

A QUICK OVERVIEW of the SIGNIFICANT RULE CHANGES in the 2005-2008 RACING RULES OF SAILING

The following is a list of the significant changes in the 2005-2008 edition of The Racing Rules of Sailing (RRS). These are changes from the 2001-2004 edition of the RRS. NOTE: These brief summaries are not intended to be actual representations of the rules; nor is this a complete list of all the changes in the 2005-2008 RRS.

Portions of this document are excerpted from Dave Perry's 'Understanding the Racing Rules of Sailing Through 2008' available from US SAILING by calling 1-800-US-SAIL-1 or ordering on-line from <http://www.ussailing.org>".

Preamble to Part 2 (When Boats Meet): The preamble now clarifies that when a racing boat meets a boat having no intention of racing, the racing boat is required to comply with the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (IRPCAS) or government right-of-way rules, or risk disqualification. However only the race or protest committee can protest the racing boat.

Rule 14 (Avoiding Contact): The rule clarifies that a right-of-way boat that breaks rule 14 can be penalized when the contact causes injury to a person.

Rule 16.2 (Changing Course): This rule now applies only when P is keeping clear by passing astern of S. If P is crossing ahead of S (upwind or downwind), S may change course and make P "immediately" change course to continue keeping clear provided P can do so in a "seamanlike" way.

Rule 19.1 (Room to Tack at an Obstruction): Now, a boat that hails for room to tack when it does not need to make a substantial course change to safely avoid the obstruction breaks rule 19.1. The boat being hailed must still respond to the hail, but she can now protest under rule 19.1 when she thinks the hail was unfounded.

Rule 25 (Notice of Race, Sailing Instructions and Signals): Now it is mandatory that the notice of race, as well as the sailing instructions, be made available to each boat before a race.

Rule 30.1 (Round-an-End Rule) as well as rule 26 (Starting Races) and Race Signals mean that the I flag, when used, is flown as a preparatory signal (i.e. it cannot be flown before a preparatory signal). The same is true for the Z flag (rule 30.2, 20% Penalty Rule) and the black flag (rule 30.3, Black Flag Rule).

Rule 30.3 (Black Flag Rule): Now if the race committee intends to disqualify a boat for breaking rule 30.3 and there is a general recall, the race committee must display her sail number *before* the next warning signal for that race. The same is true if the race is abandoned after the starting signal.

Rule 31.2 (Touching a Mark): Once a boat that has touched a mark has done one turn that includes a tack and a gybe (in either order), it may continue in the race; i.e., it does not need to do a complete 360 degree turn.

Rule 32.2 (Shortening or Abandoning After the Start): Now the race committee can shorten a race at a gate (the finishing line is between the gate marks), or at a line boats are required to cross at the end of each lap.

Rule 33(a)(2) (Changing the Next Leg of the Course): Now instead of displaying the new compass bearing when changing a mark, the race committee may use a green triangular flag or board for a change to starboard, or a red rectangular flag or board for a change to port (think of channel marker shapes and colors).

Rule 40.2 (Personal Buoyancy; Harness): As of January 1, 2006, trapeze and hiking harnesses must have a device that allows competitors to quickly release themselves from the boat at any time while in use.

Rule 41 (Outside Help): Rule 41 now “legalizes” many things that were common occurrences in the past, such as listening to a weather radio during a race or having the race committee hail your sail number 30 seconds before the starting signal when the “Round-an-End” rule was in effect, or someone remind you which way to round a mark or point out seaweed on your rudder during a race.

Rule 42 (Propulsion): “Sculling” has been redefined to include repeated “forceful” movement of the helm, regardless of its effect. Furthermore, any repeated helm movement that propels the boat forward is also “sculling.” “Sculling” is now permitted when a boat is above close-hauled and has little steerageway and is trying to turn back down to close-hauled.

Rule 44 (Penalties for Breaking Rules of Part 2): A boat no longer needs to do a complete 720 degree turn to take a penalty for possibly breaking a rule. Once a boat has done two turns in the same direction, that includes two tacks and two gybes, it may continue in the race; this is now called a Two-Turns Penalty (rule 44.2). Note that a boat that may have broken a rule and in the incident has caused injury (to anyone, including her own crew) must now retire from the race; she is not entitled to do a Two-Turns Penalty (rule 44.1).

Rule 60 (Right to Protest; Right to Request Redress or Rule 69 Action): Rules 60.2 and 60.3 state that the race or protest committee cannot protest a boat based on information learned in a request for redress, though the protest committee can always protest a boat if it learns (in any way) that a boat was involved in an incident that may have resulted in injury or serious damage.

Rule 61.1(a)(3) (Protest Requirements): In an incident in which it is obvious to the boats involved that there was damage or injury, the boats involved do not need to say “Protest” or fly a protest flag to protest; they simply have to inform the other of their intent to protest within the time limit for lodging a protest.

Rule 62.1(a) (Redress): The actions or omissions of the organizing authority can now be the subject of a redress request.

Rule 63.7 (Conflict between Rules): this new rule instructs protest committees to resolve a conflict between a notice of race and a sailing instruction in the way which provides the fairest result for all boats affected.

Rule 69.1(b)(2) (Allegations of Gross Misconduct; Action by a Protest Committee): If the protest committee decides to remove the boat from a race or races, it “disqualifies” the boat; and furthermore a disqualification under this rule is now non-discardable.

Rule 75.3 (a US prescription to rule 75, Entering a Race): The organizing authority can no longer require a competitor to assume any liabilities of the organizing authority, race committee, protest committee, host club, sponsors, or any other organization or official involved with the event (commonly referred to as an ‘indemnification’ or ‘hold harmless’ agreement).

Rule 86 (Changes to the Racing Rules): Note that rule 42 (Propulsion) cannot be changed by prescriptions or by sailing instructions (rule 86.1(a) and 86.1(b)); but it still can be changed by class rules (86.1(c)).

Rule 88.2(a) (Notice of Race; Appointment of Race Officials): Rule 88.2(a) now clarifies that the notice of race may be changed provided adequate notice is given.

Rule 89.3 (Scoring): Now the default scoring system is the Low Point System.

Appendix F (Appeals Procedures): All appeals of protest committee decisions in the U.S. are now to be sent directly to US SAILING, which in turn will forward them to the appropriate association appeals committee.