

# ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service



**C 003**

**Q&A 2010-33**

*Published: 6 October 2010*

## Situation

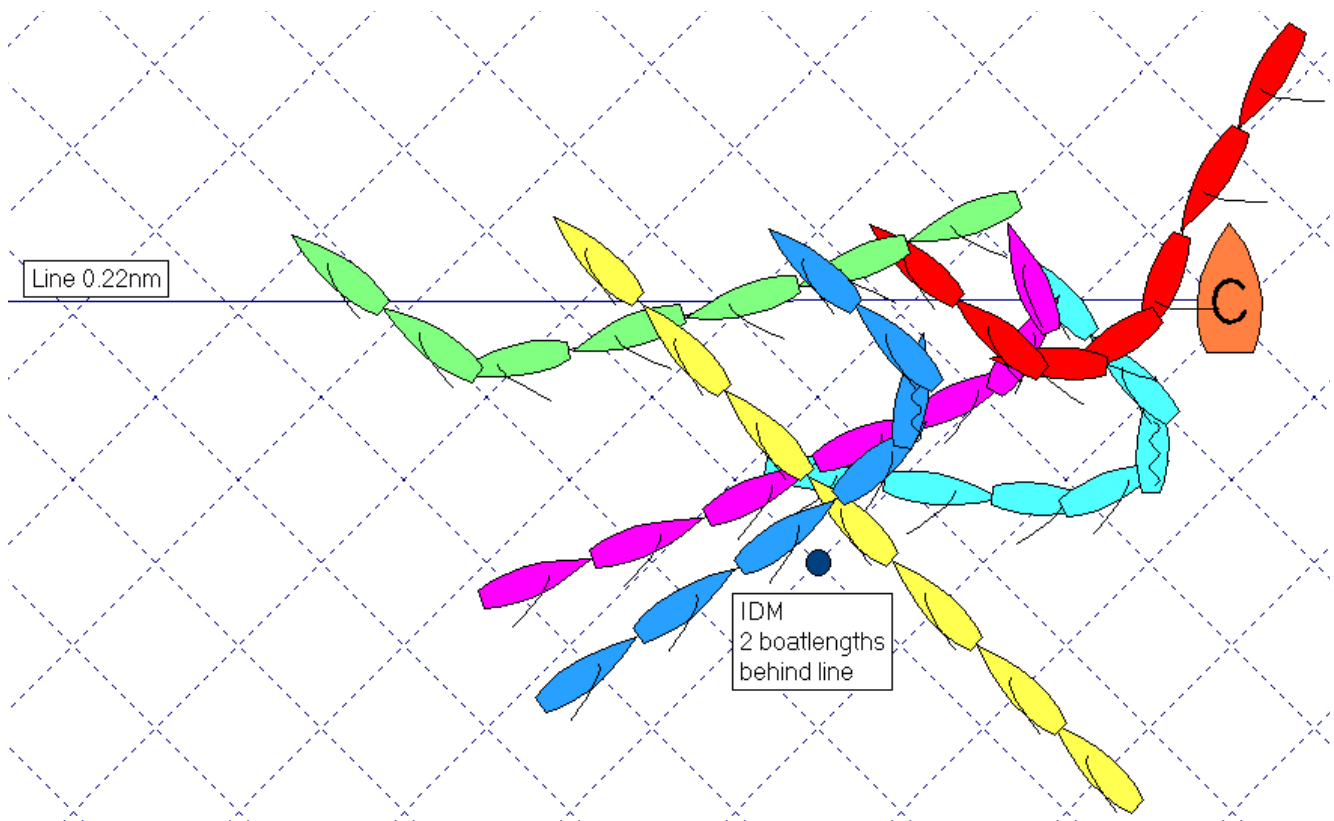
The sailing instructions at an event state:

‘An inner limit mark may be laid, but not necessarily on the starting line. If laid, yachts shall pass the inner limit mark to starboard when starting’.

Note: The diagram shows different boats, but they are all independent examples. No boats are OCS at the starting signal, and no special starting rule applies.

## Question

Which, if any, of the various boats in the attached diagram (green, blue, red, yellow, magenta, cyan), break rule 28.2.



## Answer

None. Although boats are racing from the preparatory signal, a starting mark (including a starting line limit mark which are sometimes laid to restrict the length of the actual starting line) has no required side before a boat is approaching the starting line from its pre-start side to start (rule 28.2). At that time, the starting marks get a required side, although they don't yet 'begin, bound or end' the leg a boat is on'.

The string test does not start until the boat starts and rule 28.1 says that 'after starting and until finishing ..... 'the string must pass each mark on the required side.

For a starting line inner (or outer) limit mark to have a required side, a boat must not be able to pass between it and the starting line if it is on the pre-start side of the starting line or be somewhere within a reasonable distance on the course side of the starting line.

The sailing instruction for this event uses the words 'yachts shall pass the inner limit mark to starboard when starting'.

Therefore, if a boat can pass and clear the starting line limit mark before she actually starts, as in each of the situations described here, she can not be penalised for breaking that instruction and would be exonerated due to the error in the placement of the mark by the race committee.