Racing Rules of Sailing

New Case based on Q&A M002

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

Rule 16, Changing Course

A boat changes course when the direction in which her bow is pointing changes. However, if a boat is moving astern through the water and then without changing the direction in which her bow is pointing begins to move forward, she changes course by 180°; and vice versa.

Assumed Facts for Question 1

The wind is from the southeast. A boat is moving forward through the water on starboard tack with her bow pointing directly east (90°). Without changing the direction in which her bow is pointing, she eases her sheets, her sails luff and her speed drops to zero. Later, she trims her sheets, fills her sails and begins to move forward. Initially she makes leeway and the direction in which she moves through the water is 70°, even though her bow is still pointing east.

Question 1

For the purposes of rule 16, when the boat begins to move forward while making leeway, does she change course?

Answer 1

No. Her course was 90° before she began to move, and it remains 90° after she begins to move forward.

Assumed Facts for Question 2

Without changing the direction in which her bow is pointing, a boat that had been moving astern through the water, changes the trim of her sails and begins to move forward through the water.

Question 2

When the boat begins to move forward, does she change course?
Answer 2

Yes. When a boat is moving forward through the water, her course is the direction in which her bow is pointing, but when she is moving astern through the water, her course is the direction in which her stern is pointing. Therefore, if a boat is moving astern through the water and then without changing the direction in which her bow is pointing begins to move forward, she changes course by 180°. Similarly, if a boat is moving forward and then without changing the direction in which her bow is pointing begins to move astern, she changes course by 180°.

Current Position

None. The case is new. However, it is based on current ISAF Q&A M002.

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 M002. 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.