



International Sailing Federation

The Racing Rules of Sailing Q & A's Booklet

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Introduction

The ISAF Racing Rules Questions and Answers are published on the ISAF website as a joint responsibility of the Racing Rules Committee and the Race Officials Committee.

The Question and Answer Panel is set up to provide a service to Race Officials, Member National Authorities and ISAF Class Associations whereby they may submit questions through ISAF concerning the Racing Rules of Sailing (RRS).

The answers are prepared by a Panel of experienced Race Officials. The answers are not authoritative interpretations; but they are explanations of the RRS that represent an important service by providing carefully considered opinions of experienced Race Officials.

Answers will always be given to the questioner, but only Questions and Answers of general interest are published in this booklet. It is intended that these Questions and Answers are further considered for submission for a rule change, for inclusion in the ISAF Case Book/Call Books, or for educational material in Race Officials Manuals.

This service is not to be used as a 'substitute' appeal process, but is simply to provide considered opinions on questions on the RRS.

Our thanks to Ana Sanchez del Campo (ESP) for being as Chairman of the Panel, to the Race Officials who participate in the Panel's work, and to Marianne Middelthon (NOR) for preparing this booklet of Questions and Answers.

February 2013

Jan Stage
Chairman
ISAF Race Officials Committee

Bernard Bonneau
Chairman
ISAF Racing Rules Committee



ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service

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ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service



Section A

Fair Sailing

There is currently no Q&A in this section.

A1

Other Questions that may be relevant:



ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service

Section B Boat vs Boat

- B1** Two boats fetching the mark after passing head to wind in the zone when another is already fetching
- B2** Port tries to cross in front of starboard
- B3** Rights and obligations at obstructions
- B4** 3 boats overlapped on port tack approaching an obstruction; a racing boat on starboard tack

Other Questions that may be relevant:

ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service

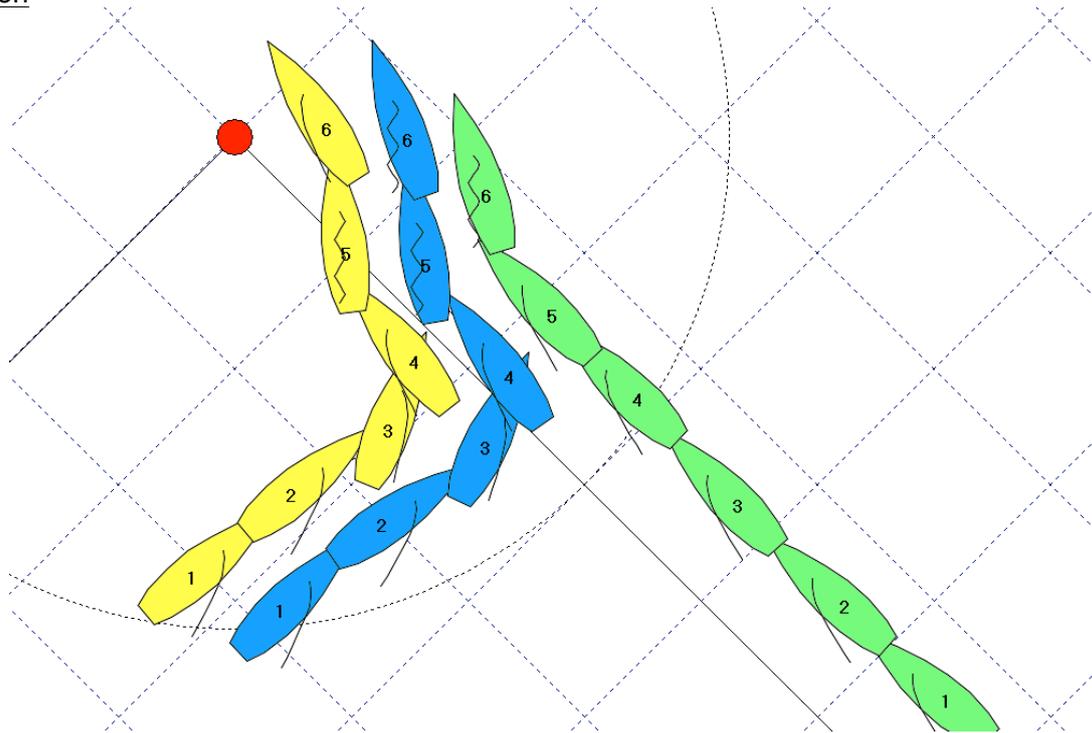


B 001

Q&A 2013-001

Published: 18 February 2013 (Revision of Q&A B17 2010-020)

Situation



Shortly after position 2, Yellow decides she can tack and fetch the mark. Blue initially believes she can cross in front of Green so she does not hail for room to tack. However, as soon as Yellow luffs to tack, Blue immediately luffs and tacks so that the two boats pass head to wind simultaneously. Upon completion of their tacks, there is room for one boat (not both) to pass between Green and the mark.

After the tack is completed Yellow luffs to round the mark and Blue luffs to give Yellow mark-room. Green has to luff above close-hauled to avoid Blue. Green protests Blue and Blue protests Yellow.

Question 1

What should the decision be?

Answer 1

Penalize Yellow for breaking rule 18.3(a).

Green was required to keep clear of Blue from the moment Blue completed her tack. Green kept clear, and broke no rule.

Yellow and Blue were both required by rule 18.3(a) not to cause 'the other boat' to sail above close-hauled to avoid contact. When Green sailed above close-hauled, it was to avoid contact. Yellow and Blue both broke rule 18.3(a). However, Blue is exonerated under rule 64.1(a) because she was compelled by Yellow to break rule 18.3.

Blue was required to keep clear of Yellow once Yellow completed her tack. Blue kept clear and did not break rule 11.

Question 2

Would the answer to Question 1 be different if there is not even room for one boat to pass between Green and the mark when the two boats complete their tacks?

Answer 2

No.

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B 002

Q&A 2013-005

Published: 18 February 2013 (Re-issuing of Q&A2011.028 B24)

Situation 1

In a fleet race with 10 knots wind, two one-design boats, S and P are approaching each other on close-hauled courses on opposite tacks. P, thinking she can cross ahead of S, does not change course or speed and there is contact between S's bow and P's starboard quarter, about 20cms from P's stern, causing damage. S had the opportunity to bear away earlier to avoid contact, but S thought P was going to cross and did not alter course before the contact occurred.

Question 1

Did S break rule 14?

Answer 1

In this situation P made an erroneous judgment that she would cross in from of S, thereby breaking rules 10 and 14.

Rule 14 requires a boat, including a right-of-way boat, to avoid contact if reasonably possible. In the described situation it was reasonably possible for S to avoid contact. However, rule 14(a) also states that a right-of-way boat does not need to act to avoid contact until it is 'clear' that the other boat is not keeping clear.

Once it became clear to S that P was not going to tack, S was obliged under rule 14 to assess whether there was a likelihood of contact or whether P was 'clearly' keeping clear. In the situation described, S made a miscalculation when assuming there would not be contact. S therefore broke rule 14, as it would have been reasonably possible for her to change course in the last moment to avoid the contact.

ISAF Case 50 states as a general principle: 'When the committee finds that S did change course and that there was reasonable doubt that P could have crossed ahead of S if S had not changed course, then P should be disqualified.'

Situation 2

The situation is the same, but just before the contact occurs, S tries to avoid P by bearing away slightly, however S misjudges the manoeuvre.

Question 2

Did S break rule 14?

Answer 2

In this situation P made an erroneous judgment that she would cross ahead of S, thereby breaking rules 10 and 14.

Although S made an attempt to avoid the collision, she too made an erroneous judgment in regard to rule 14 and whether P would keep clear. Once it became clear to S that P was not going to keep clear, S needed to commence her manoeuvre in such time as to avoid the collision. S could easily make a judgment as to how much to bear away and she had the opportunity, but misjudged it.

Under the Racing Rules of Sailing, misjudgements or poor seamanship does not normally in itself excuse a boat from complying with its obligations.

Since neither boat took a penalty, the decision of the protest committee should have been to score both boats DSQ.

ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service



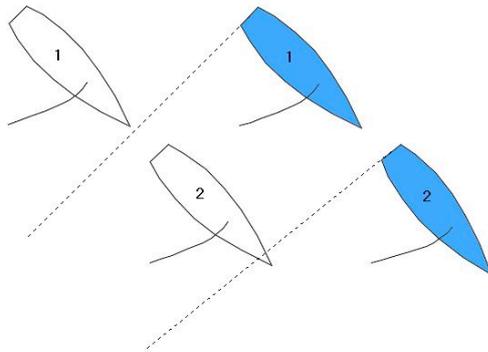
B 003

Q&A 2013-013

Published: 18 February 2013 (Re-issuing of Q&A2009.021 B004)

Background

Two boats, Blue and White, are racing. They are approaching a big obstruction that can be passed on either side. The courses steered by both boats are towards the middle of the obstruction. At position 1 Blue is clear ahead (by a very narrow margin) and on a track to windward of White. When Blue bears away slightly, she immediately becomes overlapped to windward of White.



Rule 19.2(a) states that the right-of-way boat may choose to pass the obstruction on either side. In position 1 Blue is clear ahead, and thus has right of way under rule 12. When Blue bears away and becomes overlapped to windward of White, White becomes the right-of-way boat under rule 11.

Question

How can we determine which boat has the right to choose the side for passing the obstruction?

Answer

At any point in time the right-of-way boat at that moment is entitled by rule 19.2(a) to choose on which side she will pass the obstruction. Therefore, when the boats are at position 1, Blue has the right to choose to pass the obstruction on either side. However, when the boats reach position 2 Blue has lost that right, and at that time White has the right to choose.

When a right-of-way boat acts to implement a choice she has made under rule 19.2(a), she must comply with any applicable rules of Sections A and B. In addition, rule 19.2(b) applies if the boats are overlapped. In that case, the outside boat must give the inside boat room between her and the obstruction, unless she has been unable to do so from the time the overlap began.

In the case shown in the diagram, if after position 2 White chose to leave the obstruction to starboard and if the boats remained overlapped, White would have to comply with rules 16.1 and 17, and Blue would have to give White room between her and the obstruction as required by rule 19.2(b).

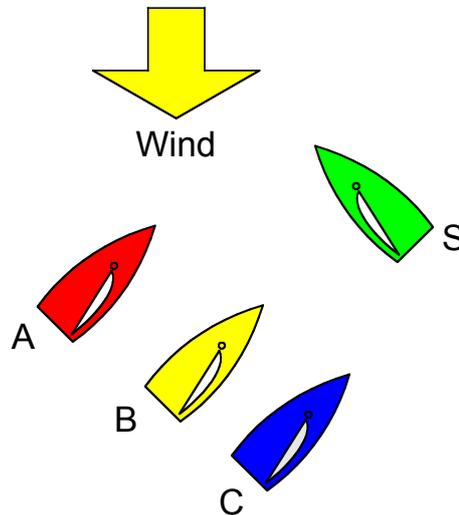
ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service



B 004

Q&A 2013-15

Published: 18 February 2013 (Revision of Q&A 2010-01 B011)



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, rule 20.1(a) makes it clear that 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 definition Room). 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 cannot be penalized under rule 14. B breaks rule 11, but she is exonerated under rule 64.1(a) because she was compelled to do so by C's breach of rule 19.2(b).

ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service



Section C

Starting

There is currently no Q&A in this section.

C1

Other Questions that may be relevant:

ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service



Section D

Sailing the Course

D1 The rights of an OCS boat that is sailing the course

Other Questions that may be relevant:

ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service



D 001

Q&A 2013-14

Published: 18 February 2013 (Revision of Q&A 2010-24 D006)

Situation

A fleet race starts and on the first run there is a luffing match between L and W. Both boats protest, and there is contact with no damage or injury.

After the race it is discovered that W was OCS.

Question

Is it open to W to allege that she and L were not on the same leg, and that when L initiated a luffing match L was not only sailing above her proper course, she was also breaking rule 24.2 because she was interfering with W?

Answer

Both L and W are on the same leg. While W may not have started correctly, and may subsequently be scored OCS, she continues to sail the race with full rights and obligations under the rules.

Nothing in the rules would prevent W from making any allegation against L, but the protest committee would be bound by the rules and as both boats are on the same leg, rule 24.2 does not apply.

ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service



Section E

Finishing

- E1** When has a boat 'cleared' the finishing line and marks?
 - E2** Race committee action when a boat passes the pin end of the finishing line on the wrong side or touches a finishing mark
 - E3** About shortening of course, finishing when the race committee is positioned at the 'wrong' end of the line
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Other Questions that may be relevant:

ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service



E 001

Q&A 2013-006

Published: 18 February 2013 (Revision of Q&A2006.002 E01)

Question

With respect to the definition *Racing*, when has a boat 'cleared' the finishing line and marks?

Answer

A boat clears the finishing line and marks when no part of her hull, crew or equipment is on the line and when neither mark is influencing her course.

A boat that clears the finishing line close-hauled and continues to sail toward the finishing line pin end mark, where current sets her into the mark, is still racing and has broken 31. A boat that crosses the finishing line, sails away from the line and marks, and then later hits the finishing line mark, does not break rule 31 as she is no longer racing.

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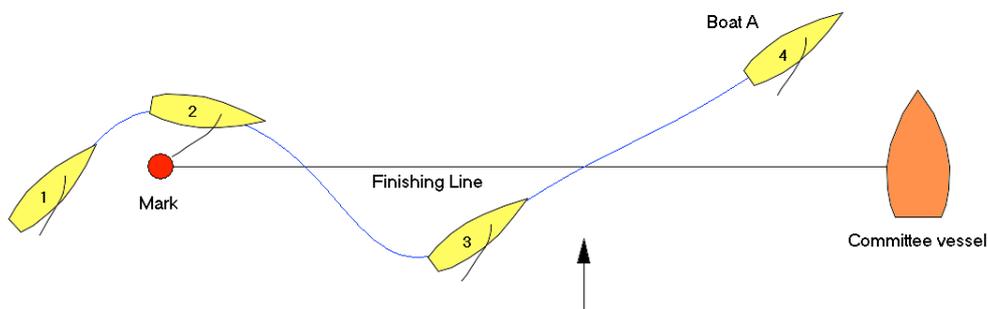


E 002

Q&A 2013-007

Published: 18 February 2013 (Revision of Q&A2006.003 E02)

Situation A



Question 1

In situation A, the race committee observes Boat A passing the pin end of the finishing line on the wrong side and then dipping below the line, finishing, and sailing into the harbor. What should the race committee do in this situation?

Answer 1

The race committee must score the boat in her finishing place because she complied with the definition Finish. The race committee should protest A for breaking rule 28.1. After crossing the finishing line, a boat may correct an error in sailing the course made at the finishing line, but if she does not, she must be scored as finished when she crossed the line from the course side.

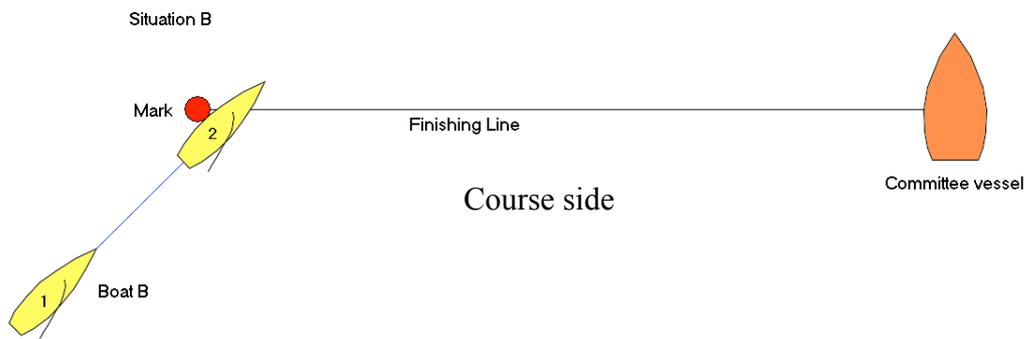
Question 2

Does the race committee need to remain on station until after the race time limit in case A returns to correct her error?

Answer 2

No, unless it is likely that A will return to correct her error and finish within the time limit.

Situation B



Question 3

In Situation B, the race committee observes Boat B breaking rule 31 as she crosses the finishing line. B does not take a penalty and sails home. What should the race committee do?

Answer 3

The race committee must score B in her finishing place when she crossed the finishing line from the course side. See the definition Finish. The race committee may protest the boat for breaking rule 31. See rule 60.2(a).

ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service



E 003

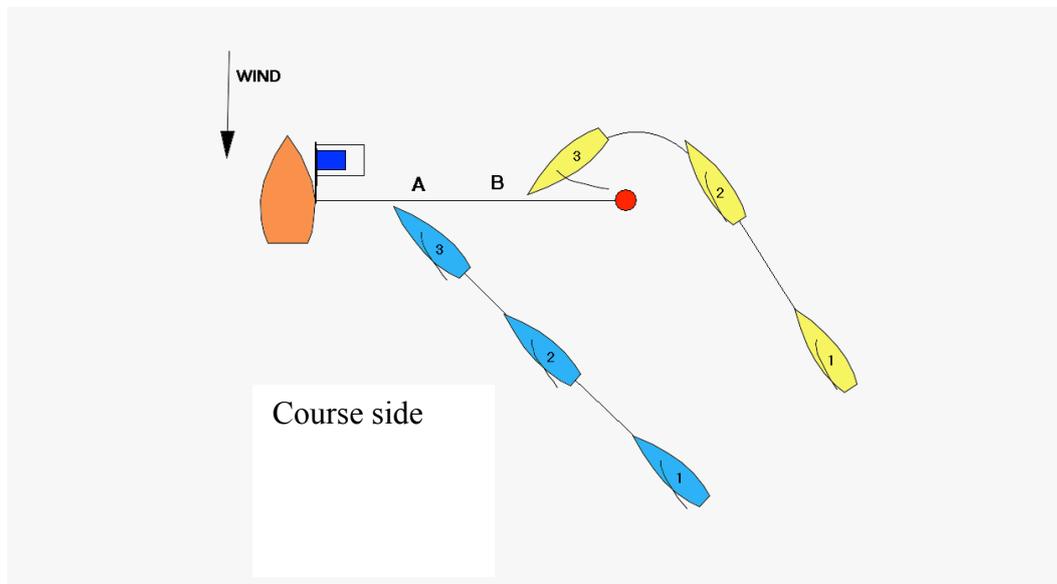
Q&A 2013-008

Published: 18 February 2013 (Revision of Q&A2009-016 E06)

Situation

According to the sailing instructions marks were to be left to port. Due to insufficient wind the race committee shortened the course by displaying flag S with two sounds at a staff on a committee boat near the windward mark.

Due to bad anchoring conditions at the starboard side of the mark the committee anchored the boat at the port side of the windward mark and so laid the finishing line at the 'wrong side' of the mark.



Question 1

Are boats after the race committee has shortened the course still required to leave the mark to port and make a hook round finish as boat B (yellow) in the diagram, or is this mark no longer a rounding mark but rather a finishing mark so that boats are required to cross the finishing line from the course side as boat A (blue) in the diagram?

Answer 1

Because the race committee has signalled a shortened course, the mark is now a finishing mark rather than a rounding mark, and boats must cross the finishing line from the course side in accordance with the definition Finish. In the diagram, boat A finishes correctly.

Question 2

Could the protest committee consider laying the finishing line at the 'wrong side' of the mark an improper action of the race committee, refer to case 45 *Revised 2007* and decide to score all the boats in the order they crossed the finishing line without regard to the direction in which they crossed it?

Answer 2

No. As long as the line clearly is at an angle to the course side, the definition Finish gives the correct finishing direction, irrespective of which side the finishing vessel is situated.

Had the race committee issued a sailing instruction that required the boats to cross the finishing line from the wrong direction, that would have been an improper action, and redress could have been considered (see ISAF Case 45).

ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service



Section F

Scoring

There is currently no Q&A in this section.

F1

Other Questions that may be relevant:

ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service



Section G

Race Management Practices and Policies

G1 Timing of individual recall signals

Other Questions that may be relevant:

ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service



G 001

Q&A 2013-016

Published: 18 February 2013 (Re-issuing of Q&A 2011-018 G 012)

Situation

At the start of a race with 60 Lasers and approximately 15-18 knots wind, the race officer observes 4 boats on the course side of the starting line close to the pin end. 10 seconds after the starting signal the race committee signals an individual recall with flag X and one sound.

Case 79 states the following about the timing of individual recalls:

'No specific amount of time will apply in all circumstances, but in this rule it means a very short time. A race committee should signal 'Individual recall' within a very few seconds of the starting signal. Forty seconds is well beyond the limits of acceptability'.

Question 1

Is 10 seconds acceptable under the mentioned circumstances?

Answer 1

To recall boats individually, rule 29.1 requires the race committee to display flag X with one sound promptly after the starting signal. Promptly cannot be quantified. The acceptable time between the two signals may depend on various parameters such as the size of the fleet, the size and maneuverability of the boats, the length of the starting line and even the weather conditions. In the circumstances described in question 1, 10 seconds would not be promptly.

Question 2

If the answer to Question 1 is no, what would be the latest acceptable time for signaling?

Answer 2

See Answer 1

Question 3

If the answer to Question 1 is no, consider the following: Neither of the 4 identified boats return to start correctly. 2 of them request redress under rule 62.1(a) after racing. The protest committee finds in a hearing that the 2 boats are eligible for redress.

Would all 4 boats be entitled to redress although only 2 of them requested redress?

Answer 3

When the protest committee decides that the race committee acted improperly by failing to signal the individual recall promptly, the protest committee shall, according to rule 64.2, make as fair an arrangement as possible for all the boats affected, whether or not they asked for redress.

However the protest committee shall determine individually for each of the boats if the rest of the conditions of rule 62.1 for giving redress are met.

NOTE

Guidance concerning race management 'best practices' of the application of rule 29.1 can be found in the ISAF Race Management Policies posted on the ISAF website.

ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service



Section H

International Jury

There is currently no Q&A in this section.

H1

Other Questions that may be relevant:

ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service



Section J

Protests, Hearings, Appeals & Procedures

- J1** Is an arbitration decision final?
- J2** May arbitrators sit on panel hearing a case that has been through arbitration?
- J3** The role and functions of a measurer or equipment inspector

Other Questions that may be relevant:

ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service



J 001

Q&A 2013-002

Published: 18 February 2013 (Re-issuing of Q&A2012.010 J27)

Situation

An international one-design dinghy class has been developing and using their own arbitration system at most of their international class events since early 1990's. The notice of race mentions that such system may be offered, and the system is described in detail in the sailing instructions. The use of arbitration is limited to boat vs boat incidents. The system is voluntary, however, if the competitors accept going into arbitration they also agree to accept the decision of the arbitrators as the final decision. An arbitration may be reopened under rule 66. Two members of the international jury will be the arbitrators.

Rule 70.5 state that the decision of a properly constituted international jury cannot be appealed.

Question 1

Will a decision by the arbitrators be final as stated in the sailing instructions or could such decisions be subject to an appeal?

Answer 1

An arbitrator's decision is not a protest committee decision under the Racing Rules of Sailing and therefore it cannot be appealed. This applies whether or not the protest committee at the event is an international jury. When the parties agree to use a described arbitration system that prevents further proceedings following the decision, they also agree to decline their rights to appeal.

However, sailing instructions may define other arbitration systems with different rights and obligations for the parties.

Question 2

Is the international jury acting outside its mandate by deciding protests using this arbitration system?

Answer 2

No.

Question 3

Is it acceptable that the sailing instructions introduce a 'non-appealable' system?

Answer 3

Yes. As this is an optional and voluntary system, it does not remove the competitor's right to choose a regular protest hearing instead. However, when there is an international jury, the choice is between two non-appealable systems.



ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service

J 002

Q&A 2013-003

Published: 18 February 2013

Situation

An event has an International Jury of 5 members appointed. The sailing instructions provide for an arbitration system.

Question 1

May a member of the jury, who acts as an arbitrator, sit as a full member of the jury if the arbitration for some reason is referred back to the jury, or is the arbitrator now limited to act as a witness as recommended by the ISAF International Judges Manual?

Answer 1

Despite the advice in the ISAF International Judges Manual, there can be good reasons for the arbitrator to be a member of the jury if there is a protest hearing because the arbitration decision has not been accepted - see answers 2 and 3. The sailing instruction describing the arbitration system may provide further information about this.

Question 2

If the answer to Question 1 is that the arbitrator cannot be a member of the jury to which the arbitration is referred and no replacement is available, is the jury still properly constituted under rule N1.5?

Answer 2

Not applicable. However, if the arbitration sailing instruction says that the arbitrator cannot be a member of the international jury, and if the arbitrator is one of the five jury members, then a jury of the remaining four is not properly constituted.

Question 3

Would the answer be the same if two of the members were arbitrators?

Answer 3

Yes.



ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service

J 003

Q&A 2013-009

Published: 18 February 2013 (Re-issuing of Q&A 2011-020 J021)

Question 1

Is an equipment inspector or measurer at an event a member of the race committee for that event?

Answer 1

Not normally. Equipment inspectors or event measurers are responsible for checking that the boats or the personal equipment used by competitors comply with the class rules.

According to the Terminology in the Introduction to the Racing Rules of Sailing, 'Race committee' includes any person performing a race committee function. The race committee functions are stated in different rules in Part 7 (conduct races, publish written sailing instructions, score races, etc) and equipment inspection is not one of them. If however the equipment inspectors or event measurers were appointed by the race committee to conduct such responsibilities on behalf of the race committee, then they are members of the race committee.

Question 2

If the answer to Question 1 is yes, can the equipment inspector or the event measurer protest a boat under rule 60.2 without the need for the written report required by rule 78.3?

Answer 2

The equipment inspector or the event measurer can only protest the boat if the race committee delegates this responsibility to him or if the sailing instructions change rules 78.3 and 60.2 accordingly.

Question 3

The rules at an event require that a certificate is produced before a boat races. One boat does not produce a certificate, but the race committee receives a statement signed by the person in charge that a valid certificate exists and that it will be given to the race committee before the end of the event. The race committee does not receive the certificate in time. Can that boat be scored DSQ for all races without a protest as rule 78.2 indicates?

Answer 3

No. The race committee should protest the boat. Rule A5 lists the scoring actions the race committee may take without a hearing. An action under rule 78.2 is not in that list.

ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service



Section K

Match Racing and Team Racing

There is currently no Q&A in this section.

K1

Other Questions that may be relevant:

ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service



Section L

Technical Questions

There is currently no Q&A in this section.

L1

Other Questions that may be relevant:

ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service



Section M

Terminology

- M1** When is a boat on a beat to windward?
 - M2** Changing course and rule 16
 - M3** Proper Course and sail configuration
-

Other Questions that may be relevant:

ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service



M 001

Q&A 2013-010

Published: 18 February 2013 (Re-issuing of Q&A 2004-006 M001)

Question

Except on a beat to windward, rule 42.3(c) permits a boat to pull the sheet or guy to initiate surfing or planing. When is a boat on a beat to windward?

Answer

The phrase 'on a beat to windward' is used in rules 18.1(a) and 42.3(c). For the purposes of each rule, a boat is 'on a beat to windward' when her proper course is close-hauled; when she is 'beating.' Therefore, if a boat is sailing on a leg to the windward mark and the wind direction changes so that the boat's proper course to the mark is no longer close-hauled, then the boat is no longer 'on a beat to windward.'

Similarly, when a boat is sailing on a downwind leg and there is a wind shift so that it is clear the boat's proper course to the mark is close-hauled, then the boat is 'on a beat to windward'.

When judging this, the last point of certainty principle is used. For example, a boat approaching a windward mark on the starboard tack layline gets a lifting shift. The judges need to be certain that the boat's proper course is no longer close-hauled before permitting 'one pump per wave'. If there is any doubt, the judgment will be that the boat is still 'on a beat to windward'.

ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service



M 002

Q&A 2013-011

Published: 18 February 2013 (Revision of Q&A 2010-019 M006)

Question

As a boat without speed sheets on to move forwards she initially drifts side-ways. Is this action considered a change of course under rule 16?

Answer

A boat moving from a stopped position to sailing in a direction would not be considered to be changing course, except when she went from having sailed backwards to sailing forwards or vice versa. (See Match Racing Call MR B 7).

In order for rule 16 to apply, there would need to be two boats and the right-of-way boat would need to be changing course.

ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service



M 003

Q&A 2013-012

Published: 18 February 2013 (Re-issuing of Q&A 2010-027 M009)

Situation

Two boats, W and L, are sailing downwind in conditions where they would normally use spinnakers to finish as soon as possible.

Boat W has a problem with her spinnaker and boat L, sailing faster, establishes a leeward overlap from clear astern and is subject to rule 17. Boat L decides not to use her spinnaker to gain a tactical advantage over W.

Both boats are sailing their fastest VMG course for a boat sailing downwind with a headsail but they are sailing a higher course than they would be able to sail if using their spinnakers.

Boat W protests boat L alleging that, by not hoisting her spinnaker and not sailing a lower, faster course in order to finish as soon as possible, she is breaking rule 17. In the absence of boat W, L would have hoisted her spinnaker and sailed a faster and lower course to finish as soon as possible.

Question

Does boat L break rule 17 by not hoisting her spinnaker and not sailing a lower, faster course in order to finish as soon as possible?

Answer

No. The rules have no requirement as to which sails a boat must use at any time and a boat's proper course is the course she would sail to finish as soon as possible in the conditions and with the sails she has set. Nor is there any requirement in the rules for a boat to finish as soon as possible and there could be a variety of reasons why a boat would not use a spinnaker, including tactical considerations. (See ISAF Case 78).

ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service



Section N

Prescriptions and other rules

N1 Trash?

Other Questions that may be relevant:

ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service



N 001

Q&A 2013-004

Published: 18 February 2013

Question

Is human excremental matter considered to be trash for the purpose of RRS 55?

Answer

No, human excremental matter is sewage and not trash. Competitors should however note that there may be other laws and regulations that apply.

ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service



Deleted Q&A's 2013

All previously published Q&A's have been deleted from the ISAF website. This Q&A Booklet starts fresh with Q&A's from 2013 and onwards.

Future deleted Q&A's will be listed here.

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