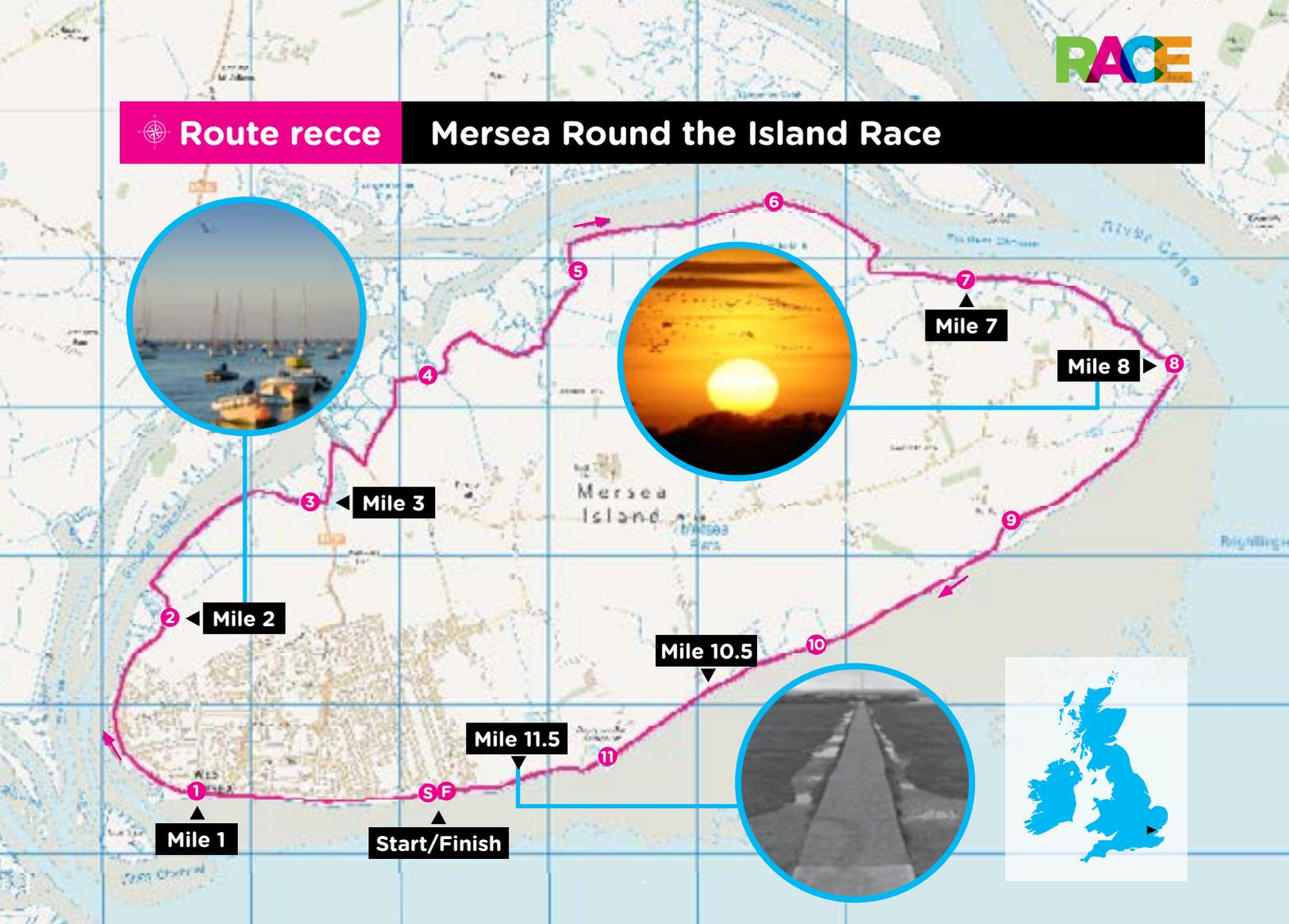


Route recce Mersea Round the Island Race



**Race secretary Terry Walker guides you along the 12.2-mile route around Mersea Island, which lies in a river estuary off the Essex coast**

**MILE 1**

Choose your racing line carefully as the sand is much firmer by the shoreline than next to the beach huts. Here you'll climb the stone 'Monkey Steps', which are said to have been guarded by officials hoping to nab smugglers coming ashore in the 18th century.

**MILE 2**

After passing the island's oyster beds as well as the 'Hard', the area where the local fishing boats land their catch, you step on to the concrete sea wall, which protects the island from flooding.

**MILE 3**

Ahead you can see The Strood, the only road from the mainland to the island, which is frequently submerged during particularly high tides.

**MILE 7**

As you round the eastern tip of the island you pass the oyster factory, which sends its fresh supplies to many top London restaurants. There are views across to Brightlingsea and the wind farms off the coast at Clacton-on-Sea.

**MILE 8**

Here you pass through Cudmore Grove Country Park, a haven for birds and other wildlife that gather on the mud flats. Inland to your right you'll spot the ancient St Edmund King and Martyr, one of the few moated

churches ever built in this country.

**MILE 10.5**

There are two caravan parks in view as you run along the beach into an often cruel headwind. In the distance, across the River Blackwater, you'll spot Bradwell nuclear power station, which is currently being decommissioned.

**MILE 11.5**

You'll be directed off the beach and run the final three-quarters of a mile on tarmac before reaching the car park finish. Your circular tour of this quirky Essex island is complete.

**Run it** This year's Mersea Round the Island Race is on Sunday, June 30 (runnersworld.co.uk/merseaisland).



**The rundown**

**Mersea Round the Island**

*Mersea Island, Essex (2012 stats)*

**First man** Robert Reason (1:19:08)

**First woman** Vanessa Dodds (1:35:51)

**No. of starters and finishers**

180 and 180 (100%)

**Finishing stats**

1:19-1:30 5.5%

1:31-1:40 15%

1:41-2:00 40%

2:01-2:20 24.5%

2:21-2:50 15%

