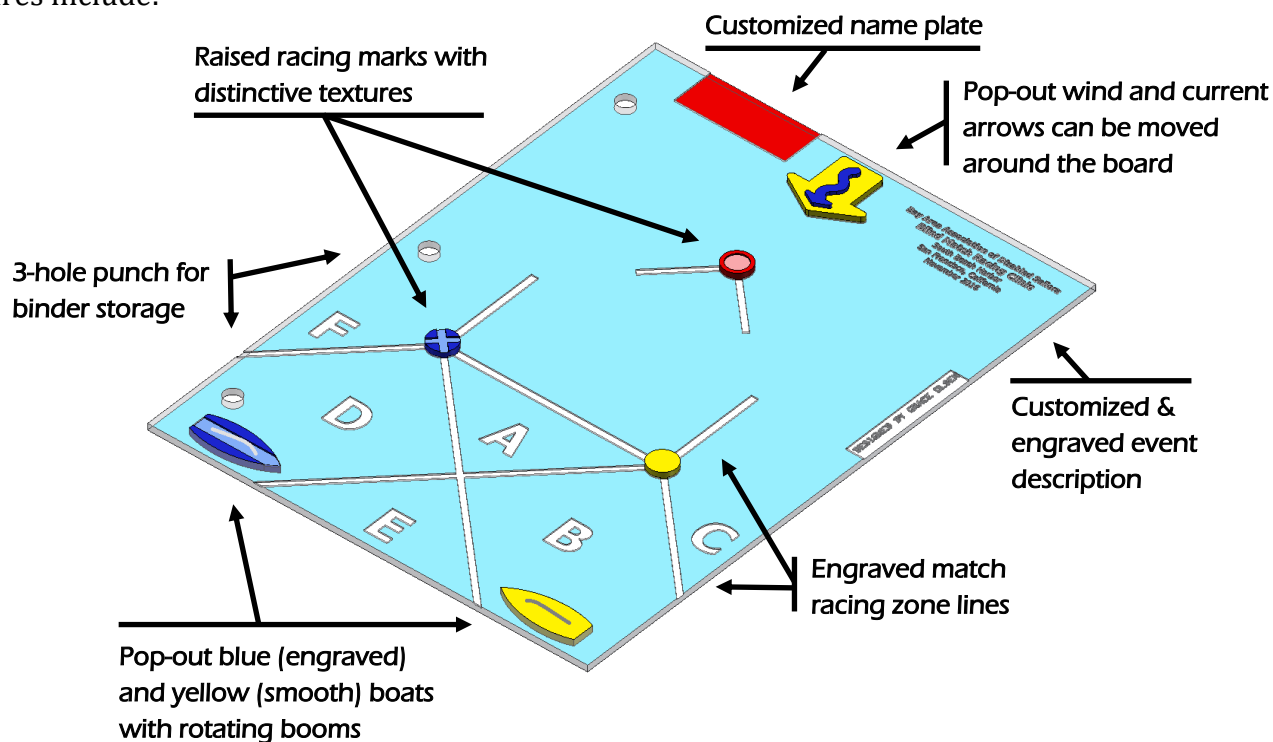


Tactile match racing boards

PRACTICE MATCH RACING SCENARIOS WITH YOUR FINGERTIPS

MATCH RACING: the game known as the ultimate test of sailboat racing skill, in which one boat must best the other boat in tactical maneuvers, wind calls, and close-quarters boat handling. Would you believe that this high-intensity sport is played by blind sailors on their own?

It takes a lot of practice time on the water for any sailor, blind or not, new or experienced, to hone his or her match racing skills. Sighted sailors often augment their practice with chalkboard discussions, moving around magnetic boats to explain their strategies. However, this is only useful if you can see the chalkboard! With the personal tactile match racing board illustrated below, blind sailors too can follow the discussion with the help of a sighted partner, or act out match racing scenarios on their own. The tactile board is about the size of a piece of paper, so it is easy to store and carry to regattas. Other features include:



HOW BLIND MATCH RACING WORKS: A team consists of three blind sailors. One sailor is at the helm, one controls the mainsail, and one controls the foresail. Each mark of the race course makes a distinctive noise (siren and foghorn are two). The boats are both equipped with a noisemaker that changes its sound when on port or starboard tack. It is the task of the three sailors to analyze the noises they hear to determine where they are on the course, and how best to tactically outsmart the other boat. You can imagine this is no easy feat, and the sailors must have strong communication skills to succeed! With a tactile board, beginner and veteran sailors alike can navigate the world of match racing both on the water and in the palms of their hands.