Get your Sail Numbers *right!*
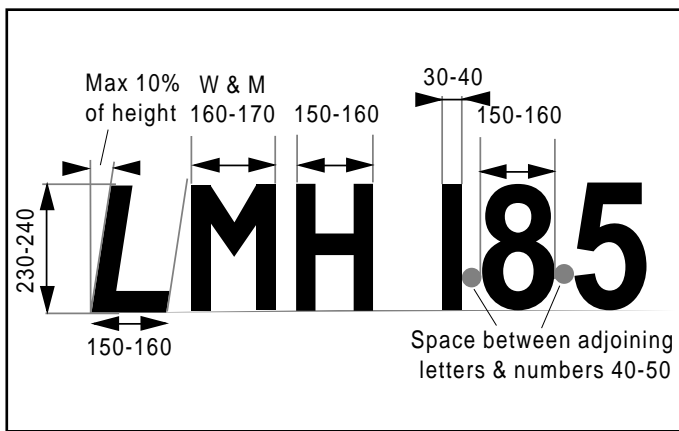
How do *you* prepare for a major regatta?
Checking your boat and rig for things which might break or come loose in the middle of the race? Studying the weather pattern? Talking to your coach?

Or are you on your knees in some steamy tent wrestling with bits of sticky black material?
At major regattas where there is "measurement" (actually scrutineering) of boats and gear, the major problem is often sail numbers. It is worth taking the time and energy *beforehand* to make sure that they are applied correctly.

First make sure that the numbers and letters supplied by the sail maker or chandler are correct.

Max 10% of height — W & M 160-170 — 150-160 — 30-40 — 150-160 — 150-160 — 230-240 — Space between adjoining letters & numbers 40-50

and the Sail Measurement Bands

Your mast should be supplied with the marks prescribed by CR 3.5.2.7(c), that is with the lower edge of Band 1 and the upper edge of Band 2 *permanently* marked. You must ensure that the bands are "clearly visible while racing".

Band 1 — 10mm min — 60mm min — Luff measurement band — 5mm min — 10mm min — Band 2 — 600mm max — 610mm min — 635mm max

On the sail CR 6.5.4 defines that the sail measurement band shall also be *permanently* fixed.
If tape is used it must be stitched, preferably with at least two stitches through the tabling.

Then make sure that they are positioned correctly.
No number/letter shall be closer than 45mm from the edge of the sail.
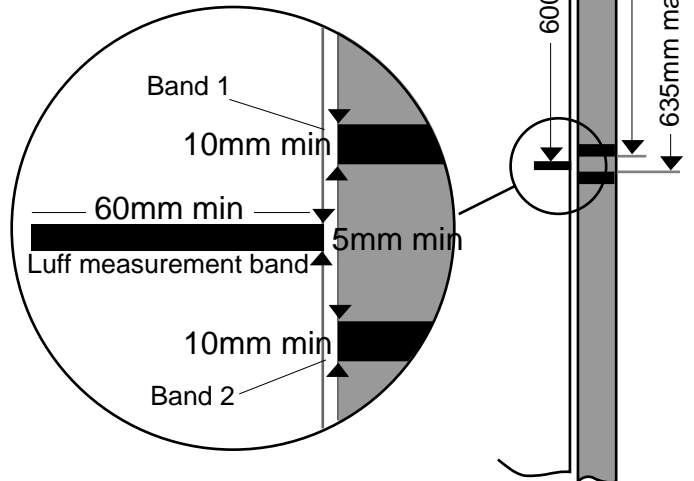National letters shall be closer to the luff on the starboard side of the sail.
Sailors chartering boats at major events should be aware that increasingly Sailing Instructions require that the sail number shall consist of the number of digits equal to the most recently issued sail number in that country. It is very confusing on the finish line and for the scorekeeper if there a several boats with the same sail number (INA 8, ITA 8, IND 8 etc.). And it must be said that one motive suspected for short numbers is to avoid recognition!

To further improve recognition IODA is proposing that, from 1 March 2000 the letter "A" shall be at most 80mm wide at the top. This is to make it more different from "R" when seen from the other side of the sail - TUR and AUT in particular being hard to distinguish.

Thickness of body marked by maker near peak CR 6.1.4 — Insignia area R = 1,000 — Min 40 Max 50 — Min 100 Max 150 — Min 150 — ARG — 8468 — Sailmaker's mark area 15% of foot length = Max 300 — Sailmaker's mark Max 150 x 150 RRS G3.1 (b) — Sail button near tack CR 2.7.5 — Stamp or signature of measurer near tack CR 2.5.6