

Racing Rules of Sailing

Rule 20 and Terminology

A submission from the Chairman of the Racing Rules Committee

Purpose

To clarify rule 20 and the meaning of 'hail' as used in rules 20 and 61.1.

Proposal 1

20.1 Hailing

A boat may hail for *room* to tack and avoid a boat on the same *tack*. **However, she shall not hail unless** ~~but only if the hailing boat is~~

- (a) **she is** approaching an *obstruction* and will soon need to make a substantial course change to avoid it safely, and
- (b) **she is** sailing close-hauled or above.

In addition ~~However~~, she shall not hail if the *obstruction* is a *mark* and a boat that is *fetching* it would be required to change course as a result of the hail.

Proposal 2

20.2 Responding

- (a) After a boat hails, she shall give **a** ~~the~~ hailed boat time to respond.
- (b) **A** ~~The~~ hailed boat shall respond even if the hail breaks rule 20.1.
- (c) **A** ~~The~~ hailed boat shall respond either by tacking as soon as possible, or by immediately replying 'You tack' and then giving the hailing boat *room* to tack and avoid her.
- (d) When **a** ~~the~~ hailed boat responds, the hailing boat shall tack as soon as possible.
- (e) From the time a boat hails until she has tacked and avoided **a** ~~the~~ hailed boat, rule 18.2 does not apply between them.

20.3 Passing On a Hail to an Additional Boat

When a boat has been hailed for *room* to tack and she intends to respond by tacking, she may hail another boat on the same *tack* for *room* to tack and avoid her. She may hail even if her hail does not meet the conditions of rule 20.1. Rule 20.2 applies between her and **a** ~~the~~ boat she hails.

Proposal 3

In the Introduction, add a sentence to Terminology as follows:

Terminology A term used in the sense stated in the Definitions is printed in italics or, in preambles, in bold italics (for example, *racing* and ***racing***). ‘Racing rule’ means a rule in *The Racing Rules of Sailing*. ‘Boat’ means a sailboat and the crew on board; ‘vessel’ means any boat or ship. **A ‘hail’ consists of words spoken loudly enough that a boat to which the hail is directed can reasonably be expected to hear it.** ‘Race committee’ includes any person or committee performing a race committee function. A ‘change’ to a *rule* includes an addition to it or deletion of all or part of it. ‘National authority’ means an ISAF member national authority. Other words and terms are used in the sense ordinarily understood in nautical or general use.

Current Position

Rule 20 was changed in Palma in November 2014. If no further changes are made, rule 20 for the 2017-2020 RRS will be:

20 ROOM TO TACK AT AN OBSTRUCTION**20.1 Hailing**

A boat may hail for *room* to tack and avoid a boat on the same *tack*, but only if the hailing boat is

- (a) approaching an *obstruction* and will soon need to make a substantial course change to avoid it safely, and
- (b) sailing close-hauled or above.

However, she shall not hail if the *obstruction* is a *mark* and a boat that is *fetching* it would be required to change course as a result of the hail.

20.2 Responding

- (a) After a boat hails, she shall give the hailed boat time to respond.
- (b) The hailed boat shall respond even if the hail breaks rule 20.1.
- (c) The hailed boat shall respond either by tacking as soon as possible, or by immediately replying ‘You tack’ and then giving the hailing boat *room* to tack and avoid her.
- (d) When the hailed boat responds, the hailing boat shall tack as soon as possible.
- (e) From the time a boat hails until she has tacked and avoided the hailed boat, rule 18.2 does not apply between them.

20.3 Passing On a Hail to an Additional Boat

When a boat has been hailed for *room* to tack and she intends to respond by tacking, she may hail another boat on the same *tack* for *room* to tack and avoid her. She may hail even

if her hail does not meet the conditions of rule 20.1. Rule 20.2 applies between her and the boat she hails.

Reasons

Proposal 1: To improve the wording of the 2017 version of rule 20.1 approved in 2014 to make it completely clear that a boat that hails for room to tack when she is not in compliance with 20.1(a) and (b) does, indeed, break rule 20.1.

The proposed wording for rule 20.1 is similar to that used in rule 18.1. Using the same wording with the same meaning in two or more rules helps to make those rules easier to understand and easier to translate.

Proposal 2: These small changes help to make it clear that a boat's hail for room to tack can obligate more than one boat to respond under rule 20.2.

Proposal 3: To make it clear that a hail needs to be loud enough to be heard in the existing conditions.
