Racing Rules of Sailing

New Case based on Q&A E006

A submission from the Chairman of the Racing Rules Committee

Purpose or Objective

To propose a new case based on an ISAF Q&A.

Proposal

CASE XXX

Definition, Finish

Rule 28, Sailing the Course

Rule 32, Shortening or Abandoning after the Start

Rule 62.1(a), Redress

When the course is shortened at a rounding mark, the mark becomes a finishing mark. Rule 32.2(a) permits the race committee to position the vessel displaying flag S at either end of the finishing line. A boat must cross the line in accordance with the definition Finish, even if in so doing she leaves that mark on the side opposite the side on which she would have been required to leave it if the course had not been shortened.

Assumed Facts for Question 1

The sailing instructions state that all rounding marks, including the windward mark, are to be left to port. Due to insufficient wind the race committee shortens the course by displaying flag S (with two sounds) from a staff on a committee boat anchored near the windward mark.
The committee sets the finishing line as shown in the diagram, with the committee boat positioned to be the mark at the port end of the line. Boats A and B approach the finishing line, see flag S and sail the courses shown in the diagram.

**Question 1**
After the race committee signals shortened course, are boats still required to leave the windward mark to port and to ‘hook round’ it (as B does), or are they required to cross the finishing line from the course side (as A does)?

**Answer 1**
After the race committee signals shortened course, the windward mark is no longer a rounding mark. It becomes a finishing mark. To comply with rule 28, boats must finish in accordance with the definition Finish. Therefore, they must cross the finishing line from its course side. A finishes in accordance with the definition; B does not finish.

**Additional Assumed Facts for Question 2**
Boat B requests redress claiming that positioning the committee boat as shown in the diagram was an improper action of the race committee because it was not clear from reading the racing rules and the sailing instructions in which direction boats were required to cross the finishing line.

**Question 2**
Was it an improper action of the race committee to anchor the committee boat displaying flag S where it did?

**Answer 2**
No. When the course is shortened at a rounding mark, rule 32.2(a) permits the race committee to position the vessel displaying flag S at either end of the finishing line. Rule 28 clearly requires boats
to cross the finishing line in accordance with the definition Finish. The definition Finish cannot be changed by a sailing instruction (see rule 86.1).

If the committee boat displaying flag S had been anchored in a position that angled the finishing line so that boats could not easily determine in which direction they should cross the finishing line, that would have been an improper action of the race committee (see Case 82).

If the race committee had issued a sailing instruction that required boats to finish by crossing the finishing line by ‘hooking round’ the finishing mark as boat B did, that would have been an improper action (see Case 45).

**Current Position**

None. The case is new. However, it is based on current ISAF Q&A E006.

**Reason**

To comply with an item in the minutes of the 2012 Racing Rules Committee meeting in Dublin by proposing a new case based on current ISAF Q&A E006. At that meeting, the Racing Rules Committee recommended that that Q&A was sufficiently helpful and interesting to competitors and officials that it be proposed as a new case.