Racing Rules of Sailing

Basic Principle Sportmanship, Rules 60.1(c), 60.2, 61.3, 63.1, 63.10, New Rule 44.4

A submission from the Chairman of the Racing Rules Committee

Purpose or Objective

To include in the RRS provision for breaches of rules that are subject to discretionary penalties.

Proposal – Alternate 1

Change the rules as follow:

SPORTSMANSHIP AND THE RULES

Competitors in the sport of sailing are governed by a body of rules that they are expected to follow and enforce. A fundamental principle of sportsmanship is that when a boat breaks a rule and is not exonerated she will promptly take a penalty, which may be to retire, or if the rules is subject to discretionary [or standard penalty], to acknowledge the breach.

Add new rule 60.1(c)

60.1 A boat may
(a) protest another boat, but not for an alleged breach of a rule of Part 2 or rule 31 unless she was involved in or saw the incident; or
(b) request redress.
(c) acknowledge breaking a rule subject to discretionary penalty.

Add to rule 61.3 Protest Time Limit

A boat that acknowledges breaking a rule subject to discretionary penalty shall notify the race committee within the protest time limit.

Change rule 63.1 last sentence - Requirement for a hearing

The protest committee shall hear all protests, decide all discretionary penalties and requests for redress that have been delivered to the race office unless it allows a protest or request to be withdrawn.

Add new rule 63.10

64.5 Discretionary Penalties
When a boat acknowledges breaking a rule subject to discretionary penalty the protest committee shall decide the appropriate penalty after hearing evidence from the boat and calling any witnesses it decides are appropriate.

Current Position

There is no provision for the [DP] other than the statement that the penalties are at the discretion of the protest committee.

Reasons

1. The rules now provide for discretionary penalties, however the basic principle does not recognise this and there is no provision in the rules for dealing with a boat that acknowledges a breach of such a rule.

2. The World Sailing Discretionary Penalty guidance will need to recognise these rule changes and ensure that a boat is assessed a lower penalty that if she had not acknowledged the breach.

Proposal – Alternative 2

Add new rule 44.4 as follows:

44.4 Taking a Penalty for Breaking a Rule Subject to Discretionary Penalty

When a boat breaks a rule subject to discretionary penalty, she takes a penalty by reporting her breach to the race committee at the finishing line, or if this is impracticable, at the first reasonable opportunity within the protest time limit.

Change rule 60.2 as follows:

60.2 A race committee may

(a) may protest a boat, but not as a result of information arising from a request for redress or an invalid protest, or from a report from a person with a conflict of interest other than the representative of the boat herself;

(b) shall protest a boat that reports to it that she has broken a rule subject to discretionary penalty;

(cb) may request redress for a boat; or

(de) may report to the protest committee requesting action under rule 69.2(b).

Current Position

Proposed rule 44.4 is new. Rule 60.2, as above.
Reasons

1. The Basic Principle, Sportsmanship and the Rules, states that ‘when a boat breaks a rule and is not exonerated she will promptly take a penalty, which may be to retire.’ When a rule is subject to a discretionary penalty (a ‘DP rule’), the current rules contain no provision for a boat that breaks such a rule to take a penalty. Rule 44 applies to “Penalties at the time of the incident.” Proposed new rule 44.4 provides a simple means for a boat that breaks a DP rule to take a penalty right after the incident.

2. Rule 63.1 states that a boat shall not be penalized without protest hearing. Therefore, in order to penalize a boat for breaking a DP rule, there must be a protest hearing. Proposed new rule 60.2(b) requires the race committee to protest a boat that reports to it that she broke a DP rule. However, the race committee’s role in the protest hearing will be short and easy. At the hearing, the race committee need only testify to the protest committee what was reported and when it was reported. After that, the race committee representative to the protest hearing could ask to be excused.

3. This proposal requires no change in the Basic Principle, Sportsmanship and the Rules. It is best for the sport to keep that principle simple and easy to remember. Given the principle stated in rule 63.1, the proposal specifies a straightforward procedure and only two rule changes to establish a process for penalizing a boat that admits to breaking a DP rule and chooses to take a penalty for her breach.