

Racing Rules of Sailing

Rule C6.5(a)

A submission from the Chairman of the Race Officials Committee

Purpose or Objective

To clarify the process for giving umpire-initiated penalties.

Proposal

C6.5 Umpire Decisions

- (a) After flag Y is displayed, the umpires shall decide whether to penalize any boat. They shall signal their decision in compliance with rule C5.1, C5.2 or C5.3. **However, when the umpires penalize a boat under rule C8.2 and in the same incident there is a flag Y from a boat, the umpires shall disregard the flag Y.**

Current Position

As above.

Reasons

In match racing, there are certain rules that boats cannot protest under (see rule C6.2). If a boat breaks one of these rules, e.g. when touching a mark, and the opponent protests, the correct signal by the umpires is a green flag (for protesting in noncompliance with rule C6.2) and a penalty flag under rule C8.2 (for breaking the relevant rule).

The green flag in this situation is often upsetting the opponent, because they may have observed a clear breach of a rule, but they see the umpires signal 'No penalty'. This is resolved when the penalty flag is displayed, but it often causes unnecessary grief.

For spectators and media it is also difficult to understand that they see a boat touch the mark and then the umpires display a green flag.

For the umpires, it increases the number of flags they have to display.

Thus for all involved, it would be much simpler and easier to understand if the green flag could be omitted.
