

Racing Rules of Sailing

New Appendix SY – Superyacht Racing Rules

A submission from the Chairman of the Racing Rules Committee

Purpose or Objective

To establish an ISAF approved appendix to the Racing Rules of Sailing that addresses the importance of safe racing and, in particular, collision avoidance at superyacht racing regattas.

Proposal

Establish a new Appendix SY to The Racing Rules of Sailing for superyacht racing, as follows:

APPENDIX SY SUPERYACHT RACING RULES

Under rule 86.2 and Regulation 28.1.3, the ISAF has approved the use of The Racing Rules of Sailing as changed by this appendix for races for a superyacht class, but only if the notice of race so states.

SY1 TERMINOLOGY

'Superyacht' means a boat with a hull length greater than 30 metres. 'Superyacht class' means a racing fleet in which a majority of the fleet are superyachts.

SY2 Changes to the Definitions and the Rules of Part 2

SY2.1 The definition *Keep Clear* is changed to:

Keep Clear One boat *keeps clear* of another if the other can sail her course with no need to take avoiding action and with no less than 40 metres between the boats.

SY2.2 The definition *Mark Room* is changed to:

Mark Room Room for a boat to leave a *mark* on the required side with no less than 40 metres between the boats. Also,

- (a) *room* to sail to the *mark* when her *proper course* is to sail to it, and
- (b) *room* to round the *mark* as necessary to sail the course.

SY2.3 The definition *Room* is changed to:

Room The space a boat needs in the existing conditions, including space to comply with her obligations under the rules of Part 2 and rule 31, while maneuvering promptly in a seamanlike way, with no less than 40 metres between the boats.

SY2.4 The definition *Zone* is changed to:

Zone The area around a *mark* within a distance of 300 metres of it. A boat is in the *zone* when any part of her hull is in the *zone*.

SY2.5 Rule 17 is changed to:

17 ON THE SAME TACK; PROPER COURSE

17.1 A boat being overtaken shall sail her *proper course* from the time the overtaking boat is within 80 metres of her until the overtaking boat is *clear ahead* or more than 80 metres from her. The overtaking boat shall not sail within 40 metres of the other boat.

17.2 When rules 18, 19 or 20 apply, rule 17.1 does not, and a leeward boat shall not sail above her proper course.

SY3 Changes to the Rules of Part 4 and Part 5

SY3.1 Rule 42.3(g) is changed to:

(g) Any means of propulsion may be used to help a person or another vessel in danger, or as required to comply with rule 14, Avoiding Contact.

SY3.2 Rule 52 is deleted.

SY3.3 Rule 60 is changed to add new rule 60.4:

60.4 The race committee or protest committee may protest a boat when it learns, from any source, of an incident involving boats sailing within 40 metres of each other. [option 1]

60.4 When the race committee or protest committee learns, from any source, of an incident involving boats sailing within 40 metres of each other, it may protest any boats involved. [option 2]

Current Position

None, but over the last two years, the ISAF has given approval under Regulation 86.2 to the SuperYacht Racing Association to test similar rules at major superyacht events.

Reason

Superyacht regattas have been growing in number and sizes of fleets in recent years. The recent St Barth's Bucket Regatta included 47 superyachts with an average LOA of 43 meters. The very top priority for organizers is safe racing, particularly collision avoidance, for this very unique and special form of yacht racing. There are inherent safety issues with superyacht racing because many of these large yachts are severely restricted in their ability to manoeuvre.

Over the years, event organizers have tried different rules to enable these extraordinarily large cruising yachts to race against one another, including the COLREGs, the RRS and specialty 'protocols' that improperly changed the RRS. With superyacht racing popularity growing and the world's top level racing tacticians joining the afterguards, the weaknesses in these rules have been exposed.

Since May 2011, the ISAF approved changes to the Definitions and rules of Part 2 have been tested at many events, and they have worked exceptionally well. The changes to the RRS were universally praised by the competitors and event organizers alike.

Approval of this submission would significantly increase the safety of superyacht racing by having a proven, standard set of rules available for every superyacht event. Appendix SY would be listed with other specialized RRS appendices under the Experimental Rules and Additions page on the ISAF website for all superyacht event organizers to use.
