Racing Rules of Sailing

Definition Keep Clear

A submission from the Chairman of the Racing Rules Committee

Purpose or Objective

To make the definition apply to boats on a run whether they are on the same or opposite tacks.

Proposal

Delete the definition Keep Clear and replace with:

Keep Clear  A boat keeps clear of a right-of-way boat

(a)  if the right-of-way boat can sail her course with no need to take avoiding action and,
(b)  when the boats are overlapped, if the right-of-way boat can also change course in both
directions without immediately making contact.

Current Position

Keep Clear  One boat keeps clear of another if the other can sail her course with no need to take avoiding
action and, when the boats are overlapped on the same tack, if the leeward boat can change course in both
directions without immediately making contact with the windward boat.

Reasons

When two same tack boats are sailing alongside each other, the windward boat must give space,
commonly known as “wriggle room”, for the leeward boat to change course both towards her and
away from her. In the same circumstances it is logical, consistent and has safety advantages to
allow the same space to a starboard tack boat sailing downwind alongside a port tack boat.

This submission was prepared by the ISAF Section C Working Party.