

ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service



N 003

Q&A 2013-029

Published: 5 August 2013 (revised January 15, 2014)

Situation

Q&A 2013-028 N002 confirms that the common practice of preparing spinnakers using elastic or wool bands at intervals to prevent them from filling during the hoist breaks rule 55 when the spinnakers are hoisted and sheeted and the bands break and end up in the water, even if the material used is bio-degradable.

Question

What can be done to prevent boats from being protested under rule 55 each time they hoist spinnakers?

Answer

Rule 55 was introduced to support a development of sailing in a direction towards a higher level of environmental responsibility. Event organizers and officials should also comply with the basic principle in the rulebook about environmental responsibility. Simply deleting rule 55 is the opposite of that.

Boats can use different systems when hoisting a spinnaker other than elastic bands or wool (i.e. snuffers or socks). However, if the OA of an event considers it is advisable to allow the use of elastic or wool bands for reasons of safety or proper seamanship, **and provided that no national or local law or regulation is broken**, they may change rule 55 by, for example, including in the notice of race and sailing instructions words to the effect of:

Notice of Race

RRS 55 will be changed in the sailing instructions by adding the following sentence to the rule: 'However, discarding elastic or wool bands when setting a sail will not be considered a breach of rule 55.'

Sailing Instructions

RRS 55 is changed by adding the following sentence to the rule: 'However, discarding elastic or wool bands when setting a sail will not be considered a breach of rule 55.'