

**Racing Rules of sailing**

**New Case**

A submission from US SAILING

**Purpose or Objective**

To provide a Case containing explanations of the definition Mark-Room as it applies in RRS 18

**Proposal**

**CASE XXX** (Appeal 105)

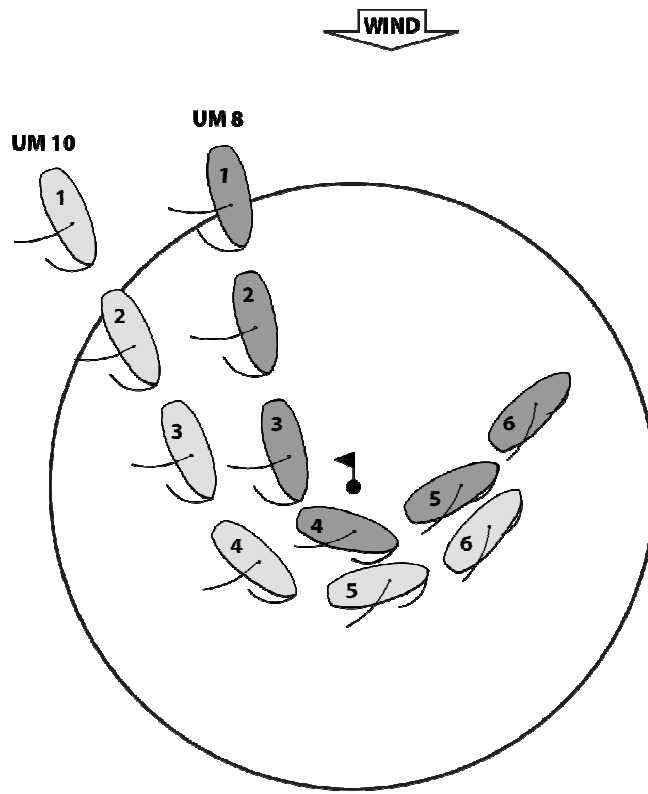
**Rule 18.2(b), Mark-Room: Giving Mark-Room  
Definitions, Mark-Room**

*In the definition Mark-Room, the phrase “room to sail to the mark” means space to sail in a seamanlike way to a position close to, and on the required side of, the mark. When the mark is abeam of the boat’s bow and she is close to it, she has arrived “at” it. While “at” the mark, the boat is entitled to room to sail her proper course.*

**Summary of the Facts**

UM8 and UM10, overlapped on port tack with UM8 inside, approached a leeward mark to be left to port and subsequently rounded it as shown in the diagram. UM8 protested UM10 under rule 18.2(b) for not giving her enough room to sail to the mark and round it. The protest committee decided that UM10 did give UM8 the room she was entitled to, both while she was sailing to the mark and while she was at the mark, and denied the protest. UM8 appealed.

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### Decision

The definition Mark-Room creates an important distinction between the room, as defined by the definition Room, to which a boat is entitled while she is sailing “to” a mark and the room to which she is entitled while “at” the mark. The phrase “*room* to sail to the *mark*” in the definition Mark-Room means space to sail in a seamanlike way to a position close to, and on the required side of, the mark. While “at” the mark, however, she is entitled to room to sail her proper course. The transition between the two types of room occurs at the moment the boat arrives “at” the mark. In this case, *UM8* is “at” the mark in position 3 in the diagram because the mark is abeam of her bow and she is close to the mark.

We agree with the protest committee’s application of rule 18.2(b) and the two components of the definition Mark-Room. Therefore, the appeal is denied and the decision of the protest committee is upheld.

December 2010

### Current Position

None.

Reason

The phrase “at the mark” in the definition Mark-Room is new to the RRS and has given rise to discussion and debate among judges and competitors alike. Questions about the precise meaning of this phrase have no obvious answers in the rules themselves, and dictionaries provide so many meanings of “at” that they are of no practical use for purposes of the right-of-way rules.

There are two basic questions: (1) exactly when does a boat arrive “at the mark,” and (2) exactly when does she cease to be “at the mark”? This proposed Case answers the first question, and the proposed Case in Submission xxx –xx (US SAILING Appeal 106) answers the second one.

Although the usefulness of this Case if adopted may not extend beyond 2012 if rule 18 is substantially revised, it nevertheless will be very important to competitors and officials during 2012, the year of the Olympic Regatta and the many national, continental and international championships that will be held in 2012, including some that national authorities will use as Olympic selection events. Without official international interpretations that only ISAF can provide, there will be no reliable guidance concerning how the definition Mark-Room applies in rule 18.