Racing Rules of Sailing

Definition Obstruction, Rule J2.2(17) and SI L10

A submission from the Chairman of the Racing Rules Committee

Purpose or Objective
To make the Definition Obstruction, Rule J2.2(17) and SI L10 consistent with one another, and to permit the common practice of prohibiting boats from crossing a line designated as an obstruction.

Proposal
Change the definition Obstruction, rule J2.2(17) and SI L10 as follows:

Obstruction An object that a boat could not pass without changing course substantially, if she were sailing directly towards it and one of her hull lengths from it. An object that can be safely passed on only one side and an area or line so designated by the sailing instructions are also obstructions. However, a boat racing is not an obstruction to other boats unless they are required to keep clear of her, or, if rule 23 applies, avoid her. A vessel under way, including a boat racing, is never a continuing obstruction.

J2.2(17) description of any object, area or line designated by the race committee to be an obstruction (see the definition Obstruction), and any restriction on entering such an area or crossing such a line:

Appendix L
Describe each object, area or line by its location and any easily recognized details of appearance.

Objects, areas or lines that are obstructions
The following object, area or line is an obstruction areas are designated as obstructions: _____.
Boats shall not [enter that area] [cross that line].

Current Position
As above.

Reasons
1. The additions of ‘or line’ in the definition Obstruction, rule J2.2(17) and SI L10 permit the sailing instructions to make a line an obstruction and require boats not to cross it, a
reasonably common practice, but one that is, technically, not allowed because it changes the definition Obstruction, which is not permitted by rule 86.1.

2. The addition of ‘object to rule J2.2(17) and SI L10 makes them consistent with the second sentence of the definition Obstruction.

3. When an area or a line is designated as an obstruction, it is frequently desirable to prohibit boats from entering such an area or crossing such a line. The proposed changes permit that.