# Charleston Ocean Racing Association Race Committee Volunteer Brief

**THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING YOUR TIME TO THE CORA RACE MANAGEMENT TEAM; HAVE FUN, BE SAFE!**
For most CORA events (confirm in the Notice of Race and Sailing Instructions) we meet at the Carolina Yacht Club (50 E Bay St, Charleston, SC 29401).  When you arrive, let the lot attendant know that you are there for CORA race committee and you will be directed where to park.

Your enjoyment and contribution will be enhanced if you are familiar with the events Sailing Instructions (SI"s), which are posted on the CORA webpage. Volunteers should report to the starting area 30 minutes prior to first class WARNING as provided in the Sailing Instructions. Inshore/Harbor Races are planned for approximately 90 minutes duration. The PRO may authorize early release if enough volunteers are available to conduct finishes. Please dress appropriately and bring individual food/beverage items (and a chair) as may be required.

The race committee team is comprised of several functional positions. Up on reporting to the designated starting area to conduct the race, the functional positions will be assigned by the PRO. Please express prior experience or functional preference when you sign up and to the PRO  when you arrive for duty. No position is more important than any other. Although one person may assume more than one of those positions, or one position may be split among many, the positions are:

**Principal Race Officer:** (**PRO**).  Team leader who makes the major race management decisions and sets the standard for the race committee's conduct. He or she is knowledgeable of the **Racing Rules of Sailing** (RRS), the racing area, and safe race management procedures. He or she is likely an experienced racing sailor.

**Recorder**: The recorder logs all boats starting and finishing and competitors who do not complete the course. Also much of the information being communicated to the race officer and the significant race management events are recorded.

**Scorer:** The scorer determines the points for each boat and each race in one-design racing and calculates corrected times for handicapped racing using handicaps and finish times.  Scoring is done in a computer program and prior training and access is required.

**Timer:** The timer keeps the time before and after the start, and precisely calls out the starting sequence to those persons on the race committee, particularly to the signaler and sounder. The timer also calls out the finish times based on the line sighter's announcement of each boat finishing.

**Sounder:** The sounder is responsible for all sound signals (gun, horn or whistle) that draw attention to the signaler's visual signals. **CORA employs the automated iStart starting equipment that will maintain time intervals and sound horns at the designated times automatically.** Manual systems are utilized in the event of an iStart malfunction.

**Signaler:** The signaler is responsible for all visual signals given by the race committee before, during and after the race. **Visual signals are the official communication with the competitors.** Times are taken from the visual signals. Sound signals are made to call attention to the signal. At the start, the signaler takes his or her cues from the timer.  It is important to be familiar with the class and race management flags being used.

**Line sighter:** The line sighter is responsible for sighting the starting line to identify boats (by sail #) on the course side (OCS) and tracks boats returning to start.  He or she also sights the finishing line to determine the order and time of finishers.

**Mark setter:** Operating from a mark boat, the mark setter works with the race committee to position, set, or relocate the start, finishing and rounding marks of the racecourse.

## Race Committee Pre-Start Activities:

**1. Position and test race committee equipment:**
- Course Board and Flag Holder
- Course Numbers and Letters
- Sound Signal: I-Start + air horn back-ups.
- Base Radio: VHF Ch 73 for RC general communications
- Handheld: VHF Ch 74 for competitor check-in
- Class Flags: A–Pink, B-Green, C-Purple, D-Dk Blue, S-White, N-Purple
- RC Flags: Finish Line, Papa, AP, X-ray, First Substitute, November, Sierra, Lima, Charlie
- Clip Board with finish sheets (+ pencils)
- Start and Finish marks with ground tackle (and inflator, if required)
- Clipboards with check-in sheets (+ pencils)

Race committee equipment is stored in a dock box at the head of the fixed dock at Carolina Yacht Club.

**2. Competitor Check-In:** Competitors are required to Check in with the race committee prior to their start. Competitors are requested to do so VHF Channel 74 (or verbally) by identifying themselves by boat name, sail number and class. Verbal check-in is not permitted for offshore races. Competitors are considered to have checked-in only when acknowledged by the race committee. When acknowledged the competitor will switch to VHF Ch 73 for general race committee communication. Check- ins will be recorded on the CORA check in sheet.

**3. Starting and Finish line:** The start and finish marks are set from a mark boat. Marks are set by fully streaming the mark with its ground tackle (UP CURRENT) and dropping on instructions received from the PRO. The length of the lines may vary based on conditions and number of competitors.

**4. Posting the Order of Start and Course:** Courses are set forth in Sailing Instructions or *Charleston Ocean Racing Association Skippers Guide*. Courses when selected by the PRO are then posted on the course board according to Class. **Courses must be posted by the class Warning.** Multiple Classes may sail the same course and/or share the same start sequence.

## The Starting Sequence:

The PRO will initiate and control the starting process. Remember that visual signals (**FLAGS**) are the governing communication. Sound signals and VHF broadcasts are a courtesy only. If a sound signal is missed the starting sequence can continue however, if a flag signal is missed the AP (Postpone flag) will be displayed with two sounds (2) and process recommenced when the AP is lowered with one (1) sound. **Flags must be displayed and removed crisply.**

The starting sequence for the first class to start is initiated by an alert signal ("**The gather**") consisting of multiple short horn blasts, one (1) minute before the Warning Signal**.**  The Warning signal**, a CLASS FLAG,** accompanied by on sound initiates the starting sequence. One minute after the Warning Signal, the **Preparatory Signal** (code flag **PAPA)** is displayed with one sound. Three minutes later the **PAPA** is removed with one long sound to indicate a class start is one (1) minute away. The **CLASS FLAG** is removed as the **Start Signal**.

**Starting Recalls:** The line is sighted at the start to identify any competitors over the starting line early **(OCS).** If a competitor(s) is touching or completely over the starting line, the individual recall signal, code flag **X-Ray,** is displayed immediately with one (1) sound and the offender(s) is identified by sail number(s). The **X-ray** flag remains displayed until the competitor(s) return to the prestart side of line and start properly or four (4) minutes whichever occurs first. Individual recalls do not affect the start of the remaining classes.

 If there are too many boats over the starting line early to identify offending boats fairly, then a general recall is signaled with the **First Substitute** code flag accompanied by two (2) sounds and all competitors return to the prestart side of the line. The **First Substitute** will be lowered with one (1) sound followed by the **Warning Signal**

(**a CLASS FLAG**) for the next class to start in one minute. This class may not be the next to start if provided by the Sailing Instructions.

After the **Start Signal** a race may be abandoned for several reasons: including, a missing starting mark or an error in the starting procedure. A race abandonment is signaled by code flag **November** with three sounds

**Chart of Starting Sequence Timing and Signals:**

| Event | Time | Visual Signal | Sound Signal |
|---|---|---|---|
| **GATHER** | **6 minutes to First Class Start** | | Multiple Short Sounds |
| **WARNING** | **5 minutes to Start** | **CLASS FLAG** ↑ | 1 Sound |
| **PREPARATORY** | **4 minutes to Start** | **PAPA** ↑ | 1 Sound |
| **PREP DOWN** | **1 minute to Start** | **PAPA** ↓ | 1 Long Sound |
| **START** | **0 Minutes** | **CLASS FLAG** ↓ | 1 Sound |
| <span style="color:red">**Next Class WARNING in 1 minute**</span> | | | |
| **WARNING** **Next Class Start** | **1 minute** | **Class Flag** | **1 Sound** |
| | | | |
| **Postponement** | | AP | 2 Sounds |
| **Postponement Ends** | 1 Min to WARNING | AP | 1 Sound |
| | | | |
| **Individual Recall** | | X-Ray | 1 Sound |
| **Individual Recall Ends** | All Clear or 4 minutes | X-Ray | No Sound |
| | | | |
| **General Recall** | | 1ST SUB | 2 Sounds |
| **General Recall Ends** | 1 Min to WARNING | 1ST SUB | 1 Sound |
| | | | |
| **Race Abandonment** | | NOVEMBER | 3 Sounds |

## Finishing and Scoring:

A Finishing line established between on orange mark and blue line flag. The Line Sighter announces the finish with a verbal "Mark" and sound as a courtesy. Recorder will record the sail number and time of finish (hours, minutes, seconds). A back up list noting order of finish (sail numbers without time) should be kept as well. CORA Finish Sheets will be prepared and transmitted to the Scorer as soon as practical.

**ALL EQUIPMENT SHOULD BE RETURNED TO THE DOCK BOX AT THE CONCLUSION OF RACING AND BEFORE THE TEAM MEMBERS ARE RELEASE BY THE PRO.**