

# How to run races and enjoy it!



# Agenda

1. The roles of the race team
2. Race day preparation & timings
3. Where to find things
4. Setting courses
5. Setting the start line
6. Communicating with sailors
7. \*\*\* Time for a break \*\*\*
8. Starting the race
9. Dealing with problems
10. Recording times and positions
11. Finishing a race
12. Tidying up & results

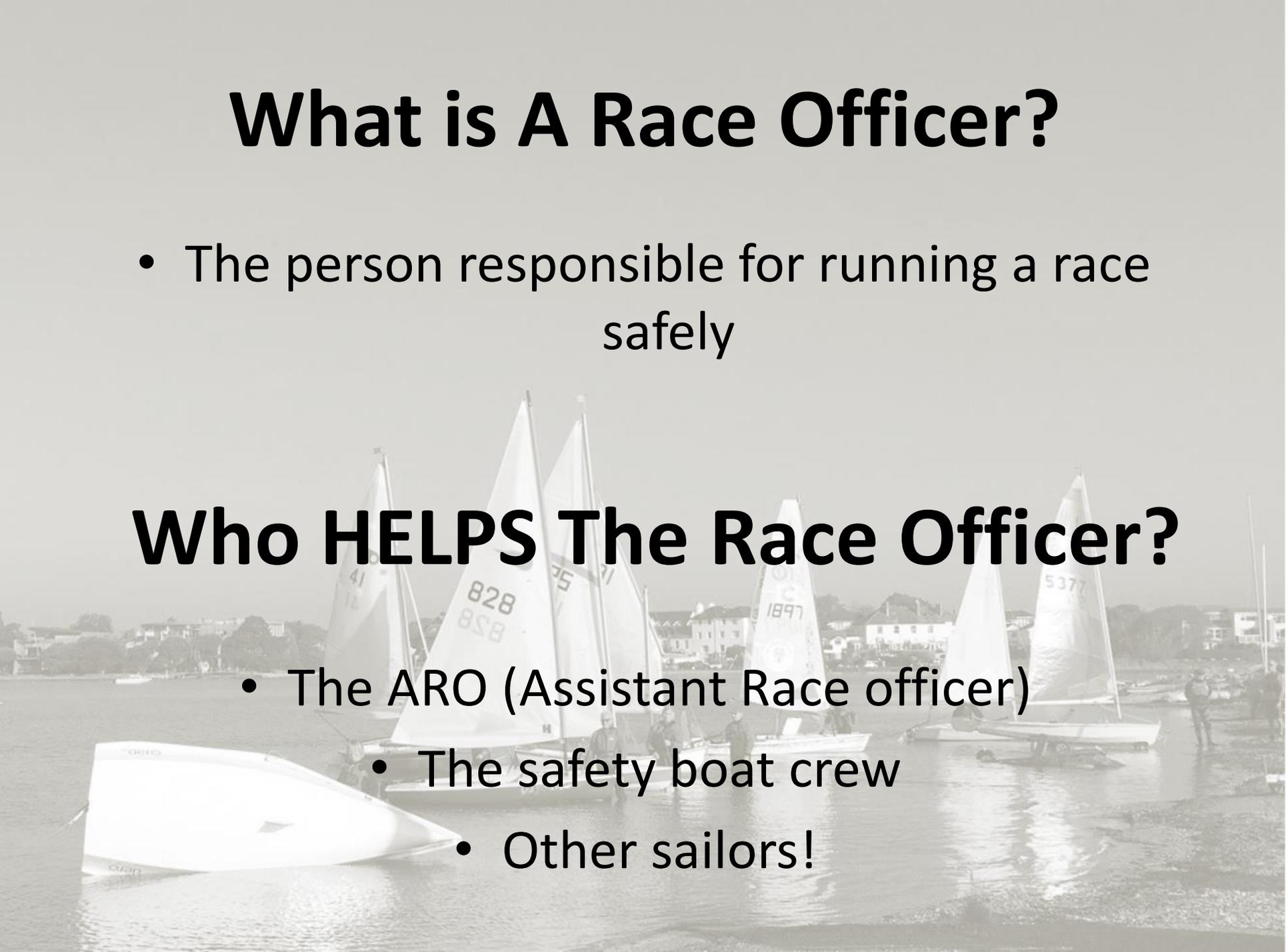


# What is A Race Officer?

- The person responsible for running a race safely

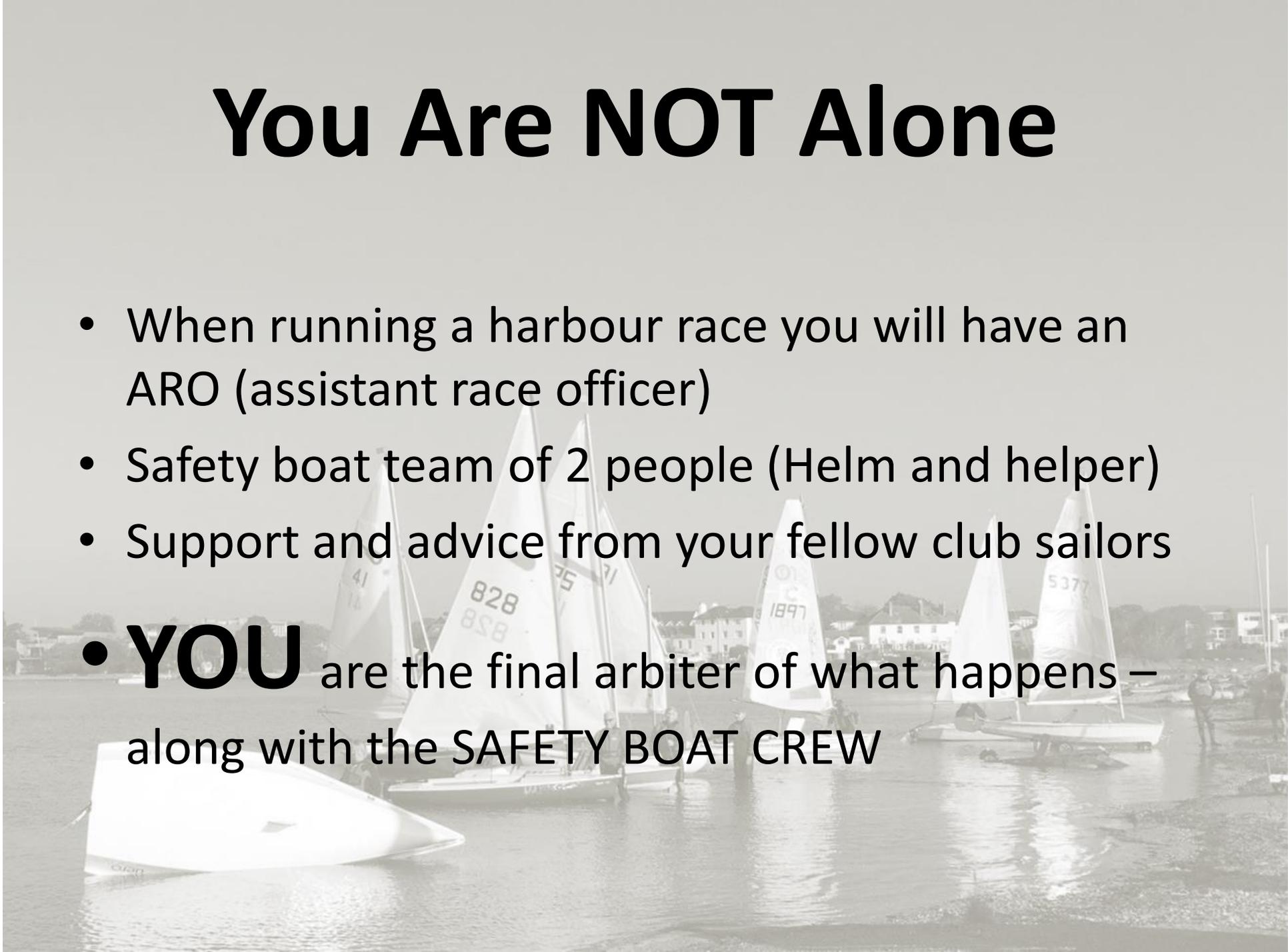
## Who HELPS The Race Officer?

- The ARO (Assistant Race officer)
  - The safety boat crew
  - Other sailors!

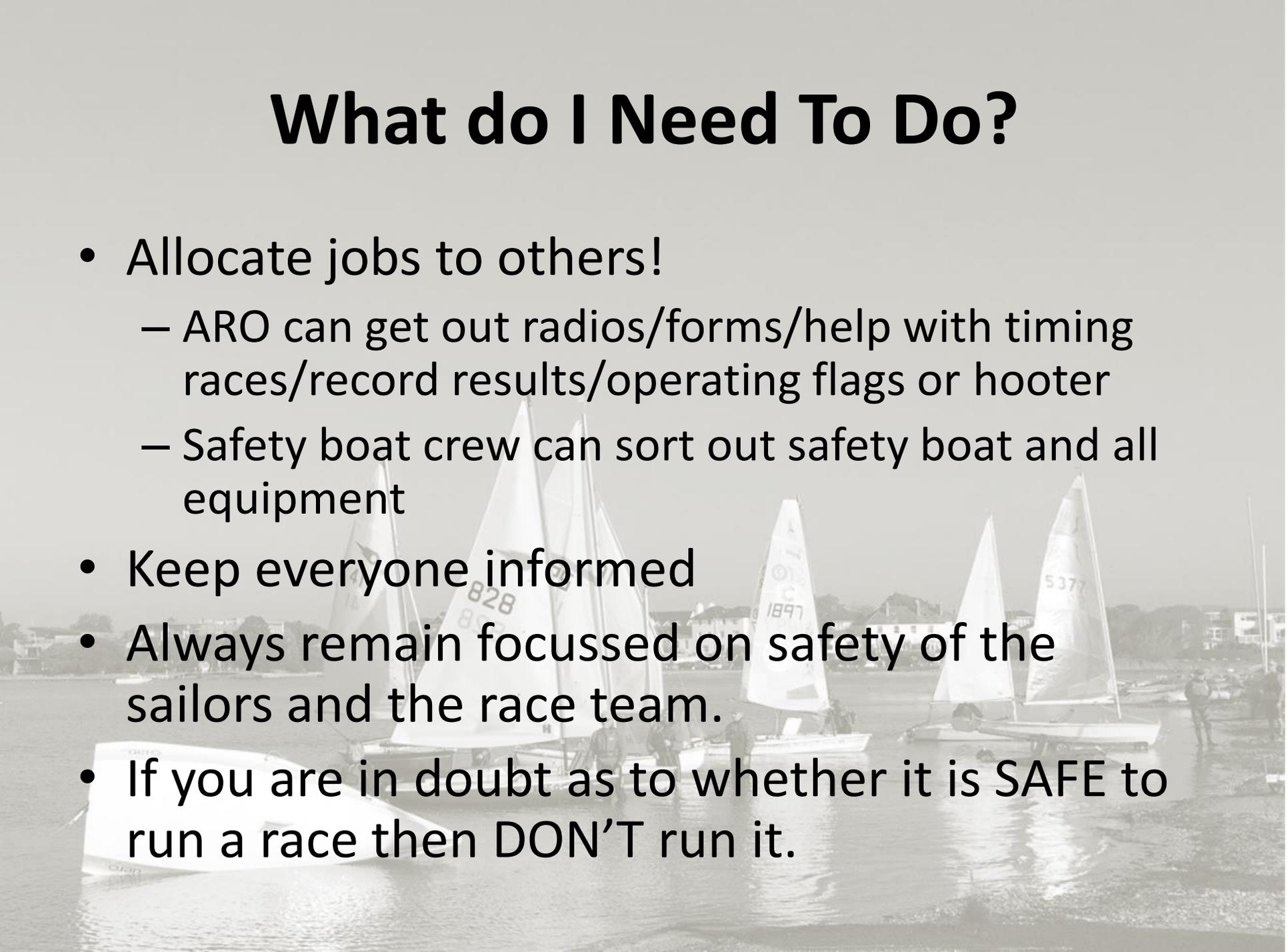


# You Are NOT Alone

- When running a harbour race you will have an ARO (assistant race officer)
- Safety boat team of 2 people (Helm and helper)
- Support and advice from your fellow club sailors
- **YOU** are the final arbiter of what happens – along with the SAFETY BOAT CREW



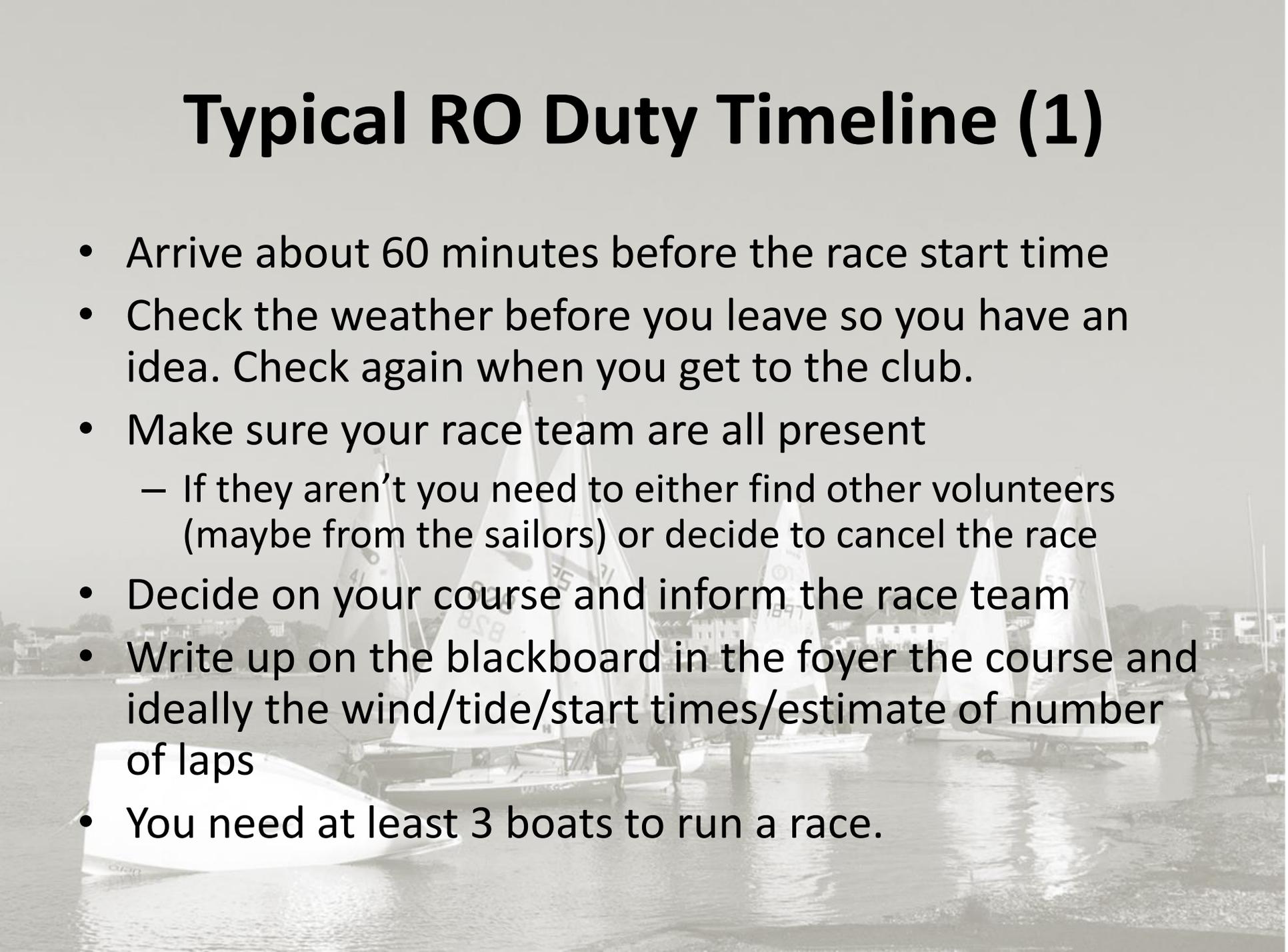
# What do I Need To Do?

- Allocate jobs to others!
    - ARO can get out radios/forms/help with timing races/record results/operating flags or hooter
    - Safety boat crew can sort out safety boat and all equipment
  - Keep everyone informed
  - Always remain focussed on safety of the sailors and the race team.
  - If you are in doubt as to whether it is SAFE to run a race then DON'T run it.
- 

# Communicating With The Safety Boat

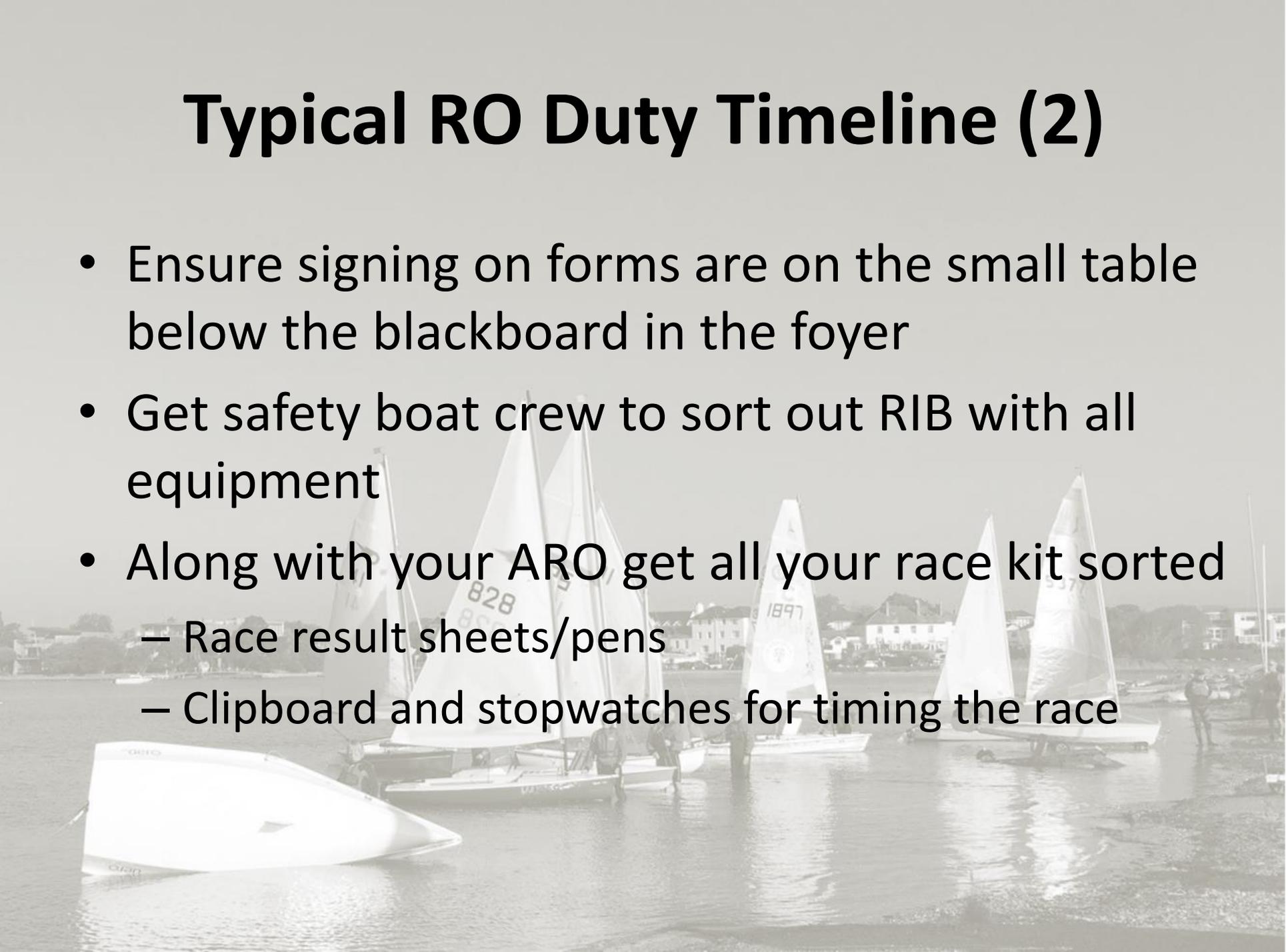
- Role of the safety boat
  - **Primarily safety**
  - Course layer and potentially guide around the course if deemed necessary due unfamiliar sailors or poor conditions
- They need to be aware of the race plan
  - Number of races/course/start line/timings/number of boats on the water
- Radio contact and clear signals from on shore
  - Check the radios work and channels before launching
  - Channel numbers for radio (P4 is normally used by HSC)
  - Hand signals in an emergency
  - Radio callsigns
- Clarity of when racing and all boats safely finished

# Typical RO Duty Timeline (1)

- Arrive about 60 minutes before the race start time
  - Check the weather before you leave so you have an idea. Check again when you get to the club.
  - Make sure your race team are all present
    - If they aren't you need to either find other volunteers (maybe from the sailors) or decide to cancel the race
  - Decide on your course and inform the race team
  - Write up on the blackboard in the foyer the course and ideally the wind/tide/start times/estimate of number of laps
  - You need at least 3 boats to run a race.
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# Typical RO Duty Timeline (2)

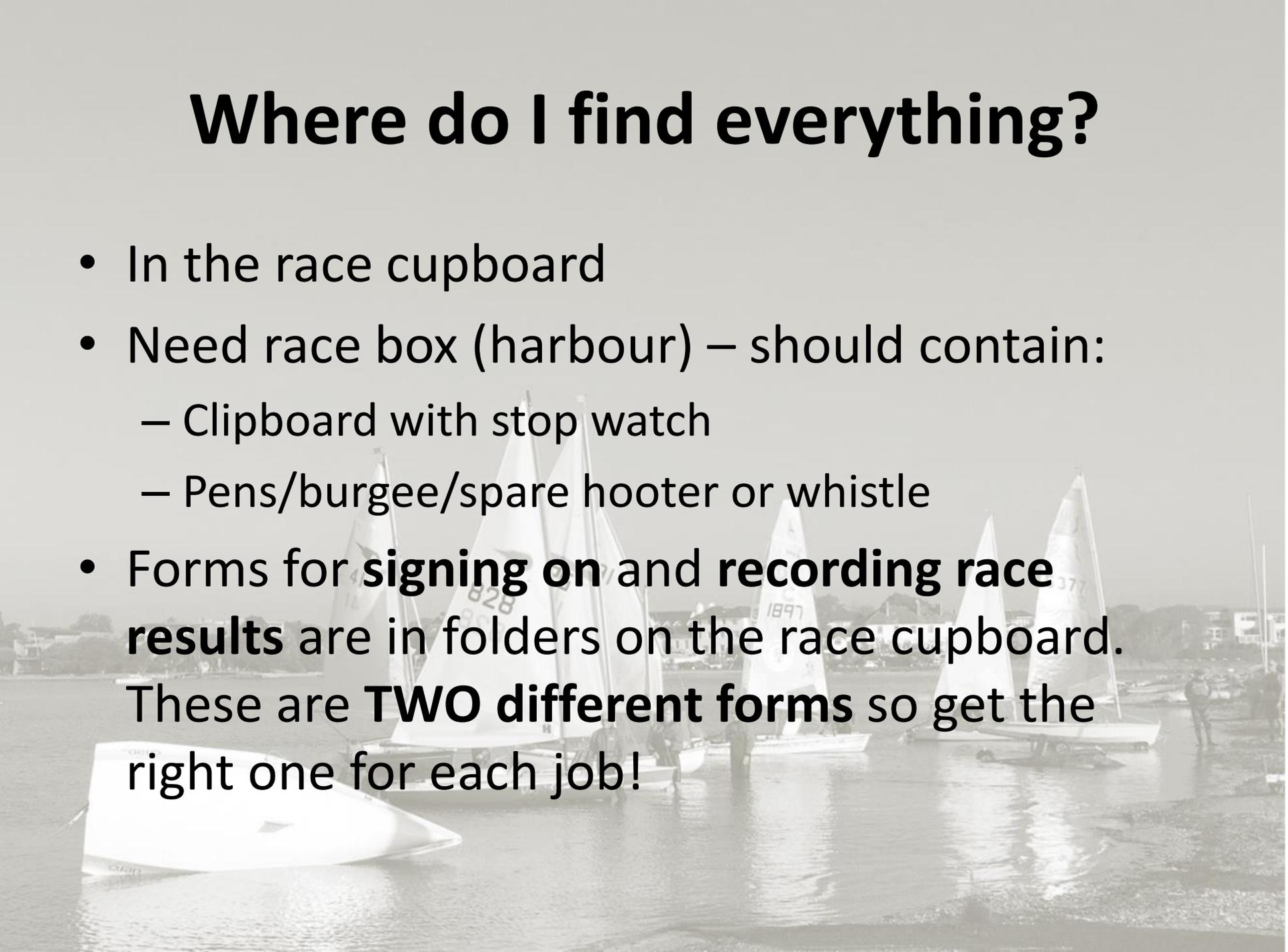
- Ensure signing on forms are on the small table below the blackboard in the foyer
- Get safety boat crew to sort out RIB with all equipment
- Along with your ARO get all your race kit sorted
  - Race result sheets/pens
  - Clipboard and stopwatches for timing the race





# Where do I find everything?

- In the race cupboard
- Need race box (harbour) – should contain:
  - Clipboard with stop watch
  - Pens/burgee/spare hooter or whistle
- Forms for **signing on** and **recording race results** are in folders on the race cupboard. These are **TWO different forms** so get the right one for each job!



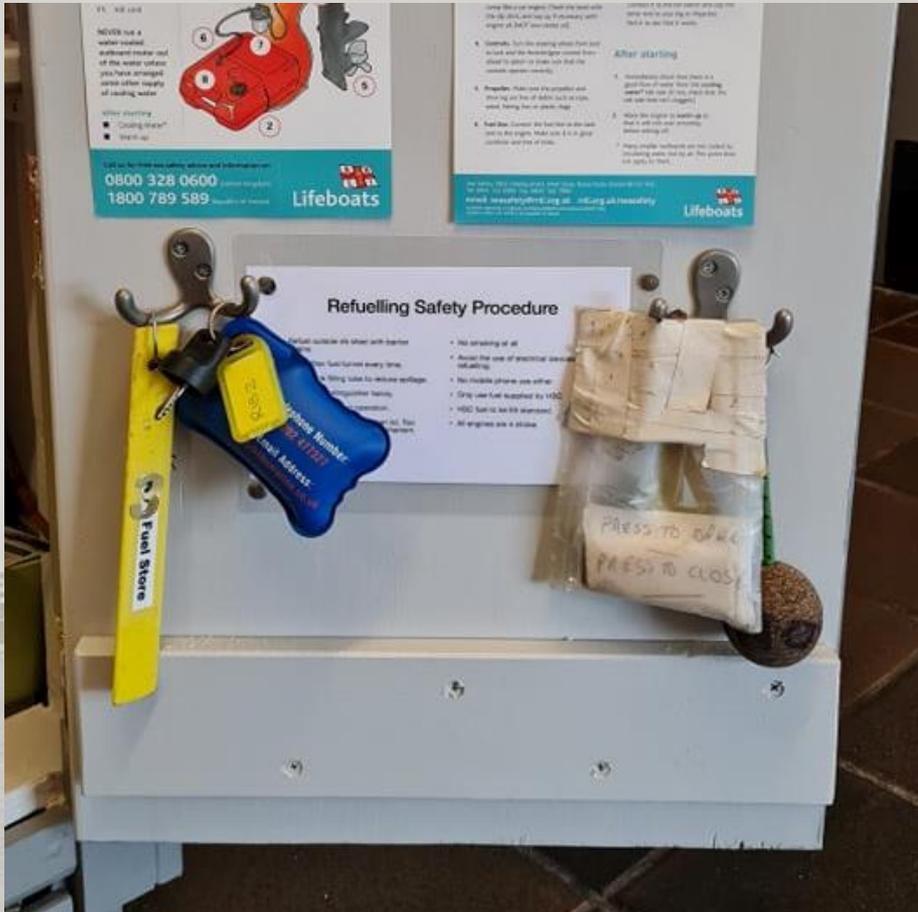
# Where do I find everything?



# Where do I find everything?



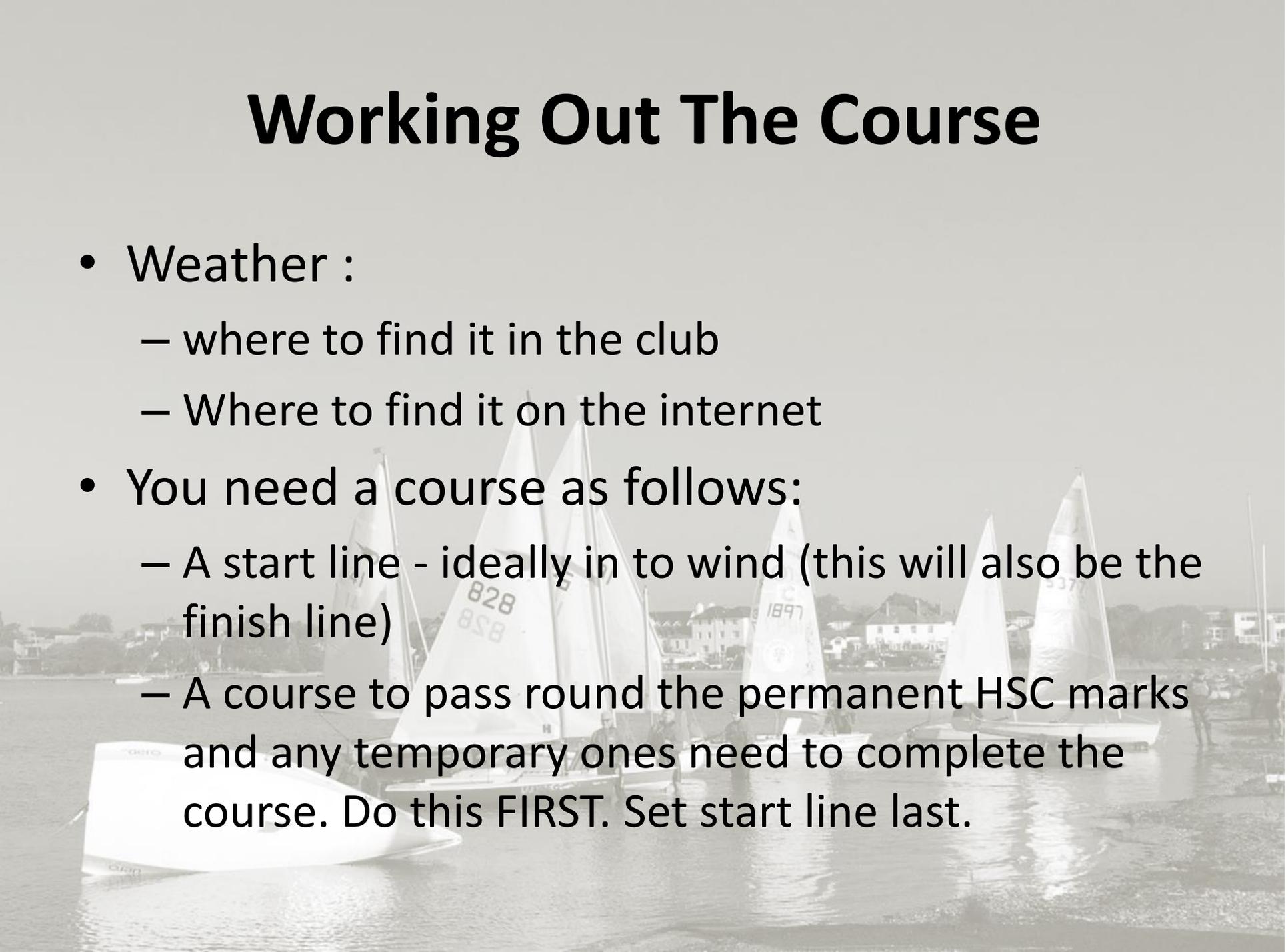
# Where do I find everything?





# Working Out The Course

- Weather :
  - where to find it in the club
  - Where to find it on the internet
- You need a course as follows:
  - A start line - ideally in to wind (this will also be the finish line)
  - A course to pass round the permanent HSC marks and any temporary ones need to complete the course. Do this FIRST. Set start line last.





**PERMANENT**



**TEMPORARY**

# HSC MARKS



# HSC MARKS





# HSC MARKS





**TEMPORARY MARK**





**AREAS TO AVOID**



**TYPICAL COURSE**



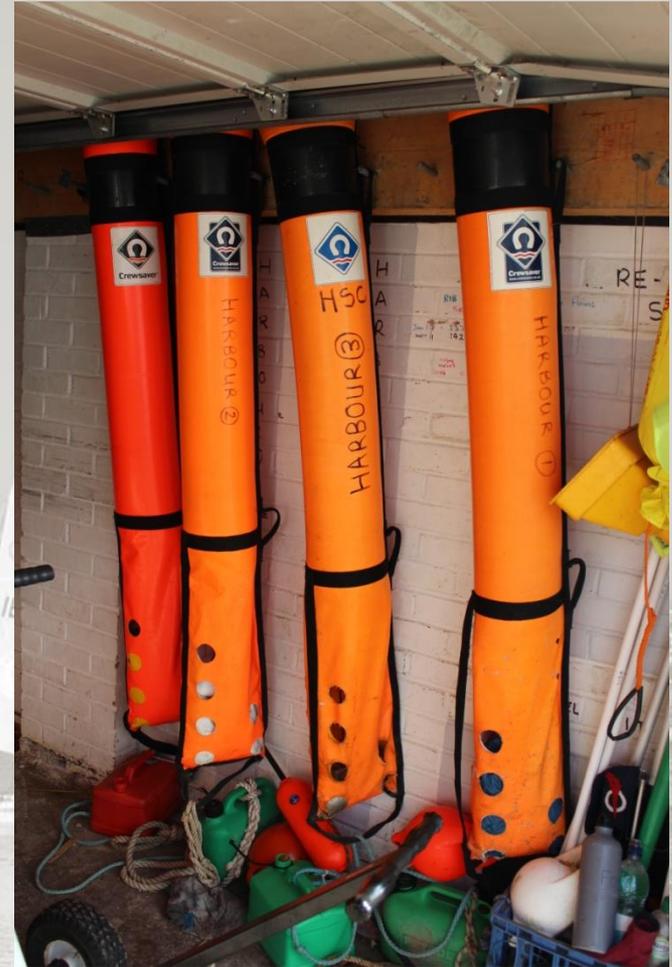
**TYPICAL COURSE**

# Setting A Start Line



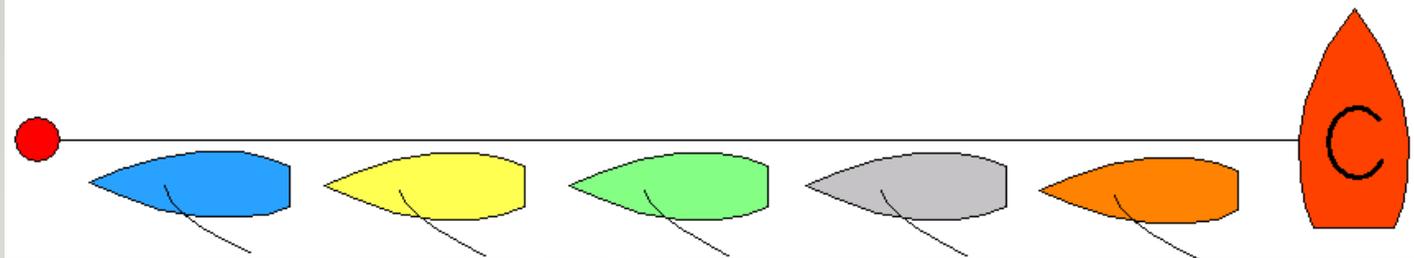
# Setting A Start Line

- Get the safety boat to put in the end of the line marker. This will be one of the pencil marks as shown to the right. Known as the “PIN END”
- The length of the line should be sufficient to give every boat a chance of being on the start line at the same time.
- Therefore the more boats racing the longer the start line.



# Start Line Length & Angle

Number of boats x length of the boat plus about 50%



- Aim for 90 degrees to the mean wind direction if the first leg is a beat to windward.
- If a reaching start – set at 90 degrees to the first mark.
- It doesn't have to be perfect.



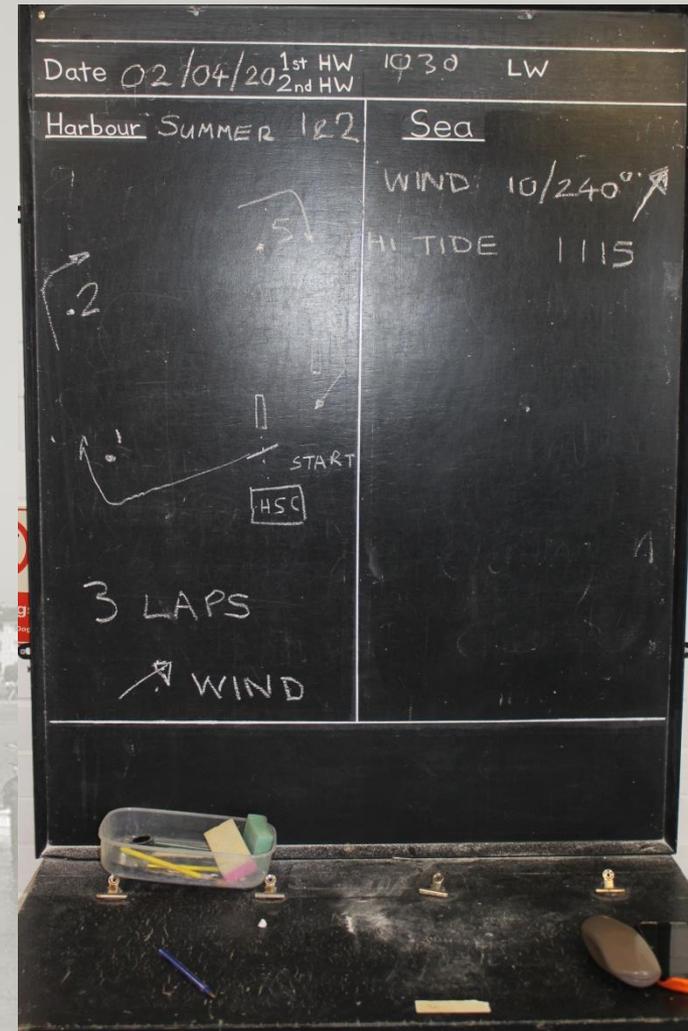
# Setting A Start Line

- The **start line runs from the flag mast to the pin end marker** placed by the safety boat.
- Ideally the race should start as close to directly in to wind as possible BUT the presence of moored boats and wind direction may restrict your options.
- Use the burgee to help you and the safety boat judge where the pin end marker should be located.
- **BOATS MUST PASS THROUGH THE START LINE ON EACH LAP**



# Communicating With The Sailors

- Use the blackboard in the entrance to let everyone know the plan
- Course - direction/marks/startline/number of laps/race name/tides/wind
- It may be advisable to brief the competitors before going afloat. Use the briefing to share the plan, address potential issues and deal with any queries.



# Communicating With The Sailors

- Take a portable blackboard with you to communicate from the Race Officer location
- The flags are to be found in the Rib shed
- The flags can be set out either on the club balcony or the balcony by the RNLI (easier to see round the corner, but less sheltered)





# THE RACE MANAGEMENT TEAM

Time for a break

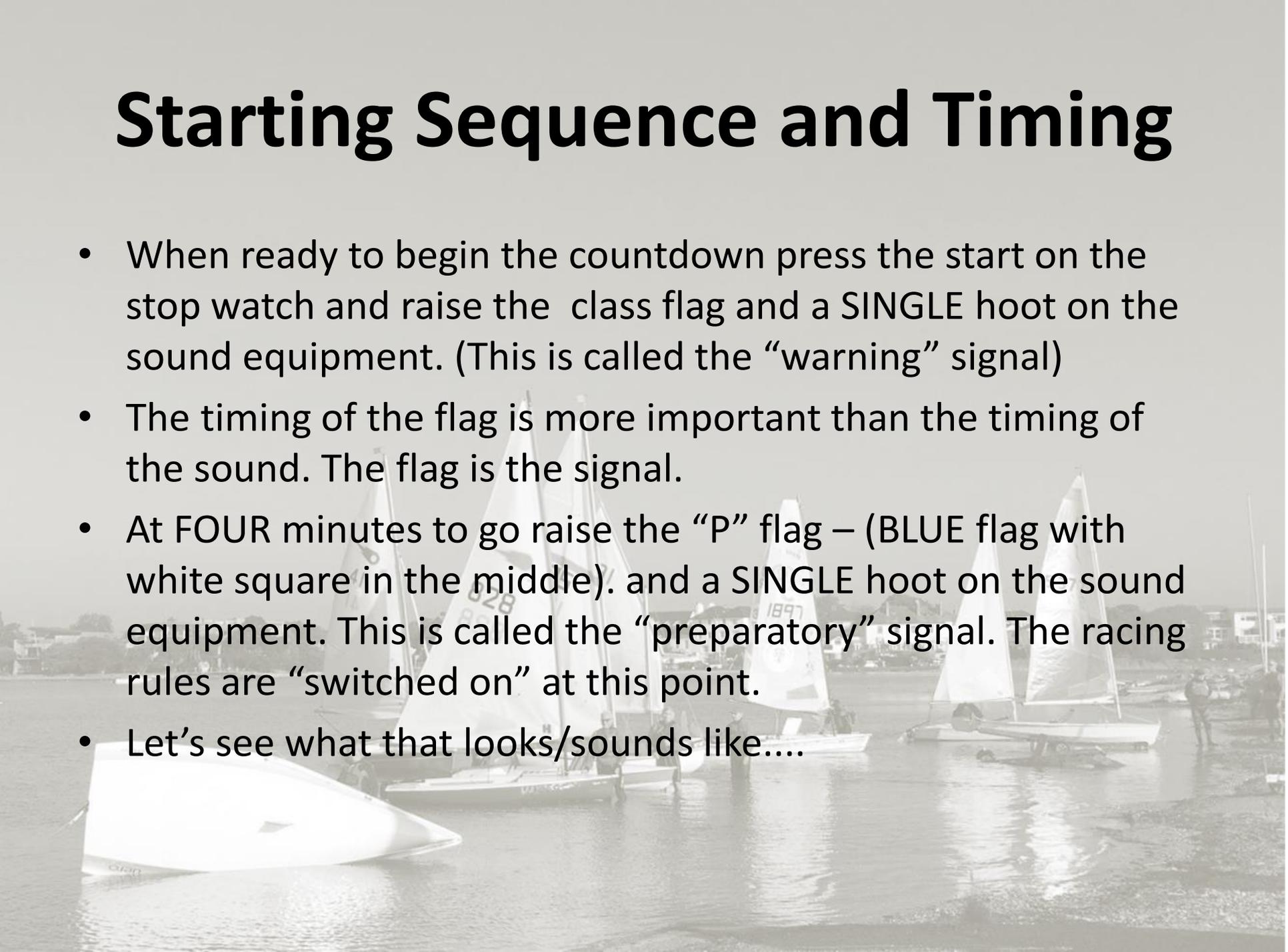
# Starting Sequence and Timing

- Ensure you have a stopwatch correctly set and ideally a back up
- Set stop watch to 5 minutes countdown
- When you have set the start line and are ready to begin, shortly before the start sequence, raise the orange flag. It's not mandatory but useful to give a few short blasts on the horn to warn sailors you will soon commence the start sequence.
- Aim to start the countdown as close as possible to 5 minutes before the advertised start time for the race.
- Before you start the 5 minute countdown ideally radio the safety boat to let them know – they can then warn sailors
- The class flag (numeral 3 for harbour races, numeral 1 for sea races) will be raised at the start of the 5 minute countdown – this is called the “Warning signal”.



# Starting Sequence and Timing

- When ready to begin the countdown press the start on the stop watch and raise the class flag and a SINGLE hoot on the sound equipment. (This is called the “warning” signal)
- The timing of the flag is more important than the timing of the sound. The flag is the signal.
- At FOUR minutes to go raise the “P” flag – (BLUE flag with white square in the middle). and a SINGLE hoot on the sound equipment. This is called the “preparatory” signal. The racing rules are “switched on” at this point.
- Let’s see what that looks/sounds like....



# Starting Sequence and Timing



Ready To Start



5 Minutes

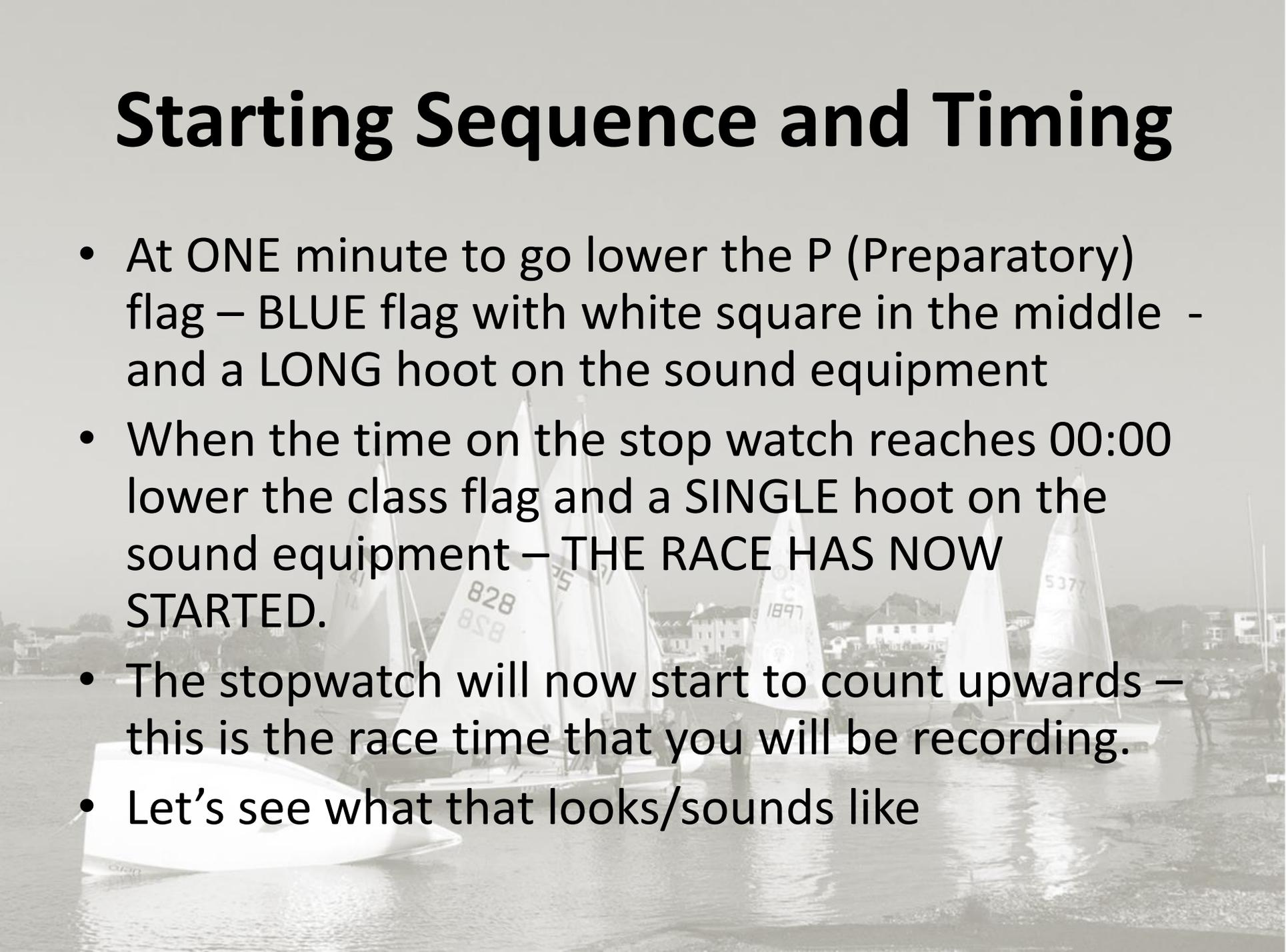


4 Minutes



# Starting Sequence and Timing

- At ONE minute to go lower the P (Preparatory) flag – BLUE flag with white square in the middle - and a LONG hoot on the sound equipment
- When the time on the stop watch reaches 00:00 lower the class flag and a SINGLE hoot on the sound equipment – THE RACE HAS NOW STARTED.
- The stopwatch will now start to count upwards – this is the race time that you will be recording.
- Let's see what that looks/sounds like



# Starting Sequence and Timing



**1 Minute – long hoot  
“P” flag down**



**Start Of Race  
Class flag down**





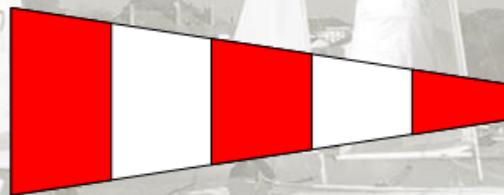
# How to postpone a race before the start

- If there is a problem with the stopwatches/safety boat/weather/anything else that means you need to stop the countdown at any time ***before the start.***
- TWO hoots required
- Flag raised AP – RED AND WHITE STRIPES
- This postpones the start and effectively resets the start sequence.
- When you are ready to start again:
  - ONE hoot and lower AP flag
  - One minute later, restart 5 minute countdown sequence

# Starting and ending a postponement

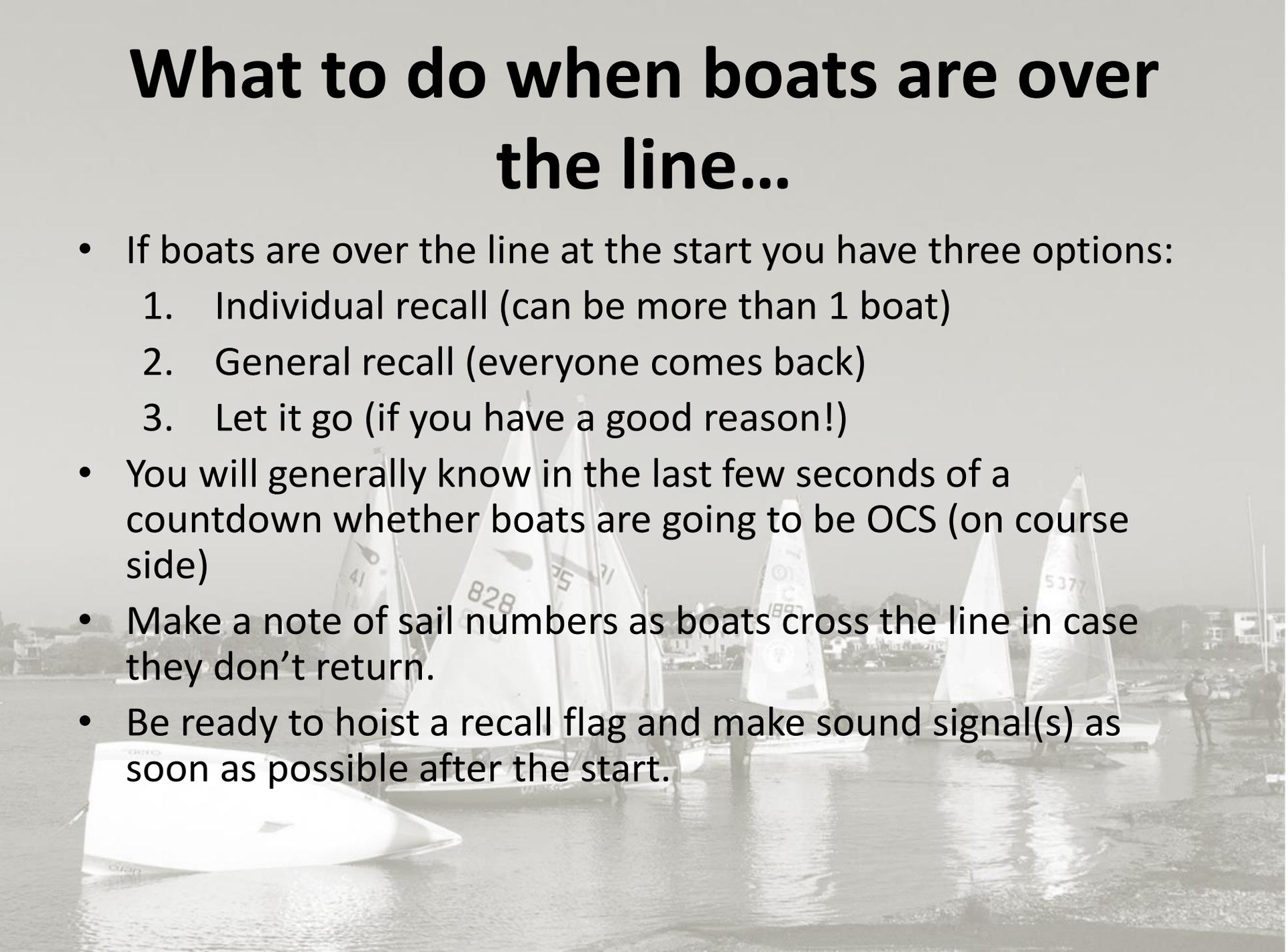


- When you are ready to start the sequence again. LOWER flag and make a single hoot.
- One minute later, begin start sequence with Warning signal.



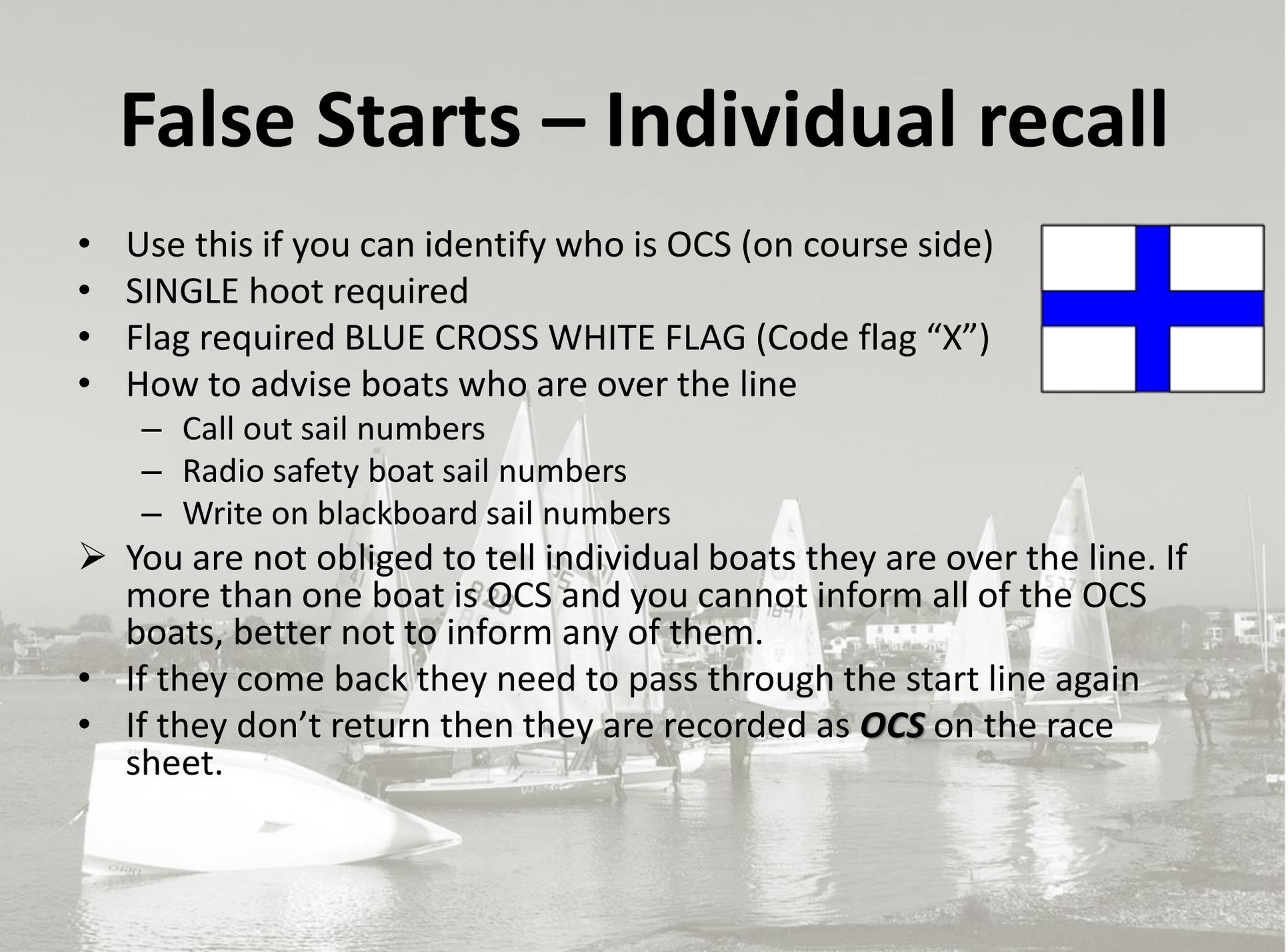
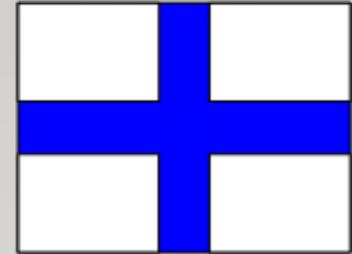
# What to do when boats are over the line...

- If boats are over the line at the start you have three options:
  1. Individual recall (can be more than 1 boat)
  2. General recall (everyone comes back)
  3. Let it go (if you have a good reason!)
- You will generally know in the last few seconds of a countdown whether boats are going to be OCS (on course side)
- Make a note of sail numbers as boats cross the line in case they don't return.
- Be ready to hoist a recall flag and make sound signal(s) as soon as possible after the start.



# False Starts – Individual recall

- Use this if you can identify who is OCS (on course side)
- SINGLE hoot required
- Flag required BLUE CROSS WHITE FLAG (Code flag “X”)
- How to advise boats who are over the line
  - Call out sail numbers
  - Radio safety boat sail numbers
  - Write on blackboard sail numbers
- You are not obliged to tell individual boats they are over the line. If more than one boat is OCS and you cannot inform all of the OCS boats, better not to inform any of them.
- If they come back they need to pass through the start line again
- If they don't return then they are recorded as **OCS** on the race sheet.



# Individual Recall

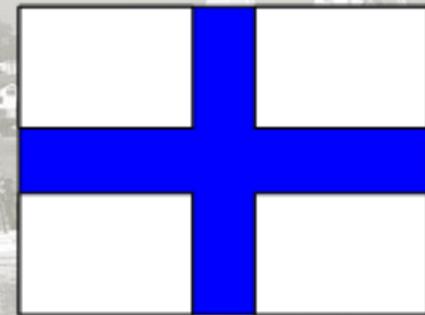


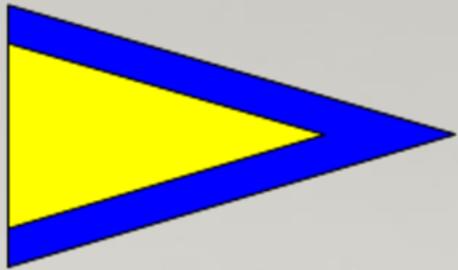
Flag remains raised until the  
**EARLIEST** of:

ALL affected boats returning to cross the line  
again **or** 4 minutes after the start of the race.

**No sound signal** is needed when lowering  
the flag.

**Within 5 seconds**





# General Recall

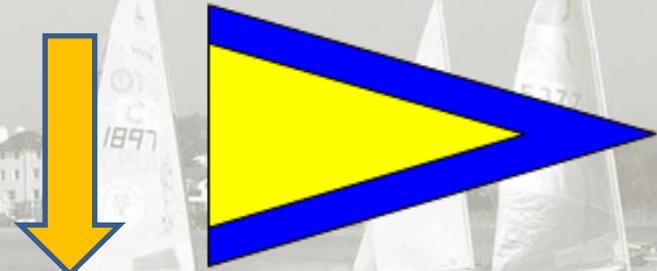


- If there are unidentified boats OCS, signal a “general recall”.
- TWO hoots required
- Flag required BLUE TRIANGLE with YELLOW TRIANGLE inside (1<sup>st</sup> substitute)
- ALL boats should stop racing and return to the starting area.
- Inform the safety boat so they can bring the competitors back quickly.

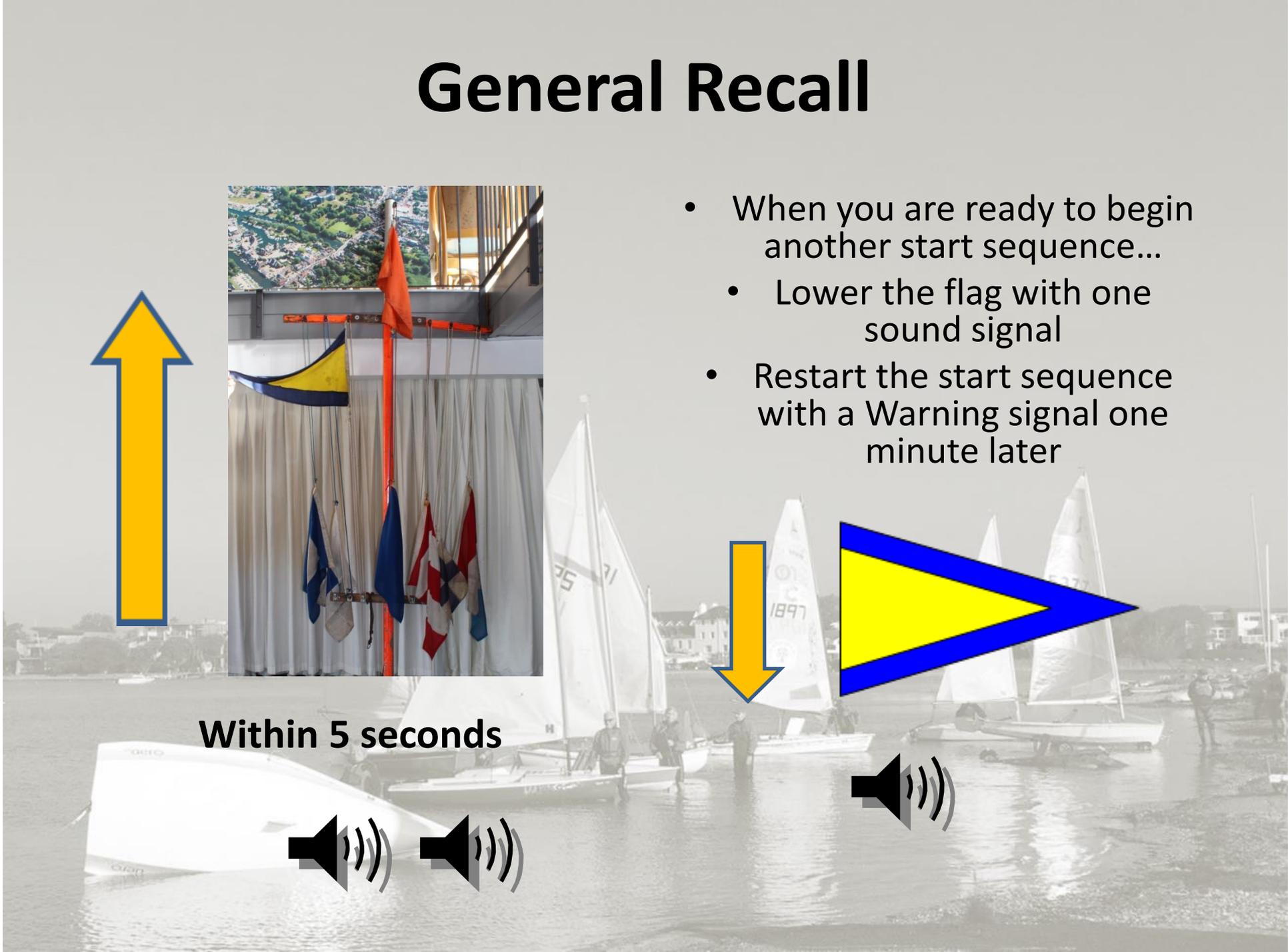
# General Recall



- When you are ready to begin another start sequence...
- Lower the flag with one sound signal
- Restart the start sequence with a Warning signal one minute later



**Within 5 seconds**



# Dealing with naughty fleets

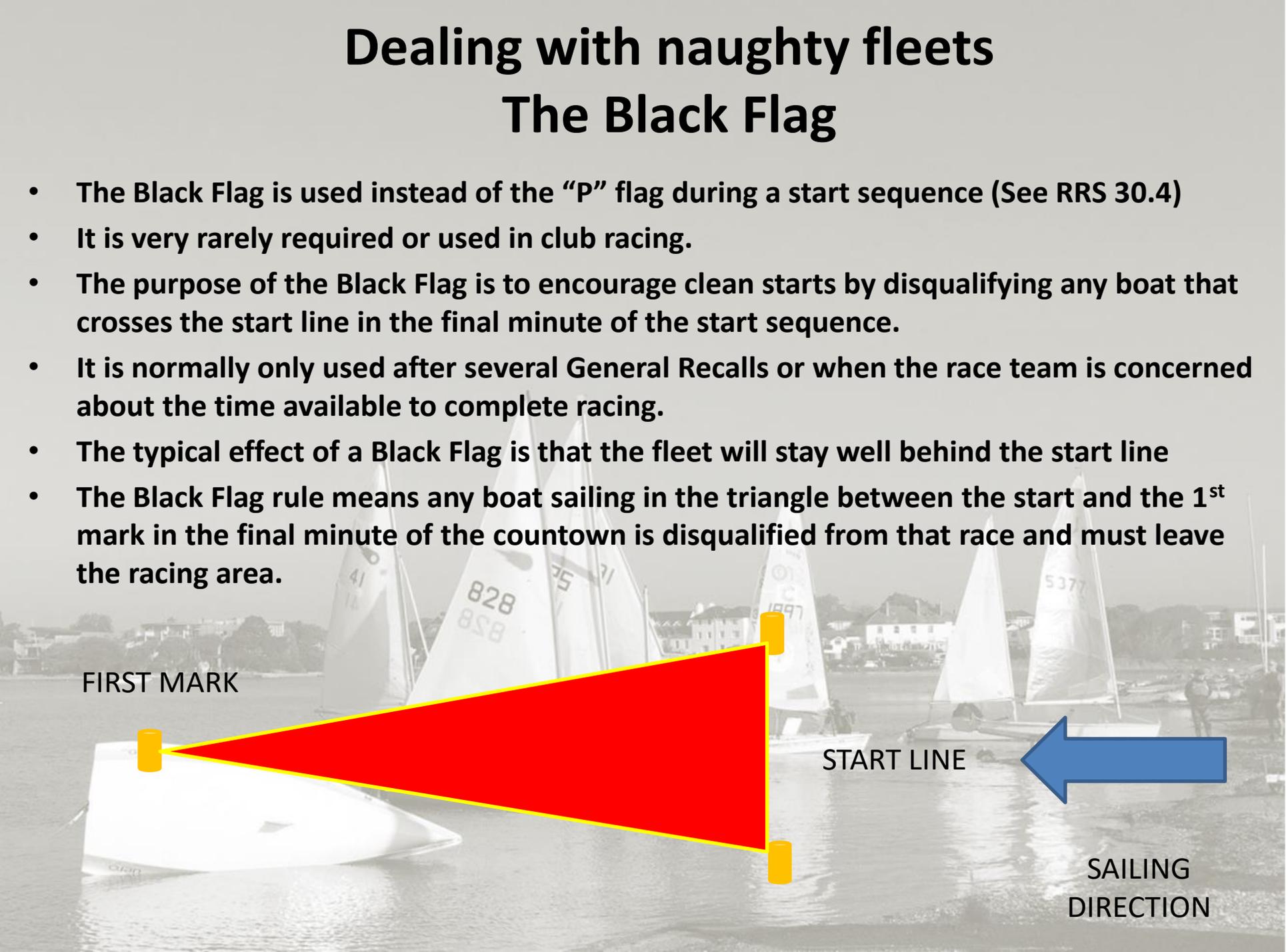
## The Black Flag

- The Black Flag is used instead of the “P” flag during a start sequence (See RRS 30.4)
- It is very rarely required or used in club racing.
- The purpose of the Black Flag is to encourage clean starts by disqualifying any boat that crosses the start line in the final minute of the start sequence.
- It is normally only used after several General Recalls or when the race team is concerned about the time available to complete racing.
- The typical effect of a Black Flag is that the fleet will stay well behind the start line
- The Black Flag rule means any boat sailing in the triangle between the start and the 1<sup>st</sup> mark in the final minute of the countown is disqualified from that race and must leave the racing area.

FIRST MARK

START LINE

SAILING  
DIRECTION



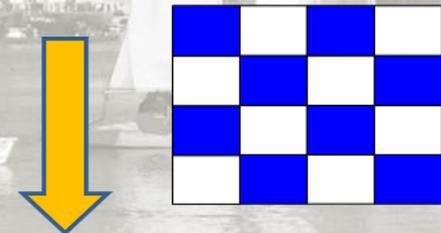
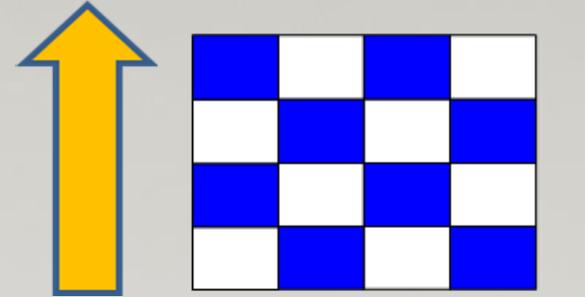
# Dealing with naughty fleets

## The Black Flag

- You will run a normal start sequence but you replace the “P” flag with the black flag.
- Raise the Black Flag **INSTEAD OF** the “P” flag with 4 minutes to go before the start.
- 1 minute before the start lower the Black Flag with 1 long sound signal.
- ALL boats seen to be in the triangle of water between ends of the start line and the first mark of the course in the MINUTE BEFORE the START should be listed as “Black Flagged” (BFD)
- Write the offending sail numbers on the blackboard and inform the safety boat so that the sailors can be notified. Boats disqualified under a Black Flag should leave the racing area immediately or they may face further penalties.
- If you postpone or abandon the race **before the start**, any boats that infringed the Black Flag rule are allowed to take part in the next start.
- If there is another general recall or the race is abandoned **AFTER** the start – boats that infringed the Black Flag rule on an earlier start are not allowed to take part. Be sure to inform all the BFD boats that they cannot take part.
- Under a Black Flag start, the Individual Recall signal (rule 29.1) is switched off. You don’t need to recall individual boats that were OCS – simply mark them as “BFD”.

# Abandoning a race after the start

- You may abandon a race after it has started for any reason affecting safety or fairness.
- If there is a significant deterioration in the weather or a safety incident that precludes the safety boat from being able to undertake its duties the race shall be abandoned.
- Display the “Abandon” flag (code flag “N”) and make three hoots. The safety boat should be informed by radio of the abandonment.
- If possible get the safety boat to warn sailors that races are abandoned. Advise them whether to return to the start or return to shore.
- If you wish to restart an abandoned race – remove the “N” flag with one sound signal – then begin the start sequence a minute later.



# IF SOMETHING GOES WRONG

If an emergency call 999 and ask for ambulance or coastguard – whichever is appropriate.

Details on notice board in foyer.



**HIGHCLIFFE SAILING CLUB**  
SAIL - WINDSURF - PADDLE  
Founded 1962  
Sea Vixen, Mudford Quay, Christchurch, Dorset BH23 4AB

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## Emergency Contacts

Coastguard -	Solent coastguard VHF channel 16 Emergency 999 Ask for Coastguard Coastguard landline 07092 552100
HSC Clubhouse	VHF Channel P4 Call sign 'Sea Vixen'
Club Ribs & Harbour boat VHF Radios use Channel P4	
Commodore Jim Brown	07775 755441
Rear Commodore House Tania Tarrant	07808 215629
Steward Ian Pike	07546 952441
Bournemouth Hospital	01202 303626
Bournemouth Police Station	01202 222222

# Recording Times And Positions

- Forms needed
  - Use signing on form to help you with sail numbers/boat type/sailors name
- What needs to be entered – see slides
- Codes used OCS/DNS/DNF/DSQ – see next slide
- Have I entered ALL the race details –
  - Date/Race name/Race Officer/Wind etc
- **FINALLY – can I actually read this clearly?**

# Recording Times And Positions

**DNC:** Meaning "did not compete", the ruling when a boat fails to compete in a scheduled race and is awarded the maximum number of points for the race

**DNF:** Meaning "did not finish", the ruling when a boat fails to finish a race and is awarded the maximum number of points for the race

**DNS:** Meaning "did not start", the ruling when a competing boat fails to start a race and is awarded the maximum number of points for that race

**DSQ:** Meaning "disqualified", the ruling when the jury disqualifies a boat from a race and awards the maximum number of points for the race

**OCS:** Meaning "on course side", a ruling where a boat is deemed to have started a race prematurely and is subsequently disqualified from the race and awarded the maximum number of points



# End A Race

(And Recording Times And Positions)

- Ideally around a 45 minute race (longer if only 1 race). Shorter if conditions or daylight dictate
  - How to shorten a race
    - Sound signal and flags
    - Planning when to shorten a race
      - Time/speed of boats/position of boats
  - Finishing a boat
    - Where it needs to pass
    - Sound signal
    - Recording time/laps
- 

# Finish a Race

## (And Recording Times And Positions)



- Once the finish line is set, display the blue flag. You may do this any time after the start although generally this is done on the final lap. No hoot is required.
- If you are finishing normally after the advertised number of laps have been completed, no further signals are required.
- The finish line is the same as the start line and the time is taken as the boat passes through the imaginary line that you used for the start. (Between the flag post and the pin end marker).
- A single hoot for each boat as it passes through the line. Although not required by the rules, a sound signal lets each boat know it has completed the course. If a boat was OCS and did not return, do not give a sound signal.

# Shorten a Race

(And Recording Times And Positions)

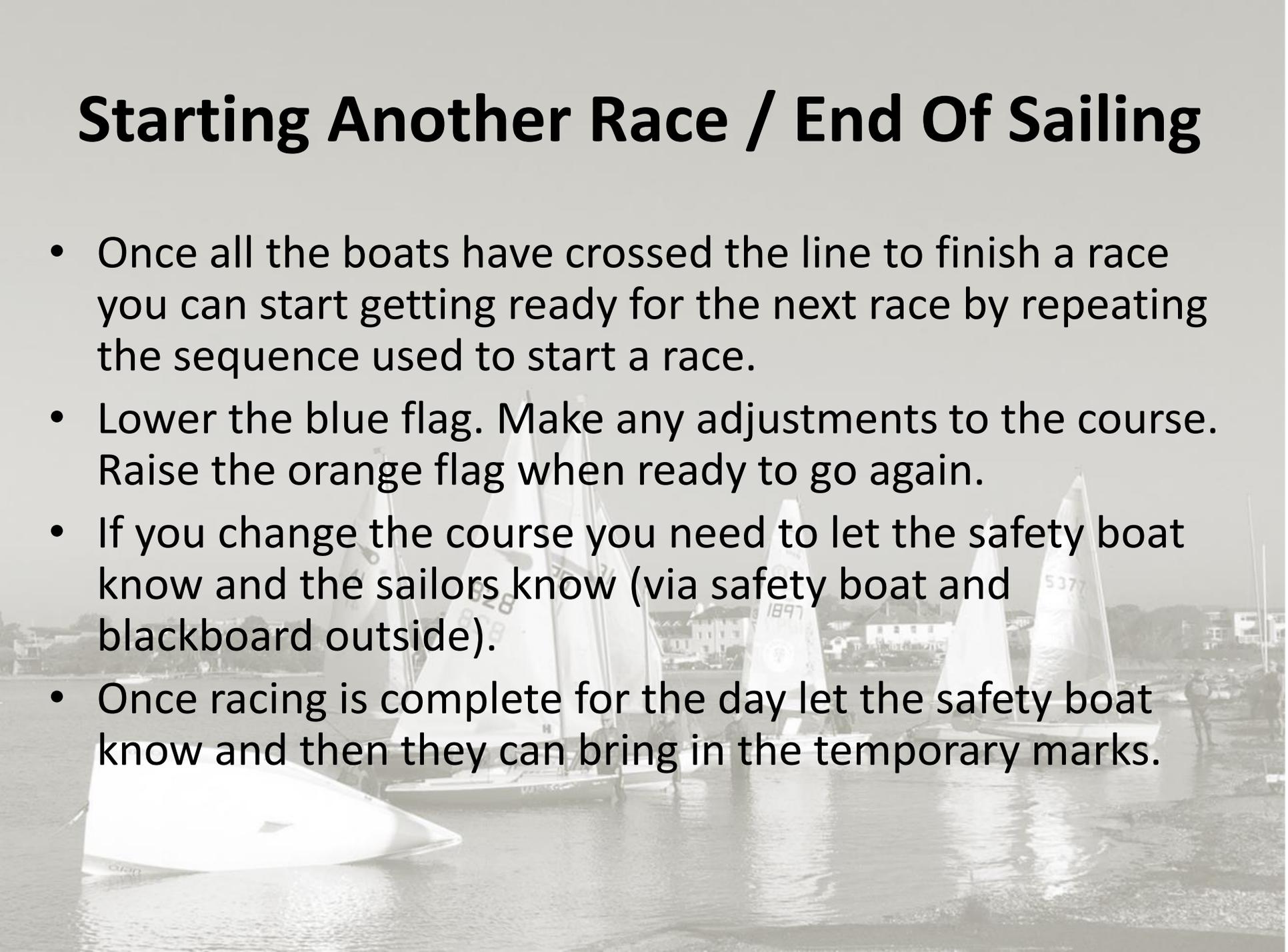


- When **you intend finishing a race early**, raise the shortened course flag (white flag with blue square in the middle – code flag “S”) and give **2 hoots** when the first boat has rounded the final mark to approach the finish line.
- The finish line is the same as the start line and the time is taken as the boat passes through the line. (Between the flag post and the pin end marker).
- Give a single hoot for each boat as it passes through the line. Although not required by the rules, a sound signal lets each boat know it has completed the course. If a boat was OCS and did not return, do not give a sound signal.



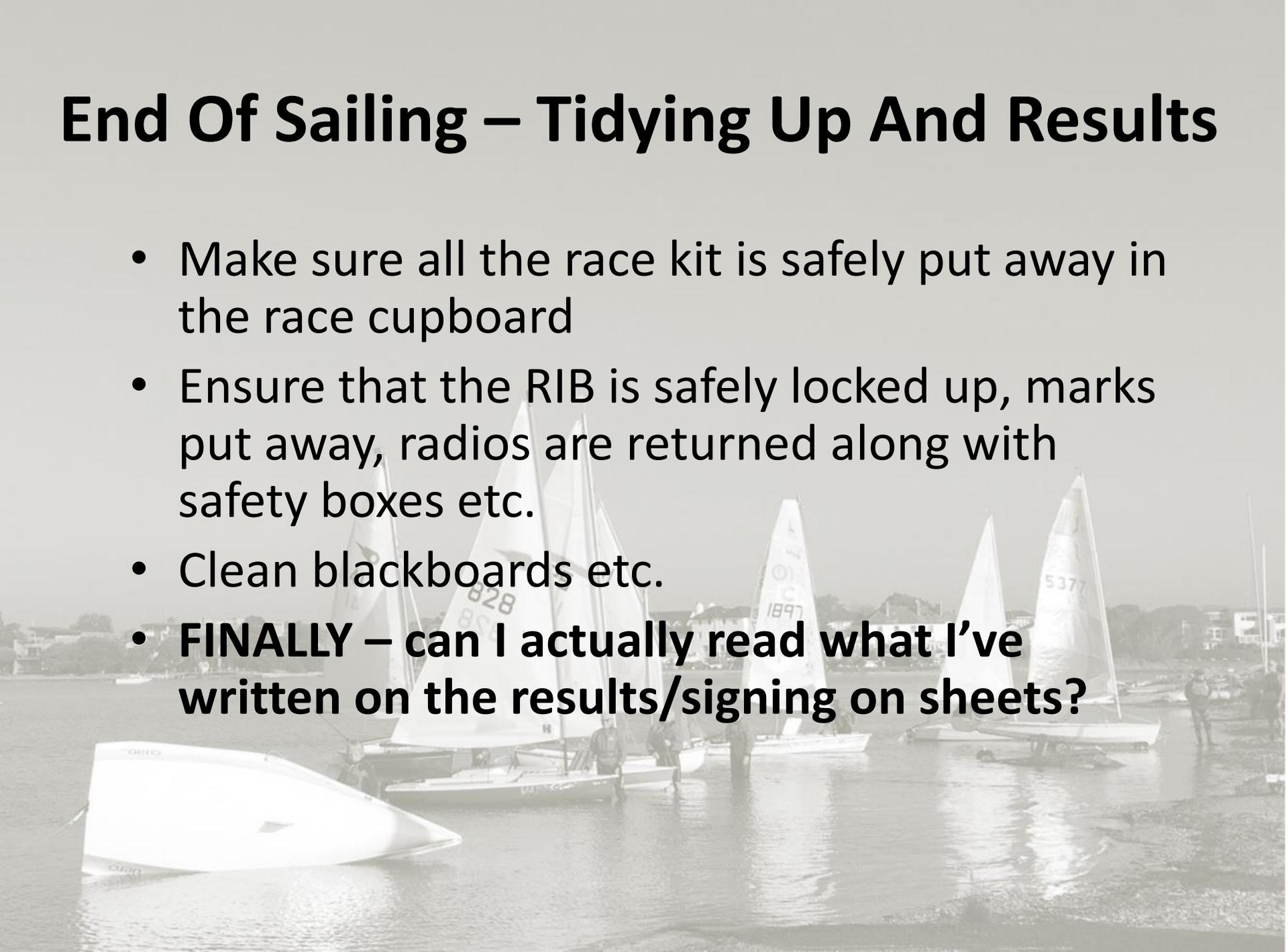
# Starting Another Race / End Of Sailing

- Once all the boats have crossed the line to finish a race you can start getting ready for the next race by repeating the sequence used to start a race.
- Lower the blue flag. Make any adjustments to the course. Raise the orange flag when ready to go again.
- If you change the course you need to let the safety boat know and the sailors know (via safety boat and blackboard outside).
- Once racing is complete for the day let the safety boat know and then they can bring in the temporary marks.



# End Of Sailing – Tidying Up And Results

- Make sure all the race kit is safely put away in the race cupboard
- Ensure that the RIB is safely locked up, marks put away, radios are returned along with safety boxes etc.
- Clean blackboards etc.
- **FINALLY – can I actually read what I've written on the results/signing on sheets?**



# End Of Sailing – Tidying Up And Results



Put results and signing  
on sheet in box by  
Race Office door at  
the top of the stairs.

**YOU GET A FREE  
TEA/COFFEE AS DOES  
ALL THE RACE TEAM**

**AND RELAX..**



**YOUR RO DUTY IS DONE**

# Any Questions?

