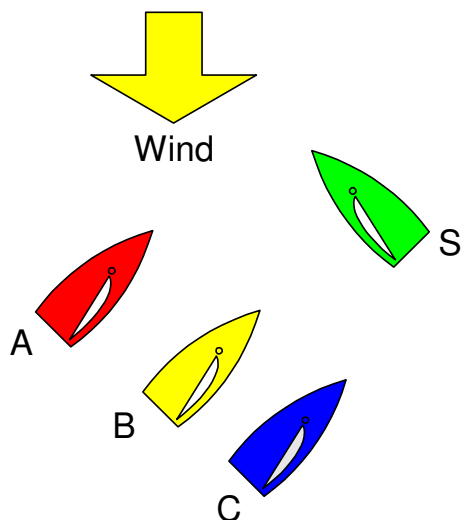


ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service



Q&A 2010-001

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Assumed facts:

Boats A, B and C are close-hauled on port tack, A being to windward of B who is to windward of C.

Boat S is close-hauled on starboard tack with a risk of collision with A. If B and C did not change course, both would pass astern of S.

Boat A bears away to duck S, and B bears away to give her space to pass astern of S. C holds her course and there is a collision between B and C, which results in neither damage nor injury.

Neither boat takes a penalty. There is a protest between B and C.

Question:

How do the rules apply to this incident and which boat or boats should be disqualified?

Answer:

A, B and C are required to keep clear of S. S is therefore an obstruction to all three.

Because C has right of way over both B and A, C may elect which side of S to pass (see rule 19.2(a)). However, because C does not need to change course to avoid S, C may not call for room to tack under rule 20. As C passes astern of S she is required by rule 19.2(b) to give room to both B and A to pass between her and S. Similarly, B is also required by rule 19.2(b) to give A room.

The room that C is required to give to B includes enough space for B to give A room and for B to keep clear of C (see the principle highlighted in italics in Team Racing Call E9). C does not give that room and, therefore, breaks rule 19.2(b), and so C should be disqualified. C also breaks rule 14 as, had she given that room, the contact could have been avoided. However, because there was no damage or injury, C can not be penalized under rule 14.

B breaks rule 11, but she is exonerated under rule 64.1(c) because she was compelled to do so by C's breach of rule 19.2(b).