

# **THE RACING RULES OF SAILING**

**for**

**2013–2016**

Basic Rules needed to  
get around a race  
course\*



# BASIC PRINCIPLES

## SPORTSMANSHIP AND THE RULES

Competitors in the sport of sailing are governed by a body of rules that they are expected to follow and enforce. A fundamental principle of sportsmanship is that when competitors break a rule they will promptly take a penalty, which may be to retire.

## PART 1 FUNDAMENTAL RULES

- 2 FAIR SAILING
  - A boat and her owner shall compete in compliance with recognized principles of sportsmanship and fair play. A boat may be penalized under this rule only if it is clearly established that these principles have been violated. A disqualification under this rule shall not be excluded from the boat's series score.

## PART 2 WHEN BOATS MEET

- **SECTION A RIGHT OF WAY**
- **10 ON OPPOSITE TACKS**
  - When boats are on opposite *tacks*, a *port-tack* boat shall *keep clear* of a *starboard-tack* boat.
- **11 ON THE SAME TACK, OVERLAPPED**
  - When boats are on the same *tack* and *overlapped*, a *windward* boat shall *keep clear* of a *leeward* boat.
- **12 ON THE SAME TACK, NOT OVERLAPPED**
  - When boats are on the same *tack* and not *overlapped*, a boat *clear astern* shall *keep clear* of a boat *clear ahead*.
- **13 WHILE TACKING**
  - After a boat passes head to wind, she shall *keep clear* of other boats until she is on a close-hauled course. During that time rules 10, 11 and 12 do not apply. If two boats are subject to this rule at the same time, the one on the other's *port* side or the one astern shall *keep clear*.

## SECTION B GENERAL LIMITATIONS

- **14 AVOIDING CONTACT**
  - A boat shall avoid contact with another boat if reasonably possible. However, a right-of-way boat or one entitled to *room* or *mark-room*
    - (a) need not act to avoid contact until it is clear that the other boat is not keeping clear or giving *room* or *mark-room*, and
    - (b) shall be exonerated if she breaks this rule and the contact does not cause damage or injury.
- **15 ACQUIRING RIGHT OF WAY**
  - When a boat acquires right of way, she shall initially give the other boat *room to keep clear*, unless she acquires right of way because of the other boat's actions.
- **16 CHANGING COURSE**
  - 16.1 When a right-of-way boat changes course, she shall give the other boat *room to keep clear*.
  - 16.2 In addition, when after the starting signal a *port-tack* boat is keeping clear by sailing to pass astern of a *starboard-tack* boat, the *starboard-tack* boat shall not change course if as a result the *port-tack* boat would immediately need to change course to continue keeping clear.
- **17 ON THE SAME TACK; PROPER COURSE**

- If a boat *clear astern* becomes *overlapped* within two of her hull lengths to *leeward* of a boat on the same *tack*, she shall not sail above her *proper course* while they remain on the same *tack* and *overlapped* within that distance, unless in doing so she promptly sails *astern* of the other boat. This rule does not apply if the *overlap* begins while the *windward* boat is required by rule 13 to *keep clear*.

## • SECTION C AT MARKS AND OBSTRUCTIONS

*Section C rules do not apply at a starting mark surrounded by navigable water or at its anchor line from the time boats are approaching them to start until they have passed them.*

### • 18 MARK-ROOM

- 18.1 When Rule 18 Applies
- Rule 18 applies between boats when they are required to leave a *mark* on the same side and at least one of them is in the *zone*. However, it does not apply
  - (a) between boats on opposite *tacks* on a beat to *windward*,
  - (b) between boats on opposite *tacks* when the *proper course* at the *mark* for one but not both of them is to *tack*,
  - (c) between a boat approaching a *mark* and one leaving it, or
  - (d) if the *mark* is a continuing *obstruction*, in which case rule 19 applies.
- 18.2 Giving Mark-Room
  - (a) When boats are *overlapped* the outside boat shall give the inside boat *mark-room*, unless rule 18.2(b) applies.
  - (b) If boats are *overlapped* when the first of them reaches the *zone*, the outside boat at that moment shall thereafter give the inside boat *mark-room*. If a boat is *clear ahead* when she reaches the *zone*, the boat *clear astern* at that moment shall thereafter give her *mark-room*.
  - (c) When a boat is required to give *mark-room* by rule 18.2(b),
    - (1) she shall continue to do so even if later an *overlap* is broken or a new *overlap* begins;
    - (2) if she becomes *overlapped* inside the boat entitled to *mark-room*, she shall also give that boat *room* to sail her *proper course* while they remain *overlapped*. However, if the boat entitled to *mark-room* passes head to wind or leaves the *zone*, rule 18.2(b) ceases to apply.
  - (d) If there is reasonable doubt that a boat obtained or broke an *overlap* in time, it shall be presumed that she did not.
  - (e) If a boat obtained an inside *overlap* from *clear astern* or by *tacking* to *windward* of the other boat and, from the time the *overlap* began, the outside boat has been unable to give *markroom*, she is not required to give it.
- 18.3 Tacking in the Zone
  - If a boat in the *zone* passes head to wind and is then on the same *tack* as a boat that is *fetching* the *mark*, rule 18.2 does not thereafter apply between them. The boat that changed *tack* (a) shall not cause the other boat to sail above close-hauled to avoid contact or prevent the other boat from passing the *mark* on the required side, and (b) shall give *mark-room* if the other boat becomes *overlapped* inside her.
- 18.4 Gybing
  - When an inside *overlapped* right-of-way boat must gybe at a *mark* to sail her *proper course*, until she gybes she shall sail no farther from the *mark* than needed to sail that course. Rule 18.4 does not apply at a gate *mark*.

• **SECTION D OTHER RULES**

When rule 22 or 23 applies between two boats, Section A rules do not.

• **22 STARTING ERRORS; TAKING PENALTIES; MOVING ASTERN**

- 22.1 A boat sailing towards the pre-start side of the starting line or one of its extensions after her starting signal to start or to comply with rule 30.1 shall *keep clear* of a boat not doing so until she is completely on the pre-start side.
- 22.2 A boat taking a penalty shall *keep clear* of one that is not.
- 22.3 A boat moving astern through the water by backing a sail shall *keep clear* of one that is not.

**PART 3 CONDUCT OF A RACE**

• **26 STARTING RACES**

Races shall be started by using the following signals. Times shall be taken from the visual signals; the absence of a sound signal shall be disregarded.

Minutes before starting signal	Visual signal	Sound signal	Means
5	Class flag	One	Warning signal
4	P I, Z, Z with I, or black flag	One	Preparatory signal
1	Preparatory flag removed	One long	One minute
0	Class flag removed	One	Starting signal

• **28 SAILING THE COURSE**

- 28.1 A boat shall start, sail the course described in the sailing instructions and finish. While doing so, she may leave on either side a *mark* that does not begin, bound or end the leg she is sailing. After finishing she need not cross the finishing line completely.
- 28.2 A string representing a boat's track from the time she begins to approach the starting line from its pre-start side to start until she *finishes* shall, when drawn taut,
  - (a) pass each *mark* on the required side and in the correct order,
  - (b) touch each rounding *mark*, and
  - (c) pass between the *marks* of a gate from the direction of the previous *mark*.
- She may correct any errors to comply with this rule, provided she has not finished.

• **29 RECALLS**

- 29.1 Individual Recall
  - When at a boat's starting signal any part of her hull, crew or equipment is on the course side of the starting line or she must comply with rule 30.1, the race committee shall promptly display flag X with one sound. The flag shall be displayed until all such boats have sailed completely to the pre-start side of the starting line or one of its extensions and have complied with rule 30.1 if it applies, but no later than four minutes after the starting signal or one minute before any later starting signal, whichever is earlier. If rule 30.3 applies this rule does not.
- 29.2 General Recall

- When at the starting signal the race committee is unable to identify boats that are on the course side of the starting line or to which rule 30 applies, or there has been an error in the starting procedure, the race committee may signal a general recall (display the First Substitute with two sounds). The warning signal for a new start for the recalled class shall be made one minute after the First Substitute is removed (one sound), and the starts for any succeeding classes shall follow the new start.
- **31 TOUCHING A MARK**
  - While *racing*, a boat shall not touch a starting *mark* before starting, a *mark* that begins, bounds or ends the leg of the course on which she is sailing, or a finishing *mark* after finishing.

## **PART 4 OTHER REQUIREMENTS WHEN RACING**

- **44 PENALTIES AT THE TIME OF AN INCIDENT**
  - 44.1 Taking a Penalty
    - A boat may take a Two-Turns Penalty when she may have broken one or more rules of Part 2 in an incident while *racing*. She may take a One-Turn Penalty when she may have broken rule 31.
    - Alternatively, sailing instructions may specify the use of the Scoring Penalty or some other penalty, in which case the specified penalty shall replace the One-Turn and the Two-Turns Penalty. However,
      - (a) when a boat may have broken a rule of Part 2 and rule 31 in the same incident she need not take the penalty for breaking rule 31;
      - (b) if the boat caused injury or serious damage or, despite taking a penalty, gained a significant advantage in the race or series by her breach her penalty shall be to retire.
  - 44.2 One-Turn and Two-Turns Penalties
    - After getting well clear of other boats as soon after the incident as possible, a boat takes a One-Turn or Two-Turns Penalty by promptly making the required number of turns in the same direction, each turn including one *tack* and one gybe. When a boat takes the penalty at or near the finishing line, she shall sail completely to the course side of the line before finishing.

## **PART 5 PROTESTS, REDRESS, HEARINGS, MISCONDUCT AND APPEALS**

- **SECTION A PROTESTS; REDRESS; RULE 69 ACTION**
- **60 RIGHT TO PROTEST; RIGHT TO REQUEST REDRESS OR RULE 69 ACTION**
  - 60.1 A boat may
    - (a) protest another boat, but not for an alleged breach of a rule of Part 2 or rule 31 unless she was involved in or saw the incident; or
    - (b) request redress.
- **61 PROTEST REQUIREMENTS**
  - 61.1 Informing the Protestee
    - (a) A boat intending to *protest* shall inform the other boat at the first reasonable opportunity. When her protest will concern an incident in the racing area that she was involved in or saw, she shall hail 'Protest' and conspicuously display a red flag at the first reasonable opportunity for each. She shall display the flag until she is no longer *racing*. However,
      - (1) if the other boat is beyond hailing distance, the protesting boat need not hail but she shall inform the other boat at the first reasonable opportunity;
      - (2) if the hull length of the protesting boat is less than 6 meters, she need not display a red flag;
      - (3) if the incident was an error by the other boat in sailing the course, she need not hail or display a red flag but she shall inform the other boat before that boat *finishes* or at the first reasonable opportunity after she *finishes*;

- (4) if the incident results in damage or injury that is obvious to the boats involved and one of them intends to protest, the requirements of this rule do not apply to her, but she shall attempt to inform the other boat within the time limit of rule 61.3.

- **62 REDRESS**

- 62.1 A request for redress or a protest committee's decision to consider redress shall be based on a claim or possibility that a boat's score in a race or series has been or may be, through no fault of her own, made significantly worse by
  - (a) an improper action or omission of the race committee, protest committee, organizing authority, equipment inspection committee or measurement committee for the event, but not by a protest committee decision when the boat was a *party* to the hearing;
  - (b) injury or physical damage because of the action of a boat that was breaking a rule of Part 2 or of a vessel not *racing* that was required to keep clear;
  - (c) giving help (except to herself or her crew) in compliance with rule 1.1; or
  - (d) an action of a boat, or a member of her crew, that resulted in a penalty under rule 2 or a penalty or warning under rule 69.2(c).
- 62.2 A request shall be in writing and identify the reason for making it. If the request is based on an incident in the racing area, it shall be delivered to the race office within the protest time limit or two hours after the incident, whichever is later. Other requests shall be delivered as soon as reasonably possible after learning of the reasons for making the request. The protest committee shall extend the time if there is good reason to do so. No red flag is required.





## DEFINITIONS

*A term used as stated below is shown in italic type or, in preambles, in bold italic type.*

**Abandon** - A race that a race committee or *protest* committee *abandons* is void but may be resailed.

**Clear Astern and Clear Ahead; Overlap** - One boat is *clear astern* of another when her hull and equipment in normal position are behind a line abeam from the aftermost point of the other boat's hull and equipment in normal position. The other boat is *clear ahead*. They *overlap* when neither is *clear astern*. However, they also *overlap* when a boat between them *overlaps* both.

These terms always apply to boats on the same *tack*. They do not apply to boats on opposite *tacks* unless rule 18 applies or both boats are sailing more than ninety degrees from the true wind.

**Fetching** - A boat is *fetching* a *mark* when she is in a position to pass to *windward* of it and leave it on the required side without changing *tack*.

**Finish** - A boat *finishes* when any part of her hull, or crew or equipment in normal position, crosses the finishing line from the course side. However, she has not finished if after crossing the finishing line she

- (a) takes a penalty under rule 44.2,
- (b) corrects an error under rule 28.2 made at the line, or
- (c) continues to sail the course.

**Interested Party** - A person who may gain or lose as a result of a *protest* committee's decision, or who has a close personal interest in the decision.

**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.

**Leeward and Windward** - A boat's *leeward* side is the side that is or, when she is head to wind, was away from the wind. However, when sailing by the lee or directly downwind, her *leeward* side is the side on which her mainsail lies. The other side is her *windward* side. When two boats on the same *tack* *overlap*, the one on the *leeward* side of the other is the *leeward* boat. The other is the *windward* boat.

**Mark** - An object the sailing instructions require a boat to leave on a specified side, and a race committee boat surrounded by navigable water from which the starting or finishing line extends. An anchor line or an object attached accidentally to a *mark* is not part of it.

**Mark-Room** - *Room* for a boat to leave a *mark* on the required side. Also,

- (a) *room* to sail to the *mark* when her *proper course* is to sail close to it, and
- (b) *room* to round the *mark* as necessary to sail the course.

However, *mark-room* for a boat does not include *room* to *tack* unless she is *overlapped* inside and to *windward* of the boat required to give *mark-room* and she would be *fetching* the *mark* after her *tack*.

**Obstruction** - An object that a boat could not pass without changing course substantially, if she were sailing directly towards it and one of her hull lengths from it. An object that can be safely passed on only one side and an area so designated by the sailing instructions are also *obstructions*. However, a

boat *racing* is not an *obstruction* to other boats unless they are required to *keep clear* of her or, if rule 23 applies, avoid her. A vessel under way, including a boat *racing*, is never a continuing *obstruction*.

**Overlap** - See *Clear Astern and Clear Ahead; Overlap*.

**Party** - A *party* to a hearing is

- (a) for a *protest* hearing: a *protestor*, a *protestee*;
- (b) for a request for redress: a boat requesting redress or for which redress is requested, a race committee acting under rule 60.2(b);
- (c) for a request for redress under rule 62.1(a): the body alleged to have made an improper action or omission;
- (d) a boat or a competitor that may be penalized under rule 69.2.

However, the *protest* committee is never a *party*.

**Postpone** - A *postponed* race is delayed before its scheduled start but may be started or *abandoned* later.

**Proper Course** - A course a boat would sail to finish as soon as possible in the absence of the other boats referred to in the rule using the term. A boat has no *proper course* before her starting signal.

**Protest** - An allegation made under rule 61.2 by a boat, a race committee or a *protest* committee that a boat has broken a rule.

**Racing** - A boat is *racing* from her preparatory signal until she *finishes* and clears the finishing line and *marks* or retires, or until the race committee signals a general recall, *postponement* or *abandonment*.

**Room** - The space a boat needs in the existing conditions, including space to comply with her obligations under the rules of Part 2 and rule 31, while maneuvering promptly in a seamanlike way.

**Rule** - (a) The rules in this book, including the Definitions, Race Signals, Introduction, preambles and the rules of relevant appendices, but not titles;  
(b) ISAF Regulation 19, Eligibility Code; Regulation 20, Advertising Code; Regulation 21, Anti-Doping Code; and Regulation 22, Sailor Classification Code;  
(c) the prescriptions of the national authority, unless they are changed by the sailing instructions in compliance with the national authority's prescription, if any, to rule 88.2;  
(d) the class rules (for a boat *racing* under a handicap or rating system, the rules of that system are 'class rules');  
(e) the notice of race;  
(f) the sailing instructions; and  
(g) any other documents that govern the event.

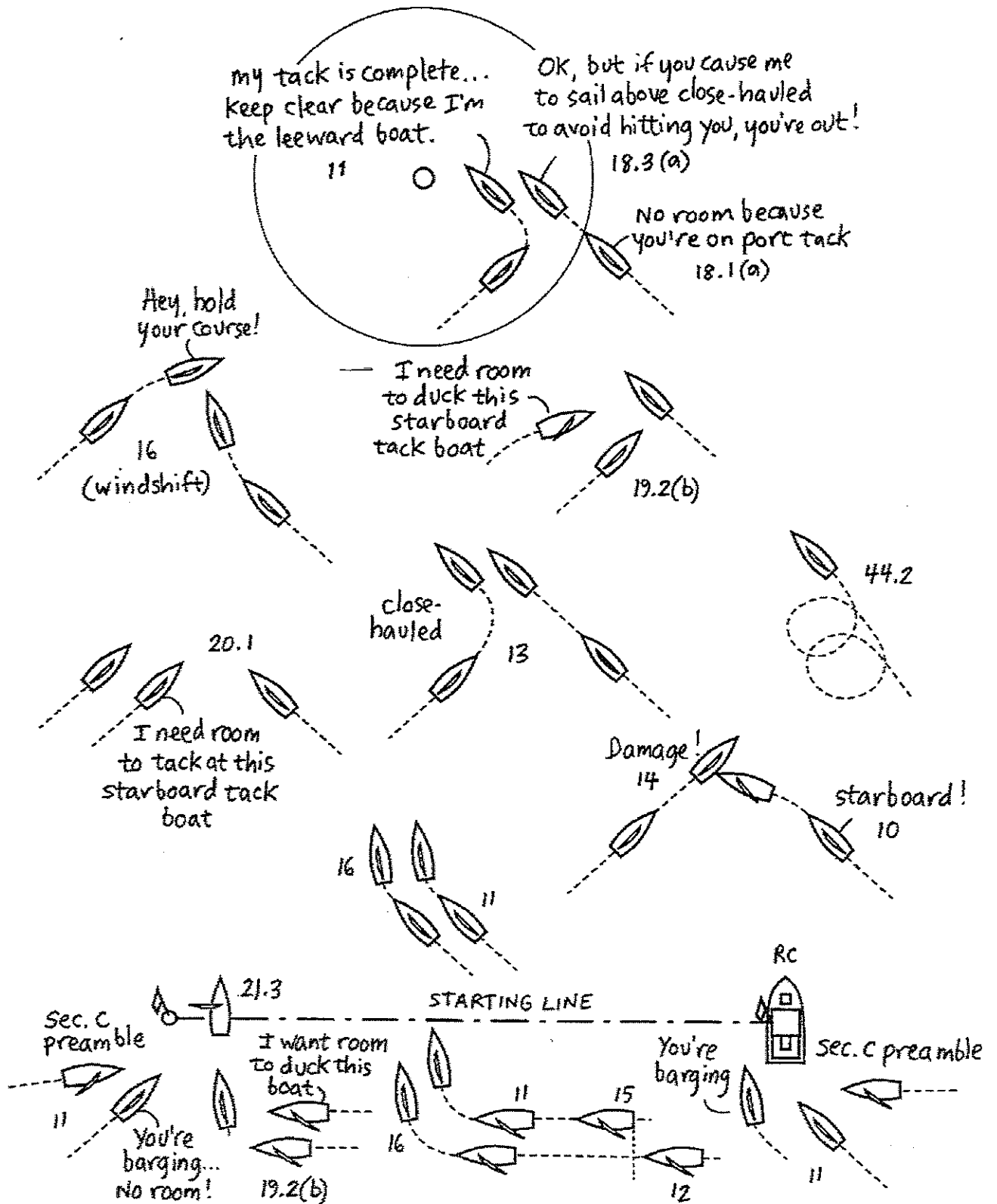
**Start** - A boat *starts* when, having been entirely on the pre-start side of the starting line at or after her starting signal, and having complied with rule 30.1 if it applies, any part of her hull, crew or equipment crosses the starting line in the direction of the first *mark*.

**Tack, Starboard or Port** - A boat is on the *tack*, *starboard* or *port*, corresponding to her *windward* side.

**Windward** - See *Leeward and Windward*.

**Zone** - The area around a *mark* within a distance of three hull lengths of the boat nearer to it. A boat is in the *zone* when any part of her hull is in the *zone*.

# AN OVERVIEW OF THE RULES...



# ...FROM START TO FINISH

