

Racing Rules of Sailing

New Case based on Q&A B003

A submission from the Chairman of the Racing Rules Committee

Purpose or Objective

To propose a new case based on an ISAF Q&A.

Proposal

CASE XXX

Definition, Room

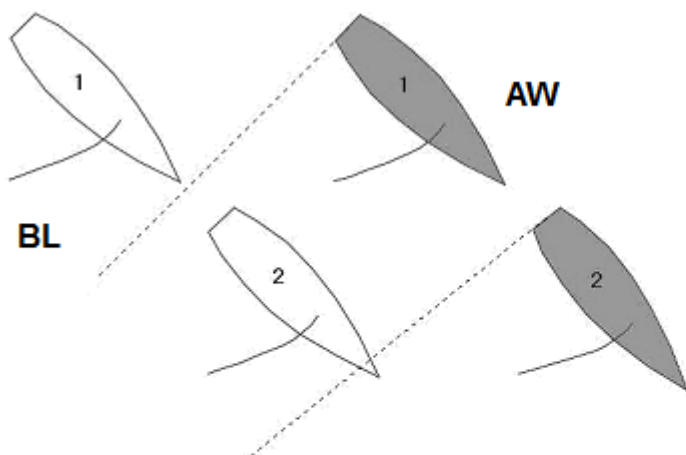
Rule 19.2(a), Room to Pass an Obstruction: Giving Room at an Obstruction

Rule 19.2(b), Room to Pass an Obstruction: Giving Room at an Obstruction

Rule 21(a), Exoneration

Rule 64.1(a), Decisions: Penalties and Exoneration

At any point in time while two boats are approaching an obstruction, the right-of-way boat at that moment may choose to pass the obstruction on either side provided that she can then comply with the applicable rules.



Assumed Facts

While racing, boats AW and BL are approaching an obstruction that can be passed on either side. Both boats are heading towards the middle of the obstruction. At position 1, AW is clear ahead by a very narrow margin and on a track to windward of BL. At position 2, they have become overlapped with AW to windward of BL.

At position 1, AW is clear ahead and thus has right-of-way under rule 12. When the overlap between them begins, BL becomes the right-of-way boat under rule 11.

Question

Rule 19.2(a) states that the right-of-way boat may choose to pass the obstruction on either side. How can we determine which boat has the right to choose in this situation?

Answer

At any point in time, the right-of-way boat at that moment is entitled by rule 19.2(a) to choose on which side she will pass the obstruction. Therefore, while AW is clear ahead of BL, she has the right to choose to pass the obstruction on either side. However, after the boats become overlapped, AW has lost that right, and at that time BL has the right to choose.

When a right-of-way boat acts to implement a choice she has made under rule 19.2(a), she must comply with any applicable rules of Sections A and B.

In the situation shown in the diagram, if after position 2 BL chooses to pass to leeward of the obstruction and if the boats remain overlapped, BL must give AW room between herself and the obstruction as required by rule 19.2(b). However, if, contrary to what is shown in the diagram, the overlap were to be established after AW was already committed to passing to leeward of the obstruction and BL was unable to give her room to do so, BL fails to give AW room to keep clear and breaks rule 15 (see the definition Room). AW is then exonerated under rule 64.1(a) for breaking rule 11.

If the boats remain overlapped after position 2 and BL chooses to pass to windward of the obstruction, BL must comply with rule 17 and, until the boats begin to pass the obstruction on the same side, with rule 16.1. AW must keep clear as required by rule 11. If AW is unable to give BL room between herself and the obstruction from the time the overlap began, BL breaks rule 16.1. BL cannot be exonerated under rule 21(a) because she is not sailing within room to which she is entitled. AW is then exonerated under rule 64.1(a) for breaking rule 11.

Current Position

None. The case is new. However, it is based on current ISAF Q&A B003.

Reason

To comply with an item in the minutes of the 2012 Racing Rules Committee meeting in Dublin by proposing a new case based on current ISAF Q&A B003. At that meeting, the Racing Rules Committee recommended that that Q&A was sufficiently helpful and interesting to competitors and officials that it be proposed as a new case.
