ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service

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Situation

Match racing. The windward mark and a replacement mark are both in the water. All race committee signals were made correctly and the procedures followed were as described in the sailing instructions.

Question 1

In one match, both boats rounded the wrong mark and neither boat protested. Should the race committee or the umpires take any action?

Answer 1

The umpires should take no action. The race committee may abandon the race under rule 32.1 if it considers fairness has been affected.

Note that ISAF Race Management Policy for Match Racing events recommends as best practice that *'A match will be abandoned if both boats in that match have rounded the incorrect mark, and the race management team is satisfied that neither boat intends to correct its error.'*

If the race committee does not abandon the race and there is a protest, the facts of the case would be that although the boats sailed the same race, neither sailed the course as required in rule 28. The last sentence in rule 90.3(a) makes it clear that a race shall not be scored unless at least one boat sails the course in compliance with rule 28.1, so in case of a protest, the match will have to be abandoned.

Question 2

The situation is the same, but one of the boats touched the wrong buoy while rounding it. Should the umpires take any action?

Answer 2

The umpires should take no action. Rule 31 does not apply.

Question 3

During a match the two boats rounded different marks. Rule C6.1(b) says that a boat may protest by displaying a red flag 'as soon as possible after the incident'. When must the red flag be displayed:

a)   as soon as possible after rounding the mark, or
b)   as soon as possible after the boat crosses the finishing line?

Answer 3

The red flag should be accepted both if displayed as soon as possible after the boat rounds the wrong mark and if displayed as soon as possible after the boat finishes - or anytime in between. Case 112 refers.