Racing Rules of Sailing

Rule 40

A submission from the Chairman of the Racing Rules Committee

Purpose or Objective

To change current rule 40 and update it with a number of proposals.

Proposal 1

Delete the text of rule 40 and replace it as follows:

40 PERSONAL FLOTATION DEVICES

40.1 Each competitor shall wear a personal flotation device except briefly while changing or adjusting clothing or personal equipment. Wet suits and dry suits are not personal flotation devices.

40.2 When rule 40.1 applies

(a) when flag Y is displayed afloat with one sound signal before or with the warning signal it applies while racing in that race.

(b) when flag Y is displayed ashore with one sound signal it shall apply at all times while afloat that day.

(c) when so stated in the sailing instructions or notice of race.

Current Position

40 PERSONAL FLOTATION DEVICES

When flag Y is displayed with one sound before or with the warning signal, competitors shall wear personal flotation devices, except briefly while changing or adjusting clothing or personal equipment. When flag Y is displayed ashore, this rule applies at all times while afloat. Wet suits and dry suits are not personal flotation devices.

Reasons

1. This proposal removes the currently ineffective penultimate sentence that does not actually require personal flotation devices to be worn at all times afloat.

2. The rule now specifies ‘each’ competitor. It could be argued in the current rule that the rule is not broken if some competitors on a boat wear a pfd.
3. The NoR or SI will simply need to state: ‘RRS 40.1 shall apply at all times while afloat.’ if that is wanted by the event.

4. There is no change in this proposal to the current rule with regards to when pfd may be worn, but it is clear that flag Y ashore applies for the whole day.

5. By making the rule apply to ‘that race’ in 40.2(a), if, for subsequent races the race committee decide flag Y is not necessary, they simply remove it and no other signal is needed.

Proposal 2a – If Proposal 1 is approved

Add the following new rule and renumber (c) in Proposal 1 rule 40.2 as (d).

(c) If flag Y over R is displayed afloat with one sound signal before or with the warning signal, rule 40.1 does not apply during that race.

Proposal 2b – If Proposal 1 is not approved

Add the following to current rule 40:

**However, if flag Y over R is displayed afloat with one sound signal before [or with] the warning signal, competitors are not required to wear personal flotation devices during that race.**

Current Position

None. The proposed rule is new.

Note: The order of rules 40.1 and 40.2 may be subject to editing.

Reasons

1. This proposal permits a Y flag ashore to be cancelled afloat.

2. ‘No Y flag’ at the warning signal was considered as it reduces the number of flags. However, that would make it mandatory for the race committee to display Y flag to keep the rule active. Should they forget to do that for any reason, safety may be compromised. This option would also cause confusion when a sailing instruction invokes the rule as the proposed Rule 40(c).

3. Under this proposal a race committee will never need to display either flag Y or flag Y over R if they stated when PFDs must be worn in the NoR or SIs.
4. Note: Appendix P also uses flag R, but similarly to Y over R, the 'R' reverses and existing signal. There is a remote possibility that a race committee would want to display R and Y over R at the warning signal, but O and R under appendix P almost exclusively apply to classes that will invoke 40(c)