

## Racing Rules of Sailing

### Rule 18.1(c)

A submission from US Sailing

#### Purpose

To correct an unintended consequence of rule 18.1.

#### Proposal

Change rule 18.1 as follows:

#### **18.1 When Rule 18 Applies**

Rule 18 applies between boats when they are required to leave a *mark* on the same side and at least one of them is in the *zone*. However, it does not apply

- (a) between boats on opposite *tacks* on a beat to windward,
- (b) between boats on opposite *tacks* when the *proper course* at the *mark* for one but not both of them is to tack,
- (c) **between boats on opposite *tacks* when the *mark* is a finishing *mark* for an upwind finish,**
- ~~(e)~~ between a boat approaching a *mark* and one leaving it, or
- ~~(d)~~ if the *mark* is a continuing *obstruction*, in which case rule 19 applies.

World Sailing is asked to make this change in rule 18.1 effective on 1 January 2019 as a matter of clear necessity and pressing importance pursuant to Regulation 28.1.2.

#### Current Position

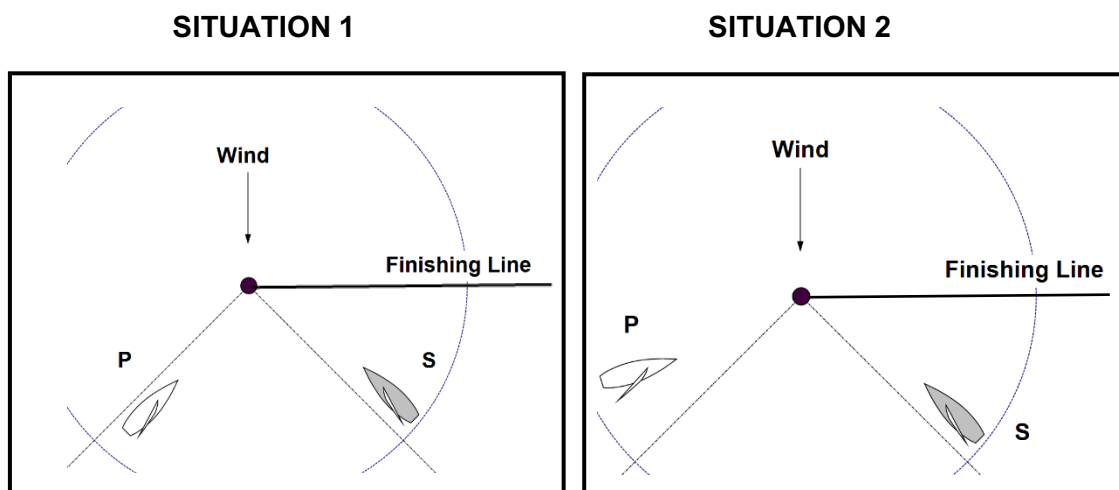
As above.

#### Reason

The basic ideas in rules 18.1(a) and 18.1(b) have been in the rulebook since 1965, when the racing rules were standardized world-wide. For more than 50 years, sailors have interpreted those two rules as saying that rule 18 does not apply between boats on opposite tacks at a mark at the end of an upwind leg.

This changed in 2014 when an existing Q&A was published as Case 132. It stated that a boat is on a beat to windward when the course she would sail to finish as soon as possible in the absence of all other boats is a close-hauled course or above.

That interpretation causes a problem with rule 18.1 at an upwind finish. Consider the two situations shown in the diagrams below. In each, boats S and P are on opposite tacks approaching a finishing mark for an upwind finish. In Situation 1, P and S are each close-hauled and, to finish as soon as possible, will sail close-hauled or above until they finish. Situation 2 is identical, except that P has overstood and, to finish as soon as possible, she will sail below close-hauled to the mark.



Rule 18 does not apply in Situation 1 because these boats are on opposite tacks on a beat to windward (see rule 18.1(a)). The same should be true in Situation 2. However, according to the interpretation in Case 132, P is not on a beat to windward in Situation 2. Because the boats are about to finish, neither boat must tack to round the mark, so rule 18.1(b) does not apply. Consequently, P is entitled to mark-room from S. P can hold her course and expect that S will give her room to sail to the mark and finish. S can easily give that room by tacking to leeward of P.

The problem described here has been publicized widely during the last year, and a question asking whether rule 18 applies between P and S in Situation 2 has been received by the Q&A Panel.

Certainly the intent of those who wrote rule 18 was that rule 18 should not apply between P and S in Situation 2, and that P should be required to keep clear of S. For over 50 years, when competitors encountered Situation 2 they have sailed as if rule 18 did not apply. This submission addresses this problem simply and directly by adding a new rule 18.1(c) saying that rule 18 does not apply between boats on opposite tacks at an upwind finish.

The unintended consequence of rule 18.1 in Situation 2 has produced a dangerous situation where a starboard-tack boat might think she need not give room because of the traditional interpretation, while a port-tack boat might think she is entitled to room because of the new interpretation. For safety and to preserve the game as it has been played for more than half a century, new rule 18.1(c) should be implemented as soon as possible.

It might be thought that, inasmuch as the problem is caused by the interpretation of 'on a beat to windward' in Case 132, it could be solved by deletion of that case. However, the deletion of Case 132 alone is not sufficient to completely remove the danger of the present situation because some sailors will continue to interpret 'on a beat to windward' as Case 132 does, even if the case is no longer in *The Case Book*.

Note that there is a companion submission from US Sailing that proposes to delete Case 132.