

**REPORTING COMMITTEE - RACING RULES
OTHER COMMITTEE -**

Racing Rules Cases

New Case

A submission from the Royal Yachting Association

PROPOSAL:

New case

Definition, Mark

When an object is attached to a committee vessel that is a starting or finishing mark the object shall be considered as part of the mark provided that, for the duration of the starting or finishing period, it is secured to the committee vessel to minimize its movement.

It is common practice for organizing authorities and race committees to borrow boats for use as committee boats. Many owners lend their boats but are aware that, at the start, it is likely that a number of competitors will sail close to the committee vessel. In practice this means that there is a substantial risk of collision possibly resulting in damage to the committee vessel or the competitors themselves. Objects such as fenders and inflatable boats are therefore often attached to the committee vessel for its protection.

However, an object temporarily attached to a mark is stated not to be part of the mark, as defined. While rule 18.1(a) denies a boat room to pass a starting mark, and so discouraging a 'fan-start', the object could be big enough to rank as an obstruction, which would then permit 'barging', as rule 18 would apply.

Question 1.

Is that correct? How can a committee vessel protect itself, while making the start fair for competitors?

Answer 1.

The definition *mark* excludes objects that are temporarily attached. 'Temporarily' means different periods of time in different circumstances. A starting mark has significance only from the preparatory signal until all boats racing have either started and are well clear of the line, or it is reasonable to assume that they will not start correctly. Any object deliberately and obviously attached to the committee vessel for this entire period is, for the purpose of this definition, not temporarily attached to it, and consequently is part of the mark.

Question 2.

Is it necessary to clarify the description of the mark in the sailing instructions by referring to the object to be attached to it?

Answer 2.

No, but it could be helpful to refer to it to make the position clear to the competitors.

Question 3.

Does the answer to Question 1 apply to a dinghy tied to the stern of the committee vessel by a painter so that it is separated from the boat by some distance?

Answer 3.

No. Any object to be included in the description of the mark, whether expressly or by implication, must be close enough to the committee vessel for it to be considered as part of the same entity.

CURRENT POSITION:

[None]

REASON:

The definition, *mark* implies that any object that is not physically and permanently part of a committee boat will be considered temporarily attached to it thus preventing race committees from attaching reasonable protection to their committee vessels. This case interprets the definition to enable race committees to attach protective objects such as small inflatable dinghies provided they remain attached for the duration of the starting or finishing sequence.

This case is understood to reflect the view of the ISAF Racing Rules Committee following their rejection of submission 172-02 which sought to change the definition: *mark* to the same effect.