

# WATER SAFETY AT ELOUERA NIPPERS



## INTRODUCTION

This document is intended as a guide to help both new and experienced Water Safety Team Members at Elouera Nippers.

It outlines the roles and responsibilities of Water Safety Team Members, the Hazards and Problems that are encountered during Nipper activities, along with the Setups and Solutions used to manage these Hazards and Problems.

This guide is intended to be read in conjunction with Surf Life Saving Australia - 1.01 - Water Safety Procedure

Available for SLSA members to download at - <https://members.sls.com.au/>

Navigate to - Document Library > Governance/Policies > 1.01 - Water Safety Procedure

## CONTENTS

Introduction .....	1
Water Safety - What Do You Do? .....	2
Prevention of Injury .....	3
The Surf Swim Course .....	4
The Surf Swim – Hazards & Problems.....	5
Problems:.....	5
The Surf Swim – Setup & Solutions.....	6
Boards – Hazards & Problems.....	11
Problems:.....	11
Boards – Setup & Solutions.....	12
Emergencies.....	16

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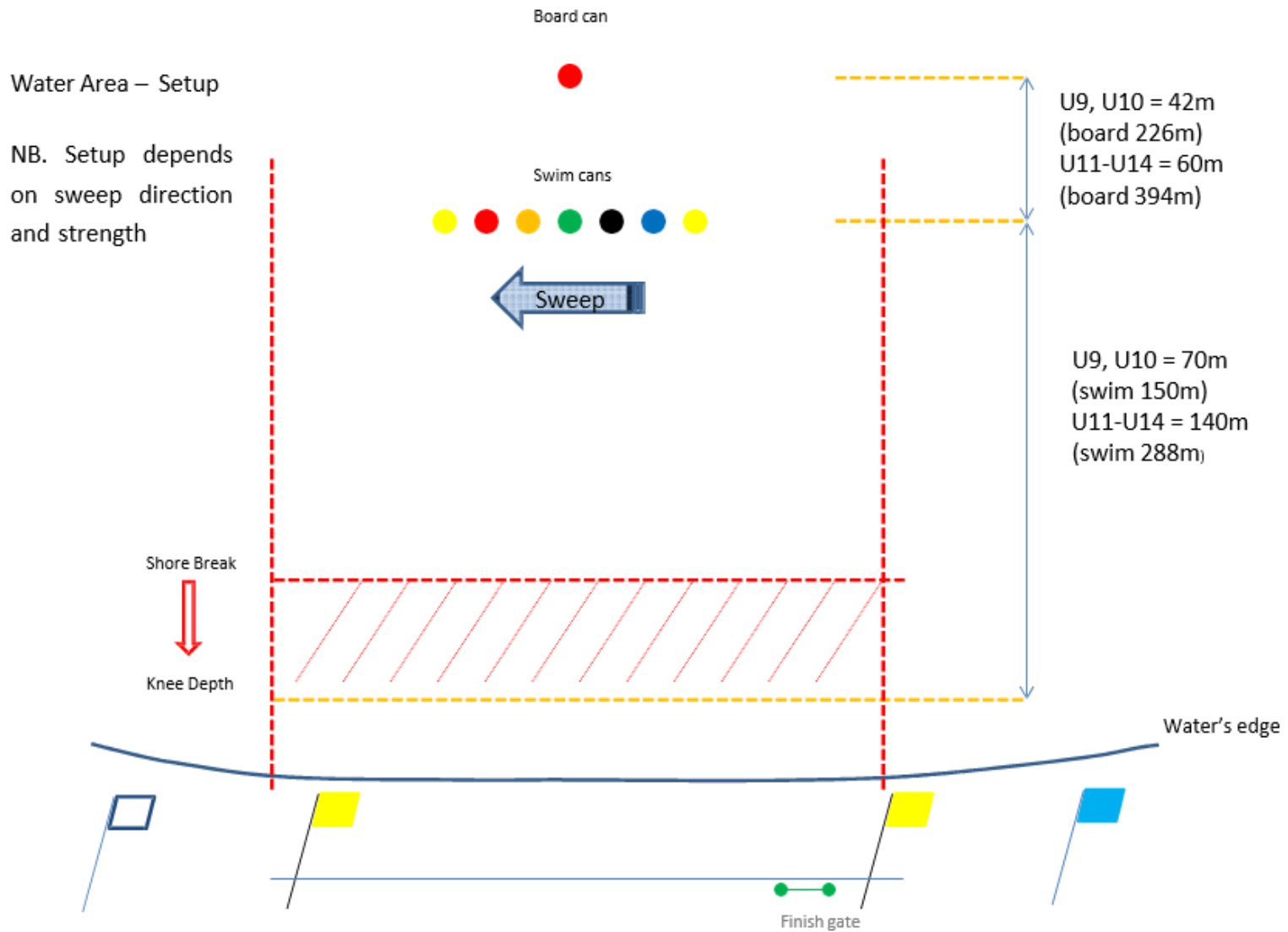
## WATER SAFETY - WHAT DO YOU DO?

- Read Surf Life Saving Australia document SLSA 1.01 - Water Safety Procedure (Available for SLSA members to download at - <https://members.sls.com.au/>)
- Your primary task is - **Prevention of Injury.**
- Your secondary task is - **Supporting the kids both emotionally & physically.**
- You are there for all the nippers and not just your own child.
- You must find a reasonable balance between support and allowing a child to develop competence.
- You are a teacher of surf skills, ensure you continue to develop your own.
- You are part of a team.
- You pay attention to the changing environment, so you can prevent injury & support Nippers.
- You do not stand back and let someone else do it.

## PREVENTION OF INJURY

- The beach environment presents unique hazards that can change dramatically in short time frames.
- Water Safety Ratio – For Nipper activities generally the required supervision ratio is 1:5 (Water Safety Personnel: Activity Participants). Determined by risk assessment.
- Just “meeting the ratio” will not ensure prevention of injury – anticipation & positioning is a key skill.
- We need to anticipate hazards – large breaking waves, drop offs, stingers, flying boards, cold water, wind chill.
- Count IN & Count OUT is the most important thing!
- Your part in this is to ensure all kids get back to the correct area – as soon as COUNTS don’t match, we have an emergency.
- You need to manage the conditions and events to ensure this does not happen.

# THE SURF SWIM COURSE



## THE SURF SWIM – HAZARDS & PROBLEMS

- Maximum of 32 swimmers, therefore 8 WS minimum.
- Skill levels range from fully competent to dog paddle.
- Hazards – shore break, stingers, cold water, chop, sweeps and currents, visibility (kids can't see cans /shore over swells).

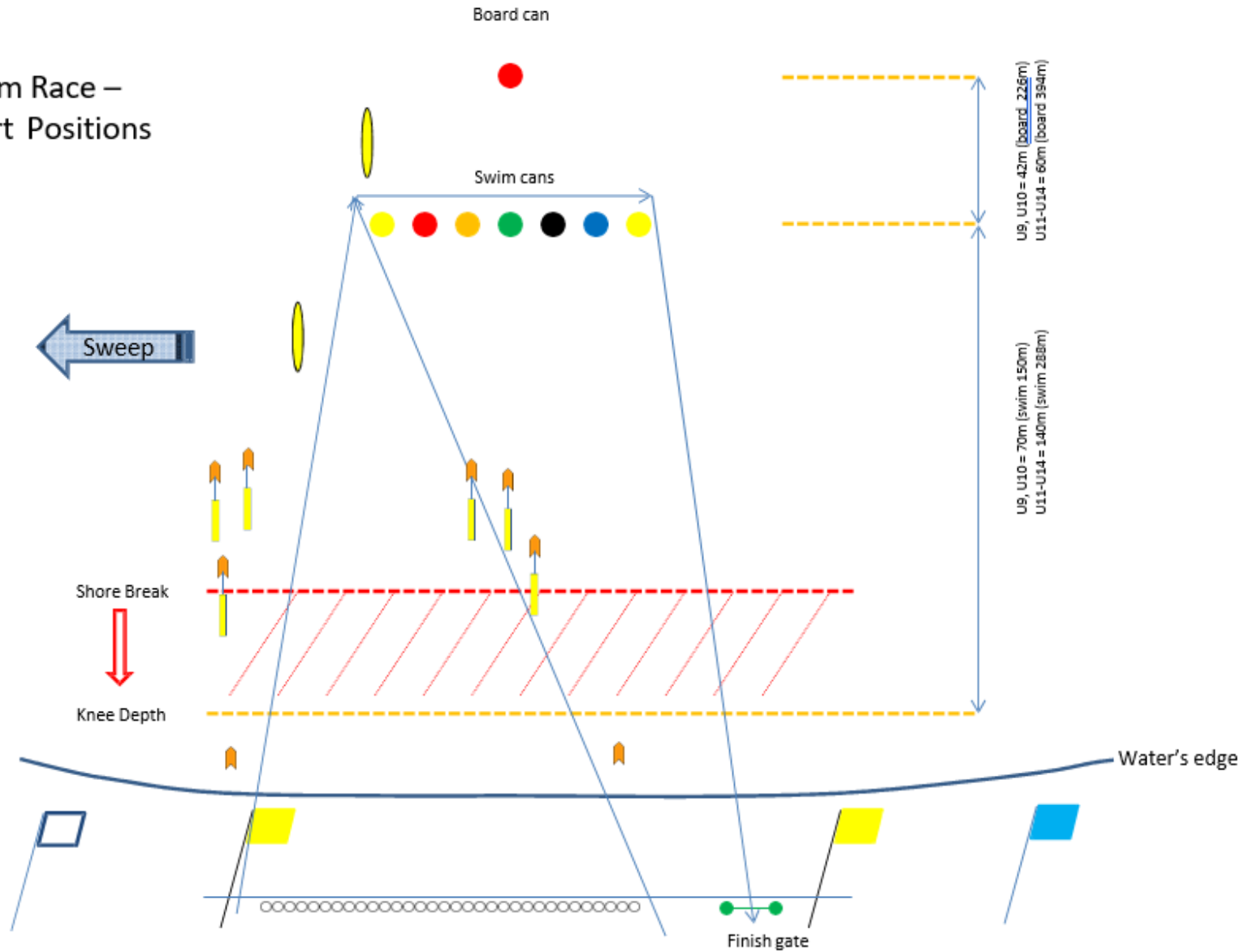
## PROBLEMS:

- Kids won't put head in water, are spooked by seaweed – look 4 fish!
- Kids can't do freestyle – need swimming lessons.
- Kids get swept or swim into next water area – count out issue.
- WS tend to help the weaker kids leaving much of the pack without coverage.
- Kids never develop if they are always towed to a can and back on a tube.
- Returning to shore through the break can be hazardous – they can't see what is coming.
- You need to help manage these hazards & problems.

## THE SURF SWIM – SETUP & SOLUTIONS

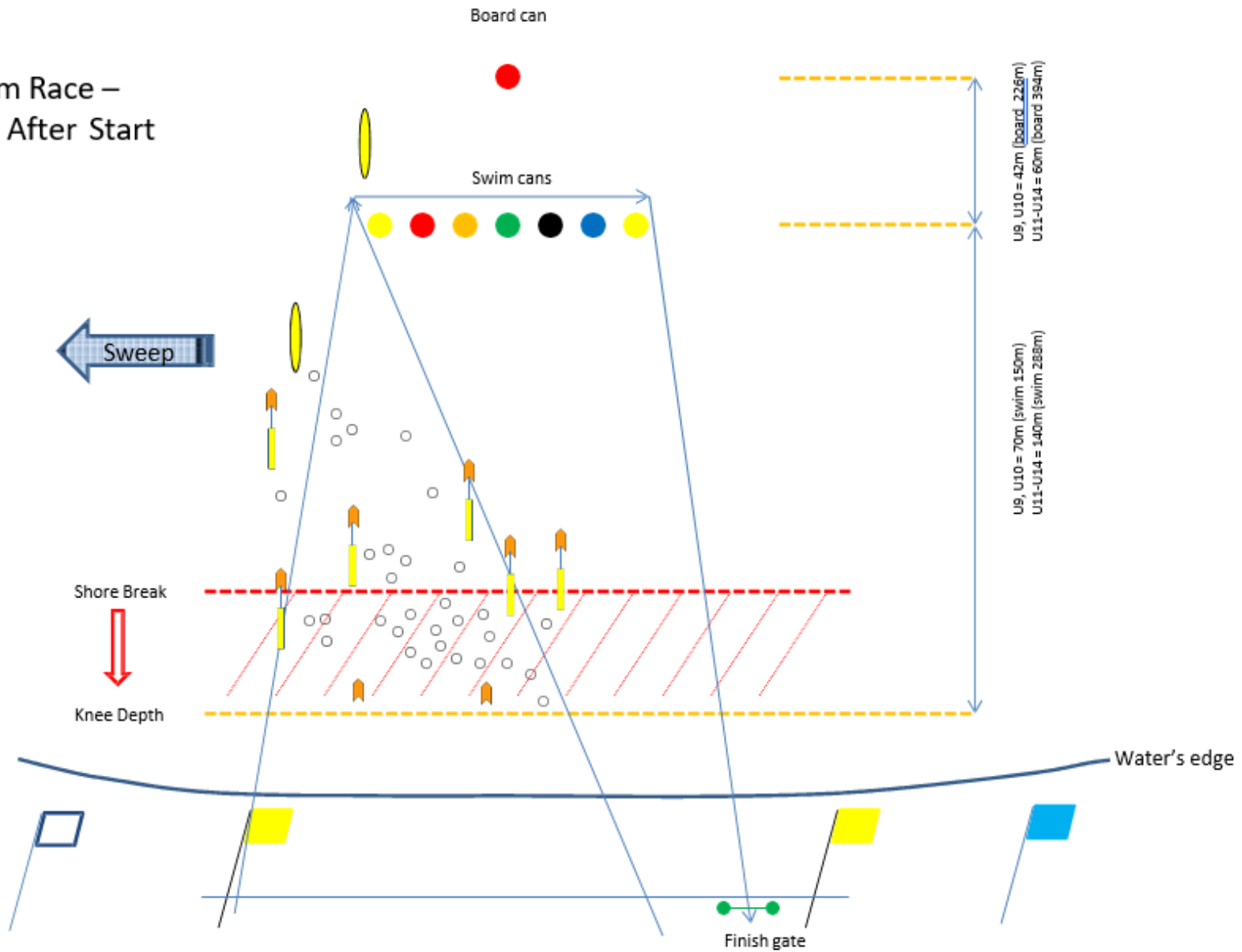
- No kids go into the water without pink rashie or cap – forbidden.
- 2 boards are preferred in the water area, more if available.
- WS boards shadow the pack leaders – main job is to fence the kids into their water area.
- 1 fences the kids in on the outbound leg & sits behind the first can so kids can see it.
- 1 fences the kids in on the inward leg – boards work together to cover the pack.
- On the inward leg, WS can hold up tubes to guide the kids as well.
- If there is a shore break, a few WS stand waist deep without tubes to assist kids manage their exit. Tubes in the break can be dangerous with the risk of the rope getting tangled around a child.
- Some WS must help the weaker kids – but you should not be towing them.
- Age Managers and trainers will teach kids to wade, porpoise & body surf but you will constantly have to remind and show them.
- Develop your own skills so you can better instruct Nippers

# Swim Race – Start Positions

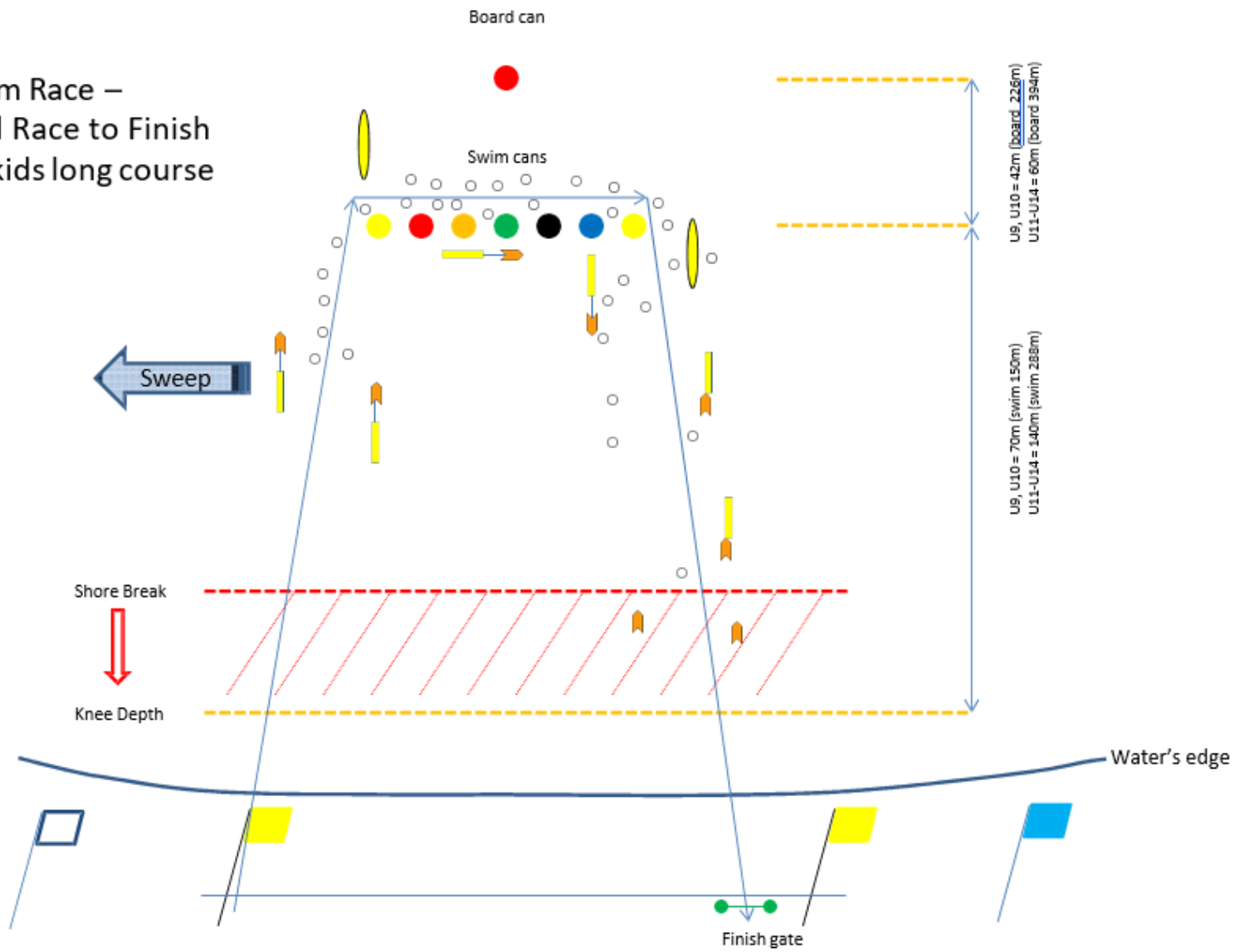




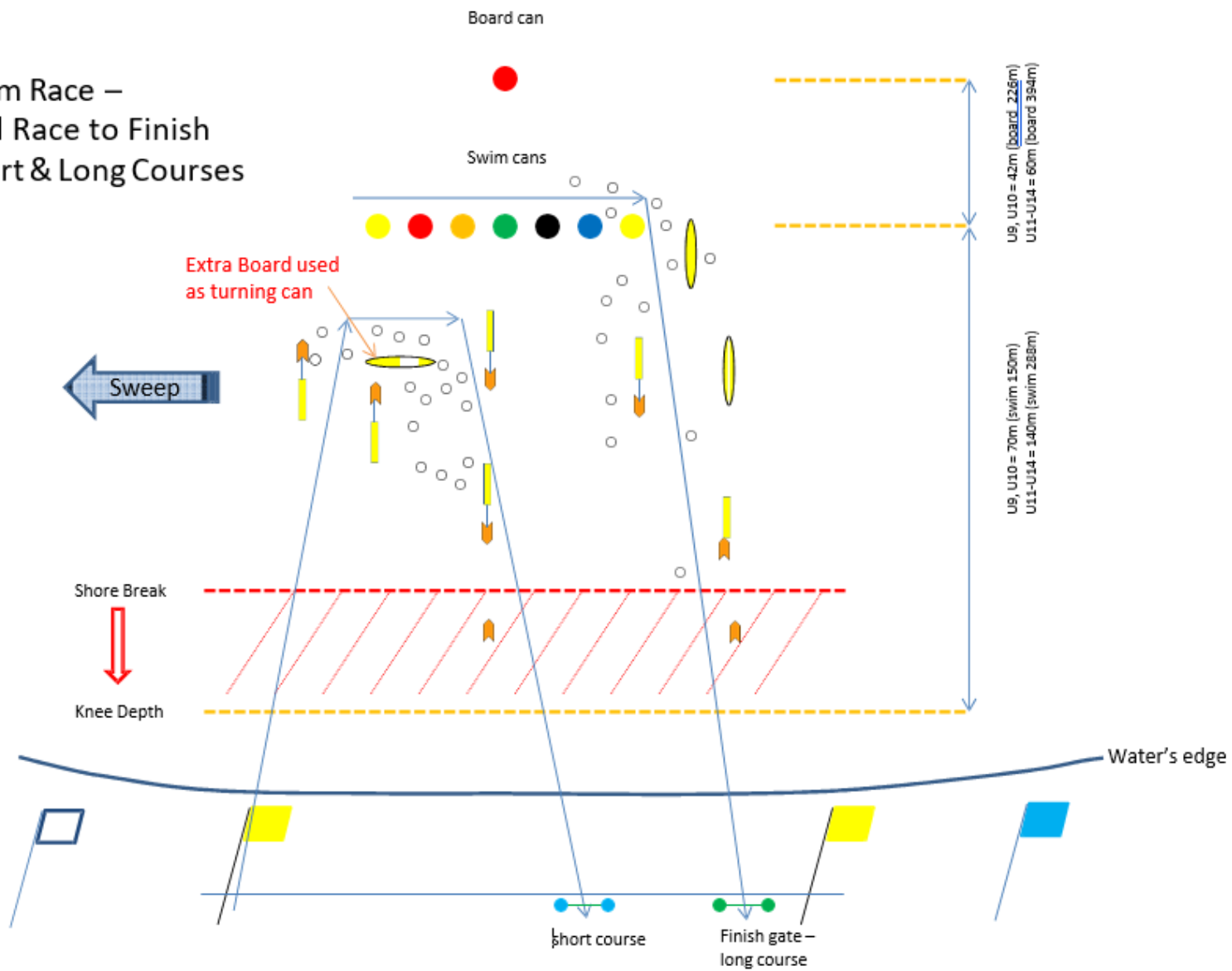
# Swim Race – Just After Start



Swim Race –  
Mid Race to Finish  
All kids long course



Swim Race –  
Mid Race to Finish  
Short & Long Courses



## BOARDS – HAZARDS & PROBLEMS

- Maximum of 16 boards / iron person, therefore 4 WS min.
- Skill levels range from competent to can't get on
- Hazards – shore break, high winds, chop, sweeps and currents

## PROBLEMS:

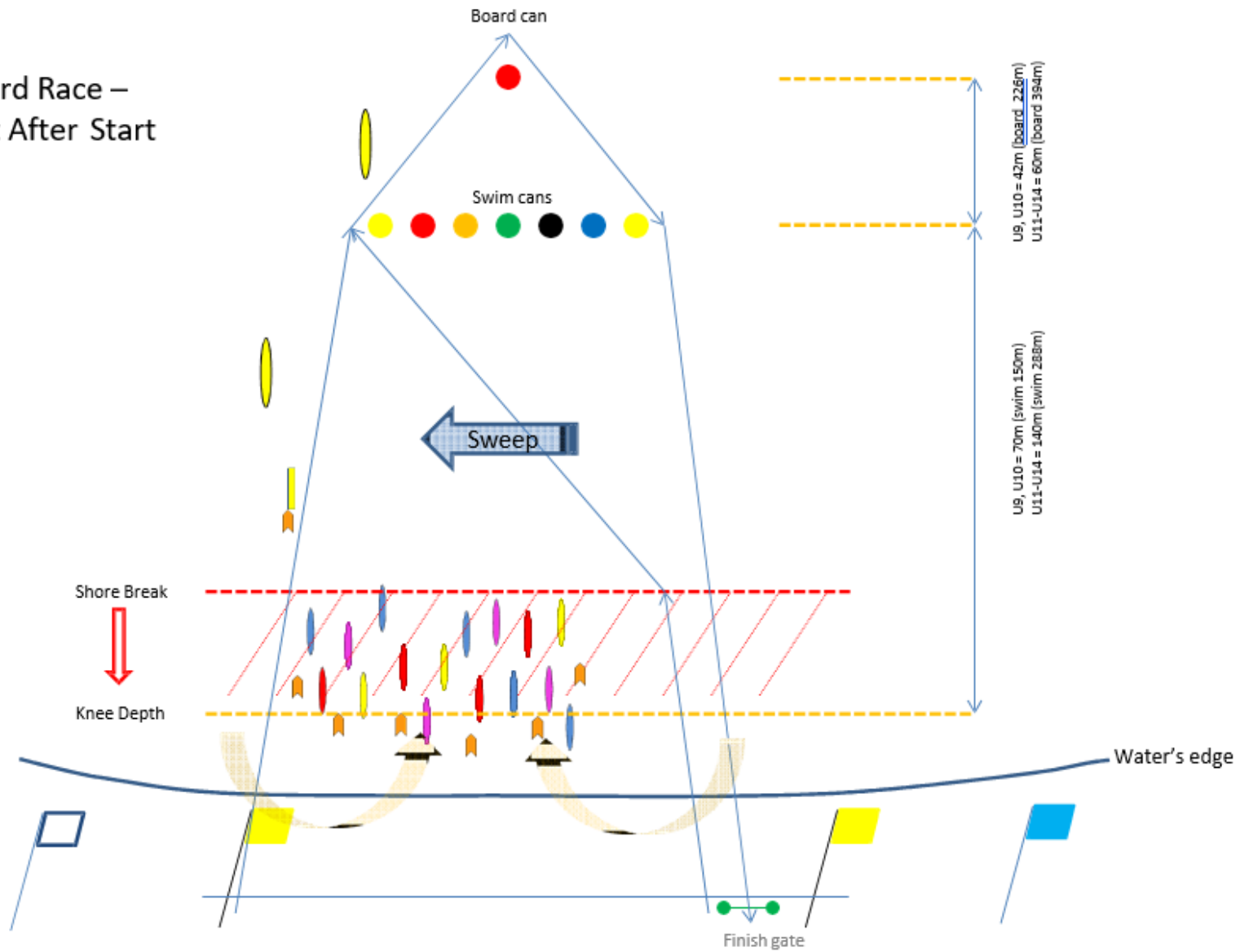
- Kids don't enter water correctly, lose board which hits someone else.
- Kids cannot get on or stay on the board – get hit by next wave
- Kids get swept or swim into next water area – count out issue
- Starting the race at a bad time
- Kids lose confidence rapidly if badly dumped on a board. It can take years to overcome the fear
- Returning to shore through the break IS hazardous at Elouera. The best of board paddlers can be dumped.
- You need to help manage these hazards & problems

## BOARDS – SETUP & SOLUTIONS

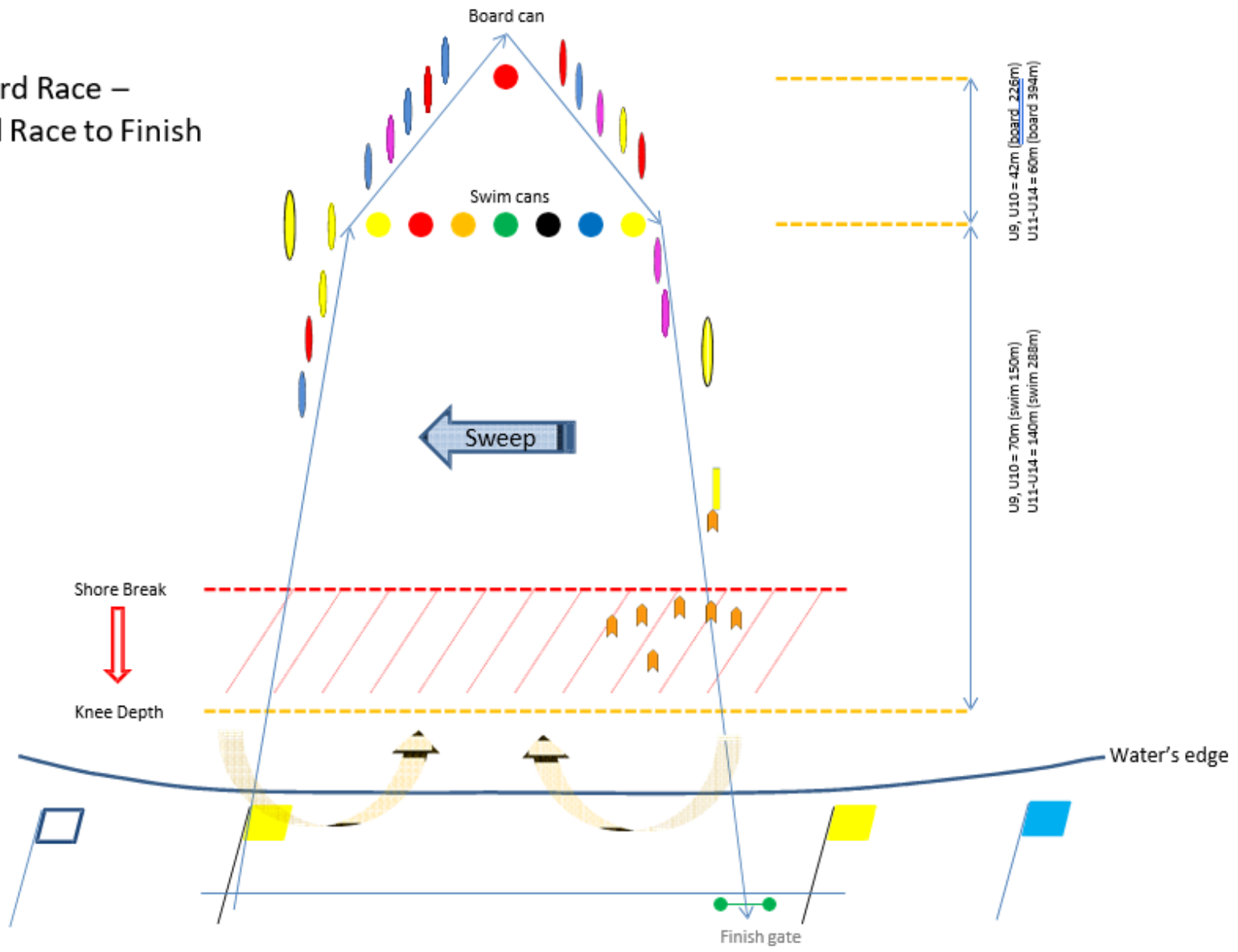
- 2 WS boards are preferred in the water area.
- WS boards shadow the pack – staying about half way between the cans and shore.
- At least 4 WS needed to stand waist deep in the break – no tubes.
- Make sure the kids are well separated on the start (1.5m between).
- As they start, follow them in – help them get on if required.
- Teach them the entry strategies – how to hold the board, how to get on, waiting, bracing and holding, bunny hopping & rolling.
- As they return, stand at the break, be alert – you will be needed.
- Manage their return – as required tell them to stop and wait, go for it or yell at them to get to the back of the board. They need to catch waves.
- If they are going to get smashed, grab the kid off the board or jump on the back of the board with them.
- You can't save them every time – they will never develop confidence or competence if you interfere every time – this is a delicate judgement.
- Develop your own skills so you can better instruct Nippers



# Board Race – Just After Start



# Board Race – Mid Race to Finish





## EMERGENCIES

- In all instances use your training – whether it be SRC, Bronze or a higher award – and always Send for Help!
- Notify the Elouera Nippers Water Safety Captain – They will liaise and coordinate with the Patrol Captain or Council Lifeguards who have ultimate responsibility for the beach.
- Patrol or Council Lifeguards will address any injuries after you have rescued/stabilised the situation to the extent of your training.
- If there is a lost child, your job is to get all other children out of the water ASAP. And into the care of their respective age manager.
- If you know the last known position of the child tell the Water Safety Captain – this will be key to a successful search
- When all children are out of the water report to the Patrol Area and await further instructions from the Water Safety Captain, Patrol Captain or Council Lifeguards. Do not re-enter the water unless directed to do so.