Keep track of all paperwork and finish sheets
  - Will be needed in case of scoring inquiry
  - Jury may need for redress issues



When you are finished . . .

- Join the party and talk to the competitors
  - Listen to any complaints politely
  - accept any compliments graciously

**HAVE FUN!**



# THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING

