



RACING RULES UPDATES

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Australian Sailing has developed what we believe is the most abbreviated version of the updates to the Racing Rules of Sailing in this document. This is with the aim of providing an awareness of change for Race Officials. If you require further detail regarding rule change and submissions to World Sailing that lead to rule change can be found in the [Racing Rules for Sailing 2021-2024 – Study Version](#).

Within this document, any references to changing of the Racing Rules for 2021-2024 will be shown as follows:

- All wording shown in black in the following table is extracted from the Racing Rules of Sailing.
- All wording that is new in 2021 is **shown in red**.
- Wording that was deleted from the 2017-2020 rulebook is shown ~~struck through in red~~.
- All information provided by Australian Sailing is **shown in blue**.

Racing Rules Updates
Introduction.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ This document is designed to help you learn and understand the changes that have▪ been made in The Racing Rules of Sailing for 2021-2024 relative to being a Protest Committee Member.▪ The racing rules are revised and published every four years by World Sailing, the international authority for the sport. The latest edition (RRS 2021-2024) and any corrections were approved by World Sailing to take effect on 1 January 2021.▪ No changes are contemplated before 2025, but any changes determined to be urgent before then will be announced through national authorities (Australian Sailing website) and posted on the World Sailing website.▪ These Rules govern the organizing authority, race committee, technical committee, protest committee and other race officials in the conduct and judging of sailing events.▪ The World Sailing Regulations that have been designated by World Sailing as having the status of a rule and are published on the World Sailing website.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The World Sailing Regulations are referred to in the definition Rule and in rule 6, but they are not included in latest RRS because they can be changed at any time. The most recent versions of the Regulations are published on the World Sailing website; new versions will be announced through Australian Sailing.▪ Interpretations: World Sailing has updated and published an authoritative interpretation of:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The Racing Rules: The Case Book – Interpretations of the Racing Rules (https://cdn.revolutionise.com.au/site/d9qhnwixmoyuy1wl.pdf).<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interpretations of the Regulations, for those Regulations that are rules (https://www.sailing.org/documents/regulations/interpretations.php).
Renumbering of the Racing Rules.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ There have been changes to the previous arrangement of information contained the Racing Rules of Sailing including the renumbering, creation and deletion of Rules.
Change to the 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 and are not exonerated~~ **they a boat breaks a rule and is not exonerated** she will promptly take ~~an appropriate a~~ **penalty or action**, which may be to retire.

Fair Sailing

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. The penalty shall be ~~either disqualification or a~~ **disqualification** that is not excludable.

- **Changing from the term competitor to boat is relevant because the boats crew and support persons are accountable to the racing rules and code of conduct. A rules or conduct breach by a boat and their support persons may impact the boats scores after a protest hearing.**

Acceptance of the Rules, and the Decision to Race

3. Decision to Race

The responsibility for a boat's decision to participate in a race or to continue racing is hers alone.

4. Acceptance of the Rules

4.1(a) By participating or intending to participate ~~in an event a race~~ **conducted under the these** rules, each competitor and boat owner agrees to accept ~~the these~~ **rules**.

(b) A support person by providing support, or a parent or guardian by permitting their child to enter ~~an event a race~~, **agrees to accept the rules**.

- **Renumbered and reworded. The attention here should be related to the competitor and support persons agreeing to accept the rules.**

Safety

1.1 Helping Those in Danger

A boat, ~~or~~ **competitor or support person** shall give all possible help to any person or vessel in danger.

Changes to Fundamental Rules, Definitions and Associated Rules

- **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 apply to boats on opposite *tacks* only when rule 18 applies between them or when both boats are sailing more than ninety degrees from the true wind.

- Overlap definition removed from the RRS and combined with Clear Astern and Clear Ahead.

- **Mark**

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

- Change from accidentally to intentionally attached. The function of this rule has not changed regarding clearing a mark and its anchor line when rounding or passing.

- **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 ~~or pass~~ the mark as necessary to *sail the course without touching the mark*.

Rule 18 no longer applies between boats when mark-room has been given.

- **18.2 Giving Mark-Room**

(d) Rules 18.2(b) and (c) cease to apply ~~if when~~ the boat entitled to mark-room ~~has been given that mark-room, or if she~~ passes head to wind or leaves the zone.

- RRS 18.3 renamed ~~passing head to wind in the zone....~~ It states - when 18.3 applies, 18.2 does not.

- **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 object, area ~~or line~~ 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 22 applies, avoid her. A vessel under way, including a boat *racing*, is never a *continuing obstruction*.

- This may include a line designated by the sailing instructions such as a no-sail zone during racing (e.g. a line marking the perimeter of a group of moored boats, reef or shallow water in which boats cannot be rescued).

- **Giving Room at an Obstruction**

19.2(c) While boats are passing a continuing obstruction, if a boat that was clear astern and required to keep clear becomes overlapped between the other boat and the obstruction and, at the moment the overlap begins, there is not room for her to pass between them,
(1) she is not entitled to room under rule 19.2(b), and
(2) while ~~While~~ the boats remain overlapped, she shall keep clear and rules 10 and 11 do not apply.

- **Party**

A party to a hearing is

- (a) for a protest hearing: a protestor, a protestee;
- (b) for a ~~request for~~ redress hearing: a boat requesting redress or for which redress is requested; a boat for which a hearing is called to consider redress under rule 60.3(b); a race committee acting under rule 60.2(b); a technical committee acting under rule 60.4(b);
- (c) for a ~~request for~~ redress hearing under rule 62.1(a): the body alleged to have made an improper action or omission;
- (d) a person against whom an allegation of a breach of rule 69.1(a) is made; a person presenting an allegation under rule 69.2(e)(1);
- (e) a support person subject to a hearing under rule 60.3(d) or 69; any boat that person supports; a person appointed to present an allegation under rule 60.3(d).

However, the protest committee is never a party.

- **Proper Course**

A course a boat would ~~choose in order to~~ sail the course and 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.

- **Sail the Course**

Sailing The Race ~~Course~~

28.1 A boat shall start, ~~sail the course described in the sailing instructions~~ and then 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 boat may correct any errors in sailing the course, provided she has not crossed the finishing line to finish. ~~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 course from the previous mark. She may correct any errors to comply with this rule, provided she has not finished.~~

A boat sails the course provided that a string representing her track....

- Most people know this as the ‘string rule’ and it has essentially been removed from RRS 28 and placed with the definitions at the front of the rule book. This has brought with it some flow on changes to:
 - RRS 28 rewritten & now just refers to sailing the race.
 - Changes also to Appendix A – there has been some re-numbering.
 - A5 Scores Determined by the Race Committee has been expanded and includes reference to ‘sailing the course’.
 - New scoring abbreviation in A10 NSC Did not sail the course:
 - Reverses the onus on the boat to seek redress rather than protesting them.
 - Ideally still have a conversation with the competitor if possible.
 - Would only use this if very confident – report from course boat.

- **Start**

A boat starts when, **her hull** 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 **from the pre-start side to the course side in the direction of the first mark.**

- **Finish**

Finish A boat *finishes* when, **after starting**, 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 **in sailing the course under rule 28.2** made at the line, or
- (c) continues to **sail the course sail the course.**

- ‘hull’ and no longer ‘hull, crew & equipment’
- Refer to the ERS definition of hull....does not include appendages such as bowsprits, wings, poles, whisker poles or gantries....or the crew.
- Flow on changes to individual recall RRS 29.1
- X flag displayed if any part of hull on course side
- just refers to the hull having to return to the prestart side of the line/extensions
- Similar changes to rules for penalty flags – other preparatory signals. 30.1 (I), 30.2 (Z), 30.3 (U) & 30.4 (black). This means that it is just the hull that counts when making an OCS, UFD or BFD call.

- **Support Persons.**

- Support persons now accept the rules and regulations
- Competitor and boat owner agrees, on behalf of their support persons, that such support persons are bound by the rules.
- A protest committee may under Rule 60.3 (d) call a hearing to consider whether a support person has broken a rule, based on its own observation or information received from any source, including evidence taken during a hearing.

63.9 Hearings under Rule 60.3(d) — Support Persons

If the protest committee decides to call a hearing under rule 60.3(d), it shall promptly follow the procedures in rules 63.2, 63.3, 63.4 and 63.6, except that the information given to the parties

shall be details of the alleged breach and a person may be appointed by the protest committee to present the allegation.

64.5 Decisions Concerning Support Persons

(a) When the protest committee decides that a support person who is a party to a hearing **under rule 60.3(d) or 69** has broken a rule, it may

- (1) issue a warning,
- (2) exclude the person from the event or venue or remove any privileges or benefits, or
- (3) take other action within its jurisdiction as provided by the rules.

(b) The protest committee may also penalize **a boat that is a party to a hearing under rule 60.3(d) or 69 competitor** for the breach of a rule by a support person by changing the boat's score in a single race, up to and including **disqualification**, when the protest committee decides that:

- (1) the **boat competitor** may have gained a competitive advantage as the result of the breach by the support person, or
- (2) the support person **committed commits** a further breach after **the competitor has been warned by** the protest committee **warned the boat in writing, following a previous hearing, that a penalty may be imposed.**

Safety

- New flag - V & new rule 37

Monitor communication channel for safety instructions (see rule 37).

Rule 37: SEARCH AND RESCUE INSTRUCTIONS; When the race committee displays flag V with one sound, all boats and official and support vessels shall, if possible, monitor the race committee communication channel for search and rescue instructions.

- Outside help

A boat shall not receive help from any outside source, except:

- (a) help for a crew member who is ill, injured or in danger;
- (b) after a collision, help from the crew of the other vessel to get clear
- (c) help in the form of information freely available to all boats;
- (d) unsolicited information from a disinterested source, which may be another boat in the same race. ~~However, a boat that gains a significant advantage in the race from help received under rule 41(a) may be protested and penalized; any penalty may be less than disqualification~~

Race Signals

- Orange Flag

The staff displaying this flag is one end of the starting line.

- Blue Flag

The staff displaying this flag is one end of the finishing line.

- Issuing the Y Flag. (Wear a personal flotation device (see rule 40)).

Rule 40.1 (Basic Rule)

When rule 40.1 is made applicable by rule 40.2, each competitor shall wear a personal flotation device except briefly while changing or adjusting clothing or personal equipment. Wet suits and dry suits are not personal flotation devices.

Rule 40.2 (When Rule 40.1 Applies)

Rule 40.1 applies

- a) if flag Y was displayed afloat with one sound before or with the warning signal, while racing in that race; or
- b) if flag Y was displayed ashore with one sound, at all times while afloat that day. However, rule 40.1 applies when so stated in the notice of race or sailing instructions.

- When Rule 40.1 is made applicable by rule 40.2, was added on 4th June in response to comments that pointed out that, without the added phrase rule 40.1 applies at all times while racing, which of course is not our intent, our intent is that 40.1 apply only when it's made applicable by rule 40.2

- Visual Signals

When a visual signal is displayed over a class flag, fleet flag, event flag or race area flag, the signal applies only to that class, fleet, event or race area.

When Boats Meet

- If the ~~notice of race so states sailing instructions so state~~, the rules of Part 2 are replaced by the right-of-way rules of the IRPCAS or by government right-of-way rules.

- **Hails** (From the RRS introduction)

A language other than English may be used for a hail required by the rules provided that it is reasonable for it to be understood by all boats affected. However, a hail in English is always acceptable.

20.4 Additional Requirements for Hails

- (a) When conditions are such that a hail may not be heard, the boat shall also make a signal that clearly indicates her need for room to tack or her response.
- (b) The notice of race may specify an alternative communication for a boat to indicate her need for room to tack or her response, and require boats to use it.

Other Rules

- **Exoneration**

- Previously identified in the RRS section D, Rule 21 -Exoneration has been removed and the following rules renumbered:

- 21 STARTING ERRORS
- 22 CAPSIZED, ANCHORED OR AGROUND; RESCUING
- 23 INTERFERING WITH ANOTHER BOAT
- When rule 21 or 22 applies between two boats, Section A rules do not.

- **43. EXONERATION**

43.1 (a) When as a consequence of breaking a rule a boat has compelled another boat to break a rule, the other boat is exonerated for her breach.

(b) When a boat is sailing within the room or mark-room to which she is entitled and, as a consequence of an incident with a boat required to give her that room or mark-room she breaks a rule of Section A of Part 2, rule 15, 16, or 31, she is exonerated for her breach.

(c) A right-of-way boat, or one sailing within the room or markroom to which she is entitled, is ~~exonerated for breaking rule 14~~ if the contact does not cause damage or injury.

43.2 A boat exonerated for breaking a rule need not take a penalty and shall not be penalized for breaking that rule.

- 14. Avoiding Contact

A boat shall avoid contact with another boat if reasonably possible. However, a right-of-way boat, or one entitled to sailing within the room or mark-room to which she is entitled,

(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.~~

- **Scoring** (Changes to Rule 90.3 and renumbering to Appendix A)

(a) The race committee shall score a race or series as provided in Appendix A ~~using the Low Point System~~, unless the notice of race or sailing instructions specify some other system. A race shall be scored if it is not abandoned and if one boat ~~starts, sails the course in compliance with rule 28~~ and finishes within the **race** time limit, if any, even if she retires after finishing or is disqualified.

(d) The race committee shall implement scoring changes directed by the protest committee or national authority as a result of decisions made in accordance with the rules.

(e) When so stated in the notice of race, notwithstanding the provisions of rules 90.3(a), (b), (c) and (d), there shall be no changes to race or series scores resulting from action, including the correction of errors, initiated more than 24 hours after:

- (1) the protest time limit for the last race of the series (including a single-race series);
- (2) being informed of a protest committee decision after the last race of the series (including a single-race series); or
- (3) the results are published.

However, in exception, changes to scores shall be made resulting from a decision under rules 6, 69 or 70. The notice of race may change '24 hours' to a different time.

- **Scoring Penalty**

44.3(c) The race score for a boat that takes a Scoring Penalty shall be the score she would have received without that penalty, made worse by the number of places stated in the **notice of race or**

sailing instructions. **When the number of places is not stated, sailing instructions do not state the number of places**, the penalty shall be 20% of the score for Did Not *Finish*, rounded to the nearest whole number (0.5 rounded upward). The scores of other boats shall not be changed; therefore, two boats may receive the same score. However, the penalty shall not cause the boat's score to be worse than the score for Did Not *Finish*.

Changes to Part 5 - Protests, Redress, Hearings, Misconduct and Appeals

- **Race Time Limit and Scores**

If one boat **starts, sails the course as required by rule 28** and finishes within the time limit **for that race**, if any, all boats that finish shall be scored according to their finishing places unless the race is abandoned. If no boat finishes within the **race** time limit, the race committee shall abandon the race.

- **Hearings (change in wording).**

Requirement for a Hearing A boat or competitor shall not be penalized without a protest hearing, except as provided in rules 30.2, 30.3, 30.4, 64.4(d), **64.5(b)**, 69, 78.2, **A5.1** and P2.

63.2 Time and Place of the Hearing; Time for Parties to Prepare All parties to the hearing shall be notified of the time and place of the hearing, the protest or redress information **or the allegations** shall be made available to them, and they shall be allowed reasonable time to prepare for the hearing. **When two or more hearings arise from the same incident, or from very closely connected incidents, they may be heard together in one hearing. However, a hearing conducted under rule 69 shall not be combined with any other type of hearing.**

- **Hearsay evidence**

63.6 Taking Evidence and Finding Facts

(a) The protest committee shall take the evidence, **including hearsay evidence**, of the parties present at the hearing and of their witnesses and other evidence it considers necessary. **However, the committee may exclude evidence which it considers to be irrelevant or unduly repetitive.**

(b) A member of the protest committee who saw the incident shall, while the parties are present, state that fact and may give evidence.

(c) A party present at the hearing may question any person who gives evidence.

(d) The committee shall then **give the weight it considers appropriate to the evidence presented**, find the facts and base its decision on them.

- **64.6 Discretionary Penalties**

When a boat reports within the protest time limit that she has broken a rule subject to a discretionary penalty, the protest committee shall decide the appropriate penalty after taking evidence from the boat and any witnesses it decides are appropriate

- **Redress**

62.1(b) injury or physical damage because of the action of a boat that was breaking a rule of Part 2 **and took an appropriate penalty or was penalized**, or of a vessel not racing that was required to clear **or is determined to be at fault under the IRPCAS or a government right-of-way rule**.

62.1(d) an action of **a another** boat, or a **crew** member **of her crew**, or **support person of that boat**, that resulted in a penalty under rule 2 or a penalty or warning under rule 69.2**(h)**

62.2(a) **However, on the last scheduled day of racing a request for redress based on a protest committee decision shall be delivered no later than 30 minutes after the decision was posted.**

Rules Updates for Officials

- **Appendix J - Notice of Race and Sailing Instructions**

- Appendix J still addresses the content of the NoR and SI's.
- SI 13.5. has been deleted.
- The notice of race shall be made available to each boat that enters an event before she enters. The and sailing instructions shall be made available to each boat before a race begins.
- If the **notice of race so states sailing instructions so state**, the rules of Part 2 are replaced by the right-of-way rules of the IRPCAS or by government right-of-way rules.
- The Templates for the Notice of Race and Sailing Instructions (Appendix K and L) have been removed from the Racing Rules of Sailing.
- NOR and SI templates with detailed recommendations to the 2012-2024 Racing Rules of Sailing can be found on the World Sailing Website (Appendix KG and LG):
 - <https://www.sailing.org/raceofficials/eventorganizers/nor.php>

Protest Forms

- The protest form that was included in previous editions of the RRS has been replaced by two forms,
 - a) a hearing request form and,
 - b) a hearing decision form.
- The new forms, in various formats, are available at the World Sailing website at (www.sailing.org/racingrules/documents). They may be downloaded and printed.
- Note that The Racing Rules of Sailing does not require a particular form to be used.
- Suggestions for improving these forms are welcome and should be sent to rules@sailing.org.
- This document template can be found on the Australian Sailing Website:
<https://www.sailingresources.org.au/scripts/download/file/&id=cwbkztbjorawc4u3>