

Racing Rules of Sailing

Rule 43

A submission from the Royal Yachting Association

Purpose or Objective

To mandate the use of quick release trapeze harnesses in order to increase the level of safety by decreasing the risk of entrapment via a fixed trapeze hook.

This submission contains 4 proposals. Proposals 1 and 4 are intended to be considered independently. Proposals 2 and 3 are relevant only if Proposal 1 is approved.

Proposal 1

Add new rule 43.1(c) as follows:

- 43.1 **(c) A trapeze harness worn by a competitor which may be used to support the competitor on a trapeze shall be of the quick release variety which allows the competitor to detach from the hook or other method of attachment at any time.**

Note: This rule does not take effect until 1st January 2023

Current Position

None.

Proposal 2

Amend rule 86.1(c) as follows:

- 86.1 (c) Class Rules may change only racing rules 42, **43.1(c)**, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53 and 54.

Current Position

See above.

Proposal 3

Amend rule 43.2 as follows:

- 43.2** ~~Rule 43.1(b) does~~ **Rules 43.1(b) and 43.1(c) do** not apply to boats required to be equipped with lifelines.

Current Position

See above.

Proposal 4

Amend rule 43.1(b) as follows

- 43.1** (b) Furthermore, a competitor's clothing and equipment shall not weigh more than 8 kilograms, excluding a hiking or trapeze harness and clothing (including footwear) worn only below the knee. Class rules or sailing instructions may specify a lower weight or a higher weight up to 10 kilograms. Class rules may include footwear and other clothing worn below the knee within that weight. A hiking or trapeze harness shall have positive buoyancy and shall not weigh more than ~~2-6~~ **6** kilograms, ~~except that class rules may specify a higher weight up to 4 kilograms.~~ Weights shall be determined as required by Appendix H.

Current Position

As above.

Reasons

1. There are numerous recorded and documented incidents, including fatalities, where a member of crew has become trapped due to the trapeze hook being entangled within a boats running rigging or standing rigging.
 2. In 2009 following a series of fatalities in 2007 and 2008, the RYA drafted a standard which has subsequently become a harmonised International Standard (ISO) which details the construction and testing requirements for a quick release mechanism for trapeze harnesses.
 3. At the 2017 29er Worlds, there was an incident involving a crew who became entrapped under the upturned hull after becoming entangled in the boats rigging.
 4. The introduction of a quick release mechanism for the trapeze harness will decrease the likelihood of an entrapment scenario as the crew will be able to detach themselves from the boat. It is intended to delay the introduction of any new rule 43 until 2023 to allow the industry to respond to this requirement.
 5. There are a number of products that are on the market which have a quick release function, but may not comply with ISO 10862 which has a requirement to release under a lateral
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loading. The intention, at least initially, is that new rule 43.1(c) includes all trapeze harnesses that have a quick release function, whether or not they comply with ISO 10862.

6. Reference proposal 4, the addition of a quick release mechanism is likely to increase the weight of the overall trapeze harness. Trapeze harnesses are also now carrying lumber support to protect the crew and therefore an increase in the maximum weight is required to support design changes. This will require less active class rule management, which is currently not happening.
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