

Fleet & Medal Racing Umpire Manual

Races using Appendix MR and Appendix UF

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Table of Contents

Fleet & Medal Racing Umpire Manual	1
FOREWORD	6
Introduction	7
<i>Medal races versus Umpired Fleet Racing</i>	7
<i>Scope of this Manual and Terminology</i>	8
1 The Rules for Umpired Fleet Racing	10
1.1 <i>The Two Umpired Fleet Racing Appendices</i>	10
1.2 <i>RRS Appendix MR (Medal race)</i>	10
1.3 <i>RRS Appendix UF (Umpired Fleet Racing)</i>	13
1.3.1. <i>Summary of Options in Appendix UF</i>	14
1.4 <i>Call Books & Manuals</i>	14
1.4.1. <i>Call Books</i>	15
1.4.2. <i>Rapid response calls</i>	15
1.4.3. <i>Questions & Answers (Q&As)</i>	15
2 Regatta Preparation	17
2.1 <i>Umpire equipment</i>	17
2.2 <i>The role of the Chief Umpire</i>	17
2.3 <i>Meeting with Regatta managers</i>	18
2.4 <i>Umpire Team Meetings</i>	18
2.4.1. <i>Umpire Meeting Checklists</i>	19
2.5 <i>Meeting with competitors</i>	19
2.6 <i>Medal Race: Pre-race preparation</i>	20
2.7 <i>Competitor discussions and debriefs</i>	21
3 Fleet Race Umpiring Fundamentals	23
3.1 <i>The Role of the Umpire Team</i>	23
3.2 <i>Umpire interaction</i>	23
3.2.1. <i>Disagreement between umpires</i>	24
3.2.2. <i>Doubt</i>	24
3.2.3. <i>Last point of certainty</i>	24
4 Communication & Decision Making	26
4.1 <i>Umpire dialogue</i>	26
4.1.1. <i>Dialogue Structure</i>	26
4.1.2. <i>Rights, Reasons, Obligations and Opportunities</i>	26
4.1.3. <i>Dialogue: the Detail</i>	27
4.1.4. <i>Examples of umpire conversation</i>	30
4.1.5. <i>Summary Table</i>	33
4.2 <i>Communication between umpire boats</i>	33
4.3 <i>The Critical Fact</i>	34
4.3.1. <i>Rule 10 Upwind</i>	34
4.3.2. <i>Rule 11/16.1 incident</i>	34
4.3.3. <i>Rule 12/15 incident</i>	34
4.3.4. <i>“Slam Dunk” Covering Tack</i>	35
4.3.5. <i>Rule 15 (Gybe)</i>	35
4.3.6. <i>Rule 16.2 – the ‘Anti-hunting Rule’</i>	36
4.3.7. <i>Rule 17 – Breaking an overlap</i>	36
4.3.8. <i>Rule 18</i>	37
4.4 <i>Wing Umpiring</i>	37
5 Umpire Mechanics	39
5.1 <i>Umpire Process</i>	39
5.2 <i>Umpire Dialogue</i>	39
5.3 <i>Voluntary penalties</i>	40
5.4 <i>Signalling the decision</i>	40
5.5 <i>Taking a penalty – rules MR3.2, UF3.2, 44.2</i>	41
5.6 <i>Interrupting or interfering with a penalty-turn</i>	41

5.7	<i>More than One Umpire Signal</i>	42
5.8	<i>Errors in signalling – rule MR5.1/UF5.1</i>	42
5.9	<i>Invalid protests – rules MR2.1/UF3.3(a)</i>	42
5.10	<i>Multiple Incidents; Exoneration</i>	43
5.11	<i>Identification of boats scored OCS, UFD or BFD</i>	43
5.12	<i>Dealing with the media</i>	44
		46
6	Umpire Initiated Penalties	47
6.1	<i>Touching a Mark (breaking rule 31) – rule MR4.1(a)/UF3.4(a)(1)</i>	47
6.2	<i>Illegal Propulsion (breaking rule 42) – rule MR4.1(b)/UF3.4(a)(2)</i>	47
6.3	<i>Gaining an Advantage Despite Taking a Penalty – rule MR4.1(c)/UF3.4(a)(3)</i>	48
6.4	<i>Breach of Sportsmanship (inc. deliberate breaches) – rule MR4.1(e)/UF3.4(a)(4)</i>	49
6.5	<i>Failure to Take a Penalty Signalled by an Umpire – rule MR4.1(f)/UF3.4(a)(5)</i>	50
6.6	<i>Failure to Sail the Course – rule MR4.2/UF2.1, UF3.4(c)</i>	51
6.7	<i>Breach of the Sailing Instructions (inc. Boat Handling Rules)</i>	51
6.8	<i>Red or Black Flag?</i>	51
7	Positioning 1: Positioning Principles Round the Course	54
7.1	<i>Active and Inactive Boats</i>	54
7.2	<i>Nine Principles for Fleet Racing Umpiring</i>	55
7.3	<i>Positioning Guidance for Specific Areas of the Course</i>	56
7.3.1.	Pre-start	56
7.3.2.	Approaching the Start, and the Start	57
7.3.3.	The Windward Leg	58
7.3.4.	The Windward Mark	59
7.3.5.	The Downwind Leg	60
7.3.6.	Leeward Mark or Gate	61
7.3.7.	Reaching Finish	62
8	Positioning 2: Macro and Micro Positioning	64
8.1	<i>Combining Micro and Macro Positioning</i>	64
8.1.1.	Anticipation	64
8.1.2.	Working as a Team	65
8.1.3.	On a Downwind Leg	65
8.2	<i>The Windward Leg</i>	66
8.2.1.	Micro Positioning	66
8.2.2.	Macro Positioning	67
8.2.3.	The Windward Mark – Umpiring with 4 RIBS	70
8.3	<i>Downwind leg</i>	71
8.3.1.	Micro positioning	71
8.3.2.	Positioning for overlaps	71
8.3.3.	Port/starboard crosses	73
8.3.4.	Macro positioning	74
8.3.5.	Umpire interaction	74
8.4	<i>Leeward Marks and Gates</i>	75
8.4.1.	Micro and macro positioning	76
9	Damage, Hearings and Redress	80
9.1	<i>Redress</i>	80
9.2	<i>Fair racing</i>	80
9.3	<i>Damage or Injury</i>	81
9.4	<i>Hearing procedure</i>	81
10	Umpire Development	83
10.1	<i>Umpire Evaluation</i>	83
10.1.1.	Personality of an umpire	83
10.1.2.	Skills and Experience of a Good Umpire	83
10.1.3.	Self-Assessment & Self-Improvement	83
10.2	<i>Applying to become an International Umpire</i>	84

10.2.1.	World Sailing Seminars and Clinics; Umpire Performance Assessment	84
10.2.2.	World Sailing's International Umpire and Race Officials Committee	84
10.2.3.	National Umpire Schemes	84
10.3	<i>Improving skills as an umpire</i>	85
10.3.1.	Improvement as a team	85
10.3.2.	Learning from Incidents; Writing up Scenarios	85
10.3.3.	Shadow Umpiring	85
10.3.4.	Other Ideas for Self-Improvement	85
10.4	<i>Coaching Novice Umpires at a Regatta</i>	85
11	Some Other Reference Documents	88
11.1	<i>Documents on World Sailing's International Umpires Page</i>	88
11.2	<i>Rules Documents</i>	88

FOREWORD

This manual is a state-of-the art description of today's umpiring skills and techniques. It is a learning tool for umpires starting their training while working towards qualification as NU and IU, as well as for qualified IU's who want to keep their knowledge and techniques up to date and use this manual as a reference document or indeed anyone who finds themselves asked to fleet race umpire.

A willingness to learn and the relentless pursuit of consistent performance have proven to be the two key characteristics of today's successful umpire at any level. It is in the spirit of these two attributes that this manual has been written.

This manual started life as an RYA document, and it is with their kind permission that it became the springboard for the World Sailing manual for umpired fleet and medal racing. This second edition has been extensively revised and updated to provide the most detailed guidance possible. I must therefore thank those who contributed their time and considerable expertise to this project. In particular, the positioning sections have been greatly expanded thanks to Arnaud Mante.

Many sections also benefited from the expertise of Sally Burnett and Heiko Falch as well as the other members of the umpire team for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics. Additionally, Chris Atkins very kindly took on the arduous task of editing the final revised draft. It has more recently been updated to comply with the RRS for 2025-2028 by Heiko Thölmann and Michal Kwiatek. Many other umpires from around the world were involved in the project by writing sections, providing comments and suggestions, etc. Thus, it is a team effort, and the International Umpires' Sub-committee sincerely wants to thank all those umpires for devoting so much of their time to the project.

This manual cannot be perfect. Fleet racing, and with it umpiring, is a developing sport, which introduces new concepts, better techniques, etc. all the time. That is why this manual needs to be a living document that is upgraded regularly. Of course, this can only be done if umpires around the World write in with their comments and suggestions. Please contact the World Sailing office if you would like to contribute to the continuous improvement of this manual and the development of the umpires' role in the sport.

Thank you.

Chris Lindsay
Chairman, International Umpires Sub-Committee

Introduction

Many judges and umpires are now being asked to umpire at fleet racing events, and make decisions on protests on the water at the time of the incident. This enables penalties to be signalled and taken while boats are still racing, and the finishing order to be confirmed at the end of the race, rather than some time later after a protest committee has heard all protests.

Umpiring has many advantages over traditional protest hearings, such as:

- a. Prompt decisions made while the boats are still racing
- b. The presence of the umpires encourages rules compliance
- c. Most penalties are one or two-turns, meaning boats are not disqualified
- d. The finishing order is known at the finish line
- e. No more lengthy protest hearings for competitors (normally)
- f. Language (or lack of it) is no disadvantage for competitors because they do not have to explain and describe the incidents.

Match and team racing have used umpires for many years, and in these disciplines on-the-water decisions by umpires are now an accepted part of the game. Umpires go round the course with the racing boats, and promptly signal decisions in response to their protests.

If there does need to be a hearing after a race, this can usually be held on the water immediately after the boats have finished, following which the result is confirmed.

Since around 2010, many fleet racing events have used umpires for the same reasons. Medal races at the World Cup Series and Olympic Games are now umpired. Umpired Sailing Champions Leagues and National Sailing Leagues are becoming more popular. Many professional circuits, such as the TP52 Super Series, 44 Cup and GC32 Racing Tour are also umpired.

These events have driven the need for more umpires skilled in umpiring fleet racing. World Sailing now runs International Umpire (IU) seminars for fleet racing, and umpires may qualify as an IU through fleet racing as well as match and team racing.

The purpose of this manual is to promote and develop umpired fleet racing, and to assist umpires appointed to events. It is a living document, and will be improved through the experience and contributions of umpires across the world.

Medal races versus Umpired Fleet Racing

This manual is a guide for umpiring both medal races, and fleet racing more generally. The rules used vary slightly between the two, and it is important to highlight the differences.

Medal Races

As the name suggests, medal races are those which decide the medals at the Olympic Games and some other Class Championships. The top 10 boats at the end of the series (usually around 10 races) compete in an umpired Medal Race.

The Medal Race rules are designed to ensure the event winner is known at the finish of the race, and to produce exciting racing close to the shore for sailors, TV and spectators. The race scores double points (2 points for 1st place, 4 points for 2nd place etc.) and is non-discardable. Typically, competitors will be sailing their own boats.

In support of this, World Sailing developed a standard, non-changeable set of rules initially known as Addendum Q which allowed officials on the water, known as umpires, to provide decisions on

sailors' protests promptly after they are made. This package of rules has been refined over time, and in 2021 was re-titled Appendix MR (Medal Race).

Umpired Fleet Racing

It is becoming increasingly common for other fleet racing events to use umpires to make decisions on protests as a race progresses, replacing the need for protest hearings after racing. These events include many National Sailing Leagues where the boats are supplied by the organisers, as well as high level professional circuits and some Class fleet racing.

As these events do not decide Olympic Medals, most adopted a set of umpiring rules that were close to, but not exactly the same as Addendum Q.

In support of these events, and to help sailors and umpires become familiar with a standard set of rules, in 2021 World Sailing published Appendix UF (Umpired Fleet), the recommended variant of Appendix MR designed to meet the needs of these umpired fleet racing events.

Since 2025 some limitations on the use of Appendix UF have been introduced. Appendix UF shall only be used to a fleet of max 25 boats and with a rib to boat ratio limited at 1:5.

Scope of this Manual and Terminology

Appendices MR and UF are very similar. This manual therefore provides guidance to umpires for both medal races and umpired fleet racing. The manual uses the latter term to refer to both.

Umpires who have gained their skills through team or match racing should find this manual helpful for highlighting the differences between disciplines. Others umpiring for the first time should find the detail in the manual helpful for getting to grips with umpiring principles.

Terminology

To differentiate between sailboats and umpire boats, "boat" is used as in RRS to mean a sailboat and the crew on board, and umpire boats are called "RIBs".

Reflecting common practice, in medal races the RIB nearest the port end at the start is referred to as "Umpire 1", the middle RIB is "Umpire 2", and the starboard end RIB is "Umpire 3". However these numbers are added for reference only.

Signalling a protest by a boat refers to a red flag as per Appendix MR. In Appendix UF3.3(a) this can be changed.

In examples the term "One-Turn Penalty" is used as per Appendix MR. In Appendix UF a penalty can be different as per UF3.2.

Section 1

The Rules

1 The Rules for Umpired Fleet Racing

1.1 The Two Umpired Fleet Racing Appendices

The use of umpires in fleet racing requires some rule changes to allow protest decisions to be made and signalled during a race. World Sailing has published two sets of rules which can be used for this purpose, **Appendix MR** (Medal Race) and **Appendix UF** (Umpired Fleet).

Appendix MR (formerly known as Addendum Q) provides a set of rules for medal races; it is used at the Olympics and some Olympic Class Championships. The aim of Appendix MR is that final rankings in the regatta are known as boats cross the finishing line of the Medal Race. Appendix MR includes rules that limit the right of boats to protest after finishing, and, with a very few exceptions, action cannot be taken after finishing relating to incidents that occurred during the race.

The use of Appendix MR is not universally available to events as it changes rules of Part 2 which cannot be changed without the required permission. In 2021 World Sailing has approved the use of Appendix MR for umpired fleet racing in the final race(s) of an Olympic Class Championships. Use of Appendix MR at any other event requires the permission of World Sailing under RRS 86.2 (for international events), or the event's national authority under RRS 86.3.

Importantly, **no changes to Appendix MR are permitted unless specifically permitted by World Sailing**. This is to create a standard set of rules for all Olympic Class medal races with which sailors and umpires can become familiar.

However, many other events include or are based on umpired fleet racing, and Appendix UF has been published by World Sailing for this purpose. Appendix UF has essentially the same rules as found in Appendix MR, but with changes to make the appendix more suitable for events where the winner does not need to be known with absolute certainty at the finish, such as National Sailing Leagues.

In addition, Appendix UF contains a number of optional components which allow the organizing authority to tailor the rules to the needs of the event. **World Sailing recommends that Appendix UF is used – within limitations – for all umpired fleet races which are not medal races.**

Event Sailing Instructions may include some additional umpire-related rules.

1.2 RRS Appendix MR (Medal race)

Formally known as Addendum Q, Appendix MR changes a number of rules to allow medal races to be umpired. This section explains these key changes under each section heading of Appendix MR. The appendix is published on the World Sailing website so the text is not repeated here, but should be referred to in conjunction with this section.

MR1 CHANGES TO RACING RULES

MR1.1 Changes to the Definitions and the Rules of Part 2

- a. **The definition of proper course is changed** to make it clear that a boat is not sailing a proper course when manoeuvring to take a penalty.
- b. **Adds the last point of certainty as new rule 7**
- c. **When hailing for room to tack under rule 20, arm signals are required** in addition to the verbal hails. This is to make the hail for room to tack (and corresponding response) clear and unambiguous. This rule does not apply to boards, kiteboards or boats in a class so

specified in the Sailing Instructions. The rule is most appropriate for large keelboats where the distances involved may mean a hail is hard to hear.

- d. This rule states that a boat that does not start within 2 minutes of her starting signal will be scored DNS without a hearing.

MR1.2 Changes to Rules Involving Protests, Redress and Penalties

- a. **The Two-Turns Penalty** in rule 44.1 is replaced by the **One-Turn Penalty**. Therefore a boat may take a One-Turn Penalty when she may have broken a rule of Part 2 (when boats meet), or rule 31 (touching a mark).
- b. This rule provides that boats may protest or request redress.
- c. This rule deletes the protest provisions for boards and kites, except that deviations in kiteboard equipment are dealt with in the same way as for fleet racing.

Note: as in normal fleet racing, the penalty for a boat that has broken a rule and caused injury or serious damage, or gained a significant advantage by her breach, is to retire.

- d. **Most redress is not available.** A boat is not entitled to redress for improper actions or omissions of the Race Committee etc, nor for injury or damage caused by a penalized boat, nor for the action of a boat penalized under rule 2 or 69. The only situation when redress may be given is as a result of giving help in compliance with rule 1.1. In practice this is unlikely to happen in a medal race.

This is a significant limitation, and is quite different to what fleet racing competitors may be used to. It ensures that the finishing order in a medal race is known with certainty at the finish line.

- e. **For protests that are still decided by the protest committee**, after a hearing the PC may apply penalties other than disqualification for rule breaches. The PC has broad discretion to decide what penalty is appropriate (if any); the rule only requires that the penalty is equitable.
- f. **Appendix P (Special Procedures for Rule 42) does not apply.** Appendix P permits judges on the water at fleet racing events to penalize competitors for breaches of rule 42. With umpires on the water, the provisions of Appendix MR apply, so Appendix P is no longer necessary. However the Oscar and Romeo flags can still be used.

Although Appendix P itself does not apply, penalties for rule 42 may be penalized by an umpire (see later), so breaches are judged in the same way as if Appendix P applied. Umpires refer to the same rule 42 interpretations. The main difference is that the penalty for a rule 42 breach is always a One-Turn Penalty, irrespective of the number of rule 42 penalties a boat has accrued prior to the Medal Race or receives during it.

MR2 PROTESTS AND REQUESTS FOR REDRESS BY BOATS

- a. **Right to Protest.** A boat may only protest another boat under a rule of Part 2 for an incident in which she was involved (not one she has only seen). If a third boat protests for an incident between two other boats, that protest is invalid.
- b. **To protest** under a rule of Part 2, or rule 31 or 42, a boat shall hail "Protest" and display a red flag at the first reasonable opportunity for each.
- c. **After a boat protests**, a boat involved in the incident may take a One-Turn Penalty. After giving time for this, an umpire may penalize any boat that broke a rule and was exonerated under rule 43.1, unless that boat took a penalty.
'Any boat that broke a rule' may include the boat which protested. In the scenario where boat A protests boat B and B takes a penalty, if the umpires agree that A broke a rule, the

umpires should penalize A. Boat A broke a rule and has not taken a penalty. It is not relevant whether or not another boat takes a penalty.

- d. **At the finishing line**, the Race Committee informs boats of the finishing order and scoring abbreviations, then promptly displays flag B for at least two minutes.

Flag B alerts competitors, coaches and TV that race positions have been announced or displayed, and starts the final 2 minutes window for any protests

- e. **A boat intending to protest** for a rule that is not one of those subject to an umpire decision (e.g. breach of a sailing instruction), or to request redress under rule 61.4(b)(4), must hail the race committee before or during the display of flag B. Any protest from the umpires must be submitted within the same time limit. No protest form is required. The race committee then informs the protest committee of any protests or requests for redress submitted.

In practice, this means that a protesting boat usually hails the race committee promptly after finishing. It allows any remaining issues to be resolved quickly.

MR3 UMPIRE SIGNALS AND IMPOSED PENALTIES

- a. **An umpire signals a decision to a protest** under a rule of Part 2, rule 31 or 42 by displaying a coloured flag with one long sound.

- A green and white flag indicates no boat is penalized.
- A red flag indicates a boat is penalized. The boat is identified by hail or signal and must take a One-Turn Penalty. Multiple penalties are signalled separately.
- A black flag indicates a boat is disqualified. The identified boat must promptly leave the racing area.

Note that a green and white flag does not indicate that no rule was broken. It only states that no boat is penalized as a result of the protest. The umpires may not have seen the incident sufficiently, or may have disagreed.

- b. In addition, at any time more than two minutes after the start, an umpire may display flag X (or another flag named in the sailing instructions) to signal that a boat has been scored OCS, UFD or BFD by the race committee. The identified boat must promptly leave the racing area.

MR4 PENALTIES AND PROTESTS INITIATED BY AN UMPIRE; ROUNDING OR PASSING MARKS

- a. **Umpire-Initiated Penalties.** An umpire may also signal a penalty for specific rule breaches without a protest from a boat. The breaches are when a boat:

- i. breaks rule 31 (Touching a Mark) and does not take a penalty;
- ii. breaks rule 42 (Propulsion);
- iii. gains an advantage despite taking a penalty;
- iv. commits a breach of sportsmanship, including deliberately breaks a rule; or
- v. fails to comply with a signal given by an umpire.

The penalty is normally one or more penalty turns, but an umpire may also disqualify the boat. See section 6.8.

- b. **More than One Penalty Turn.** There is no provision for an umpire to hail a number of turns (*unlike team racing*). A red flag always signals a One-Turn Penalty, and each penalty turn must be signalled separately. Also if an umpire signals a penalty on a boat because she has failed to take one signalled earlier, the original penalty is cancelled.

To signal that a boat must take a penalty that is more than one turn (for example, for a breach of Part 2 or rule 31 that was also a breach of sportsmanship, or when a boat fails to take a penalty the umpire signalled), an umpire must signal one penalty, wait for the boat to take it, and then signal the next.

- c. **Not Sailing the Course.** Rule 28.2 is changed so that a boat may only correct an error in sailing the course before she rounds the next mark or finishes. If a boat breaks rule 28.2, an umpire shall disqualify the boat with a black flag after she rounds the next mark or finishes.

It may be helpful to hail to the boat the reason for the black flag, as significant time may have passed since the original failure to sail the course.

- d. **Reporting Other Breaches.** If a boat breaks a non-umpired rule, an umpire should report this to the protest committee (who may also be the umpires). However, a breach of rule 14 is not reported unless it caused damage or injury.

MR5 PROTESTS; REQUESTS FOR REDRESS OR REOPENING; APPEALS; OTHER PROCEEDINGS

- a. This section limits the actions a boat can take following the race. A fundamental principle of umpiring is that umpires' decisions made during a race are final and cannot be later reversed. A boat may not seek recourse for any action or inaction of an umpire, which may include poor positioning or interference with a racing boat, or a failure to see or respond to an incident.
- b. Protest decisions under Appendix MR are not subject to appeal. A party may not request that a hearing be reopened and other boats may not request redress for a decision of the protest committee. *(The protest committee itself may consider reopening if, for example, it concludes it may have made a significant error).*
- c. The hearing process is accelerated. The hearing request need not be in writing; the oral notification to the race committee is sufficient. The protest committee may inform the protestee orally, schedule and conduct the hearing, and take evidence, in any way it considers appropriate. It may communicate its decision orally; there's no requirement to provide parties with facts found and conclusions.
- d. The Race Committee may not protest a boat, nor may the Technical Committee unless it decides a boat does not comply with the class rules, rule 50 (Clothing) or the equipment regulations of the event, in which case it shall protest.
- e. If the protest committee decides a breach has had no effect on the outcome of a race, it may impose a points penalty or some other arrangement, which may be no penalty. Some events have a Standard and or Discretionary Penalty policy.
- f. When a boat is penalized all other boats are informed of the penalty. This is important for penalties imposed before a race starts, as other boats' tactics may be affected. A medal race umpire team should decide in advance its method to communicate this information.

1.3 RRS Appendix UF (Umpired Fleet Racing)

In 2021, World Sailing published RRS Appendix UF as a recommended set of rules for all non-medal-race umpired fleet racing events.

Appendix UF is based upon the same set of core rules for umpired racing as Appendix MR, so the guidance in section 1.2 applies. In addition Appendix UF includes a number of options to give an organizing authority the flexibility to match the rules to the needs of the event.

The options are colour-coded for ease of reference, and to make it clear which parts of the document must be changed to implement each option.

This should lead to greater consistency in the wording of rules between events. An organizing authority implementing a permitted change (for example deletion of rule 14) should now use the standard wording, rather than invent its own.

This consistency in wording will help umpires too. Umpires should check carefully the options in force at any event they attend. It is anticipated changes that are specific to certain types of boats may be used at relatively few events.

For 2025, Appendix UF has been approved as a World Sailing test rule, and an organizing authority does not require permission to use it. However, UF1 includes rules that rule 86.1 normally prevents an event from changing and when this appendix is used, it is permitted to change these rules, provided that only the options in UF1 are applied. **Parts 2-5 of Appendix UF may be changed as permitted by rule 86.1.**

Important changes affecting the umpire process under Appendix UF as opposed to Appendix MR are:

- When racing, a boat need not take a penalty unless signaled to do so by an umpire (UF1.2)
- Protest hail is no longer required for a protest to be valid when the standard wording of Appendix UF is used (UF3.3)

1.3.1. Summary of Options in Appendix UF

RRS	Options Available
13	<i>Either</i> Standard RRS 13, <i>or</i> delete RRS 13
14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Standard RRS rule b. Change to allow penalty points to be applied for a breach of rule 14 c. Change to allow rule 14 penalties with or without damage d. Rule 14 may be changed so that only contact between boat's hulls breaks the rule or other objects as appropriate
17	<i>Either</i> Standard RRS 17, <i>or</i> delete RRS 17
18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Standard RRS 18 b. Change to 'match racing version' of the rule, where mark-room is defined as room for a boat to sail her proper course
28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Umpires shall penalize for failing to sail the course b. A protest for failing to sail the course is possible
31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Standard RRS 31 b. Change that only contact between mark and crew or hull is prohibited
UF4.1	On requirement for race committee to display results at the finish of each race: <i>Option</i> to remove requirement, and post on official noticeboard instead <i>Option</i> to change requirement to requiring results to be broadcast over radio
UF5.4	<i>Option</i> to limit race committee protests
UF5.10	<i>Option</i> to limit right to redress for actions of a committee or the organizing authority

1.4 Call Books & Manuals

World Sailing aims to maximise consistency across events worldwide so competitors receive consistent decisions irrespective of the events they attend. This is achieved through various working

parties and the publications of **call books**, **rapid response calls**, and **Q&As**. These are published as guidance to race officials on the interpretation of the rules.

1.4.1. Call Books

All calls describe a situation with facts, a question, and an answer. An example call, TR CALL A2, is shown on the right.

The publishing of the Call Book is governed by World Sailing Regulation 20.6, which states that calls are authoritative only for the discipline they are published. For example, team racing calls are only authoritative for team racing.

However, many calls, such as TR CALL A2, interpret rules that are the same across disciplines. World Sailing plans to publish a call book for umpired fleet racing in the near future. Prior to this, fleet racing umpires are advised to consult the match racing and team racing calls. In cases where the rules are the same, fleet racing umpires may rely upon an interpretation in a match or team racing call.

1.4.2. Rapid response calls

Rapid response calls are issued by the World Sailing working parties. They have the same format as a published call in a call book but are advisory only. Each is published with an expiry date (typically January of the following year). At this time they are either added to the call book and become authoritative, or are withdrawn. Rapid response calls are intended to improve consistency around the world and permit calls to be thoroughly reviewed before becoming authoritative in accordance with World Sailing Regulations.

1.4.3. Questions & Answers (Q&As)

World Sailing offers a Q&A service to assist in the interpretation of situations that are not yet covered by a call or case. The Rules Opinion Working Group consists of experienced race officials who prepare answers to the questions raised. Questions may be submitted to the Working Group by any World Sailing race official or national authority. Unlike calls, the interpretations of the Working Group are not authoritative; they are solely provided as guidance to improve consistency between race officials.

TR CALL A2

Rule 11 **On the Same Tack, Overlapped**
Definitions **Keep Clear**

Question
B closes on Y from windward. When is B no longer keeping clear of Y?

Answer
B is keeping clear of Y when Y, the right-of-way boat, can sail her course with no need to take avoiding action and also, because they are overlapped, change course in both directions without immediately making contact.

At positions 1 & 2: B is keeping clear.
At position 3: if Y luffs, there will be contact but not immediately, so B is still keeping clear.
At position 4: Y cannot change course to windward without immediately making contact with B. B is no longer keeping clear, and would be penalized under rule 11 if Y were to protest, whether or not the boats make contact.

At any moment, a boat's course (as that term is used in Part 2 and the Definitions) means the direction in which her bow is pointing. It does not mean her proper course, nor the course she could be expected to be sailing shortly.

There does not need to be contact for a boat to fail to keep clear.

Section A - Definitions and Fundamentals

Section 2

Regatta

Preparation

2 Regatta Preparation

In the days leading up to an event, umpires should prepare themselves by familiarising themselves with the event's rules. Umpires should be fully aware of any event specific rules, the World Sailing rule 42 interpretations and any other rules that they will need to apply on the water. Umpires may also find the World Sailing Call Books useful for refreshing themselves of common incidents.

2.1 Umpire equipment

Items an umpire should bring to an event include:

- a. a copy of the rule book, call books and rapid response calls
- b. a copy of the Notice of Race, and Sailing Instructions (if published)
- c. wet weather clothing suitable for long days afloat
- d. waterproof notebook and pen
- e. whistle
- f. magnetic boats suitable for hearings and debriefs
- g. flags, VHF radio and personal floatation device*

*(at some events, these items may be provided by the organizing authority).

Some umpires find it useful to bring an elastic cord that can be looped round the RIB console and used to secure umpire flags, radios, and other items.

Many umpires use the app, developed by the RYA and World Sailing, which gives easy access to the rule book, call books and other documents on a smart phone. This app can be found in your mobile device application store.

2.2 The role of the Chief Umpire

It is normal for one of the umpires in the team to be appointed as the Chief Umpire (CHUMP) and take on some extra responsibilities. The Chief Umpire leads the umpire team, and represents it at meetings with the Race Committee, organizing authority and competitors.

The Chief Umpire and Race Officer are likely to work together much more than a Jury Chair and Race Officer at non-umpired events, so establishing a good working relationship is essential. The Chief Umpire should not interfere with the working processes of the Race Committee, but may be called upon for advice on things such as format changes or race abandonment. It is important that there is an atmosphere of mutual respect, so that during the event the Chief Umpire will be able to point out diplomatically anything potentially affecting the success or fairness of the regatta.

An umpire applying to become an International Umpire requires references from already qualified IUs. These references normally come from the Chief Umpire with input from other IUs on the team. National programmes are likely to have similar requirements. As the Chief Umpire is usually responsible for deciding umpire pairings it is usual to ask if any umpire on the team requires a reference, and then design the pairings to facilitate this.

The Chief Umpire may also consider publishing an 'event call' to clarify a specific event related issue, such as an event specific sailing instruction. Event calls should not be published to clarify incidents that are not specific to the event, hypothetical scenarios, or Part 2 rules situations (which should instead be raised through a Rapid Response call). Event calls may only be used once, and

after that must be sent to the World Sailing Rules Opinion Working Group, which either accepts or rejects them.

2.3 Meeting with Regatta managers

On arrival, the Chief Umpire should meet the Event Director and Race Officer to agree how and when decisions on the format of the competition will be made, where any sailor briefings will be held, and the role of the Chief Umpire in any meetings.

At this meeting the Chief Umpire should also:

- a. **Confirm arrangements for umpires** including RIBs and their refuelling, use of equipment such as radios and flags, availability of water and lunches, expense reimbursement, and logistical and hospitality arrangements for the umpire team.
- b. **Agree any support** the Race Officer would like from the umpire team in race management decisions and actions (such as advice on whether to abandon a race, when to start races, moving marks). Confirm that umpires will advise the Finish Boat of any boat black-flagged, the finishing positions of boats that cross the line more than once, and any race that is “subject to protest”.
- c. **Agree with the Race Officer on the process to minimise delays between races**, and when the warning signal for the next race will be made. It is usually best that the Race Officer does not wait for umpires to conclude finish line conversations, as the warning signal alerts umpires to return for the next start.

The Chief Umpire should understand the Race Officer’s intended race programme, start and finish locations, and time between starts. He should confirm the intended schedule for umpire rotations if it might impact that programme.

2.4 Umpire Team Meetings

An initial team meeting should be held in adequate time before the racing begins. This meeting is to ensure that the umpires will work ashore and afloat as a co-ordinated team. Any individual responsibilities are confirmed, as are the umpire positioning plan, VHF channels, damage and breakdown procedures, and any changes to the rules or event-specific sailing instructions.

Examples of tasks which may be distributed amongst the umpire team are:

- a. Chair of the protest committee (or International Jury)
- b. Daily umpire rotations (if not prepared by the Chief Umpire)
- c. Liaison with the Race Committee and OA
- d. Draft answers to questions submitted in writing from competitors
- e. Dealing with changes to SIs and other rules.
- f. Have calls available, draft event calls, write up scenarios
- g. Responsibility for rule 14 and damage issues
- h. Umpire RIBs (refuelling, radios and umpire flags)
- i. Lunches and water
- j. Keep record of the results and assist Race Committee with scoring issues
- k. Social (accommodation, transfers, breakfast and dinner, expenses).

The umpire team should also normally meet at the start of each day to confirm the plan for the day, and after racing to review the day’s umpiring.

2.4.1. **Umpire Meeting Checklists**

The initial meeting of umpires before any racing starts may include:

- a. Welcome and introductions, identify any umpires having assessments
- b. Allocation of tasks across umpire team
- c. Intended competition format
- d. Intended daily schedule, including umpire meetings
- e. Key regatta personnel; requests of the Event Director or Race Officer
- f. Method for any feedback on event and race management
- g. Number of RIBs per race; coverage model; Course Chief Umpire (if used)
- h. Any non-standard Sailing Instructions, event rules and umpire responsibilities
- i. Expected important or difficult calls, rule 42 issues, event calls (if any)
- j. Guidelines for umpire-initiated calls, in particular sportsmanship
- k. RIBs and equipment, repair, refuelling, trash, radio channels and recharging
- l. Boats, processes for ensuring boats are sailed as supplied; boat handling rules and umpire responsibilities, any compliance inspection when launching
- m. Spare boat equipment and process for reporting or repairing breakdowns
- n. Damage inspection, reporting arrangements and requirements on umpires
- o. Food and water arrangements
- p. Safety and medical arrangements and any other obligations on umpires

A morning umpire meeting to confirm the plan for the day

- a. Weather forecast
- b. Intended schedule; the Chief Umpire may have had an earlier meeting with the Race Committee to decide on the plan for the day
- c. Umpire pairings and positions; Race Chumps
- d. Requests from the Event Director or Race Officer
- e. End of day and evening plans

An end-of-day meeting to review items that arose during the day and any opportunities to improve the quality and consistency of umpiring

- a. What went well, challenges, lessons learnt
- b. Specific and noteworthy calls or conversations
- c. What the umpire team can improve for the next day
- d. Feedback to competitors or regatta management

2.5 Meeting with competitors

Establishing a good working relationship with the competitors is essential for the umpire team, and helps maintain mutual respect throughout the regatta. A competitor briefing before racing starts may be used to advise competitors how the umpire team will operate at the event, and give them a chance to ask questions.

The content of this briefing is at the discretion of the Chief Umpire, and will vary depending on the level of experience among the competitors. Experienced competitors will usually only want to double check SIs and other items specific to the event. Novice competitors may benefit from a fuller explanation of items like protest procedure and boat handling rules. It may be appropriate to:

- a. introduce the umpire team members, and highlight any responsibility a specific umpire has

- for addressing sailors' issues such as replacement equipment;
- b. clarify what can and cannot be adjusted on supplied boats;
- c. identify published documents. If changes to published documents have been made, these may be highlighted;
- d. advise on local rules or issues such as boundaries and other prohibited areas;
- e. if sportsmanship is a concern, state clearly what will be penalized;
- f. explain to novices the protest, penalty, and umpire decision process;
- g. remind sailors that at the finish they may quickly ask an umpire the reason for a call, but any longer conversation should wait till the end of the day;
- h. state when umpires will be available ashore to discuss any calls made.

It is normally wise not to answer rules-related questions at the briefing, except simple questions which can be answered unambiguously. Competitors should be asked to submit other questions in writing so they can be properly considered, and the answer posted on the notice board for the benefit of all competitors.

2.6 Medal Race: Pre-race preparation

Before medal races in particular, the umpires will meet to discuss any specific issues that are anticipated, and to review current standings to identify any likely “match-racing” (MR) or “team-racing” (TR). Two common scenarios are:

MR: If boat A will win the event if she finishes ahead of boat B, the order of A and B will decide first and second. If A will win providing B finishes lower than a certain place, A may try to sail B down the fleet. The same might happen when boats from the same country are competing for Olympic selection. In such cases, one RIB may be assigned to follow that specific pair for the pre-start at least.

TR: When a country has two boats, one with a chance of a podium place, the other might sail to help her. Identifying this before the race means all the umpires are aware and can watch for it.

The table below is an example of this preparation in practice. Each boat's current points, and possible final places, are shown. This table shows whichever of NZL 1 and FRA 9 finishes higher will win the event, and they may match-race each other. A potential team-race involving the two ESP competitors is also noted; in practice, team racing is rare, but pre-race analysis means the umpires will be alert to it. A spreadsheet is available on the World Sailing website for medal race preparation.

Pos.	Boat	Pts.	TR	MR	Places
1	NZL 1	36		MR	1 - 2
2	FRA 9	37		MR	1 - 2
3	ESP 18	60	TR		3 - 9
4	POL 11	70			3 - 10
5	NED 11	72			3 - 10
6	ESP 177	72	TR		3 - 10
7	ITA 74	76			3 - 10
8	SUI 5	77			3 - 10
9	ISR 11	78			3 - 10
10	JPN 1	81			4 - 10

2.7 Competitor discussions and debriefs

Umpires should be available to discuss calls with competitors ashore after racing, and some events organise formal umpire and competitor debriefings after racing. Two umpires should always be in any conversation to avoid any perception of individual bias, and to double-check the rules guidance provided.

Unlike conversations at the finish line, the main purposes of a discussion ashore are to help sailors understand the rules better, and to explore an incident from their point of view. If possible, invite both boats in the incident to state what they believe occurred. The discussion can address what the decision would have been based on the facts described by the sailors. This also reduces the risk of the conversation becoming a disagreement between sailor and umpire on what actually happened.

If during any discussion it becomes clear that an umpire may have made a mistake, the umpire should immediately acknowledge this.

Have your rule book with you. It is usually helpful to be able to refer to the specific wording in the applicable rule when answering any question. This helps sailors link the answer to the question with the words in the RRS, and can change the conversation from being just about one specific incident to being about the wider application of a rule. Referring to and using the text of the rule also lessens the risk of giving guidance that may be ambiguous or misunderstood. Sailors with limited English can cross-reference to their own-language copy of the rule book.

When a question is asked that is likely to be of interest or value to all teams, the umpires should request that it is put in writing so that a written Q&A can be published. Alternatively, the Chief Umpire should ensure, by some other means such as the daily briefing, that all teams are aware of the answer.

Section 3

Umpiring

Fundamentals

3 Fleet Race Umpiring Fundamentals

3.1 The Role of the Umpire Team

The role of an umpire is to resolve rules disputes between boats at the time of an incident, on the basis of what they see and in accordance with the rules.

In fleet race umpiring, the umpires watch the incident and decide whether any boat(s) break a rule. If a boat then protests, an umpire penalizes any boat that broke a rule (and is not exonerated), and does not take a penalty.

The umpire team’s goal is to ensure every incident in a race is observed, and that a prompt decision follows every protest, with a minimum level of rushing around the race course.

A particular characteristic of good fleet-race umpiring is the level at which RIBs will work together as a team to provide the best possible coverage of the fleet. In match and team-racing there are only two strategies – one for each team. In fleet-racing every boat in the race has her own strategy.

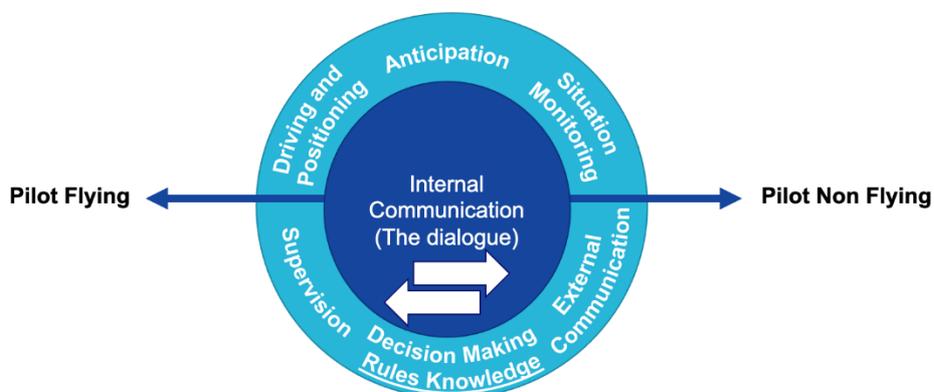
A ratio of RIBs to boats of around 1:3 provides excellent coverage. Ratio of 1:5 is the limit as per preamble of Appendix UF. The fleet shall not exceed 25 boats.

The more boats there are per RIB, the more the umpires should prioritise the parts of the course mostly likely to lead to incidents, such as the start, laylines, marks and the finish line. This enables the vast majority of incidents to be covered, but some unexpected incidents may be missed. Despite this possibility, umpiring is preferred to protest hearings by many events and competitors.

3.2 Umpire interaction

Umpires work in pairs in a RIB; one umpire per RIB is discouraged unless resources make it unavoidable. Two umpires per RIB leads to more reliable and consistent decision making. Responsibilities are shared; the umpires learn from each other; and any rules misunderstandings become apparent and can be resolved.

Umpires work together in a similar way to how airline pilots operate. One pilot is the ‘pilot flying’ who is operating the aircraft; the other is the ‘pilot not flying’ who monitors the aircraft’s systems and handles the communication with ATC. The roles are considered equal, and the pilots swap roles each flight even though the Captain may have much more experience than the Co-Pilot.



Umpires should operate in a similar way in the RIB. Although one umpire is likely to have more experience than the other, they are considered equal, share roles, and both contribute to all

decisions. Driver and co-driver should swap roles periodically, and both roles are equally involved in making any decision.

The key to good performance is good communication in the RIB. With that, all of the other elements of umpiring fall into place. There are three general principles that umpires adhere to when working together.

3.2.1. Disagreement between umpires

There will be occasions when umpires disagree over what the decision should be. In such cases, even if there has been contact, the umpires should signal 'no penalty' rather than penalize one boat or the other.

Good dialogue between the umpires during the build-up to an incident (see Chapter 4) minimises the likelihood of disagreement, and identifies it as soon as it occurs. Often it can be resolved before any boat protests.

3.2.2. Doubt

Umpires should only signal a penalty if they are certain that a boat broke a rule. If there is doubt about the facts of an incident, or the application of the rules, then the umpires should not penalize a boat, but should signal 'no penalty'.

With a good knowledge of the rules, RIB positioning and observation, most cases of doubt should be avoided. An example of doubt is when the umpires have just started to watch two overlapped boats downwind and are not sure how the overlap was established. In this case there is doubt over whether rule 17 applies, and so the umpires should assume that the leeward boat may sail above her proper course.

The same applies if the umpires have not seen the incident or are unsure about the reason for the protest.

3.2.3. Last point of certainty

There are instances where umpires are required to make a judgement on whether a specific fact changes. For example, whether an existing overlap is broken or a new overlap is established, or whether a boat passes head to wind.

In these situations, the umpires should assume that the situation has not changed, until certain it has. For example, a boat is considered not to have passed head-to-wind or reached close-hauled until the umpire watching that boat is certain she has.

Section 4

Communication & Decision Making

4 Communication & Decision Making

Good communication between umpires as a race progresses is essential for prompt and correct decisions. The umpires agree the facts, the relevant rules and the decision as an incident happens. If there is a valid protest, the umpires have already made their decision and signal it to the boats as soon as the rules allow. The absence of a proper dialogue between umpires may result in confusion, and incorrect or delayed decisions.

This section describes how umpires should communicate between each other in a succinct and consistent manner in order to make good decisions.

4.1 Umpire dialogue

4.1.1. Dialogue Structure

For an incident involving two boats, each umpire in the nearby RIB is responsible for watching one boat and describes aloud:

- i. **Rights, Reason:** whether the boat has right-of-way and why;
- ii. **Obligations, Opportunities:** what obligations the boat has under the rules;
- iii. **Actions:** whether the boat is complying with her obligations.

In a fleet race where a RIB may be watching multiple boats, an umpire should first make it clear which boat is being called, for example “*I am boat 7*”. After this, everything the umpire says is assumed to relate to boat 7. For example “*I may luff*” communicates that rule 17 does not apply to boat 7.

The most natural way of picking a boat to talk about normally works best. Usually, the first umpire to notice a developing incident will start speaking. However, it is better for the driver to call boats that are in front of the RIB and for the co-driver to call boats that are approaching from outside the driver’s normal field of vision. For incidents with three boats, one umpire (normally the driver) calls the middle boat and the co-driver calls the other boats.

As an incident develops, an umpire should not repeat *Rights, Reason*. Repeatedly saying “*I am on port, keep clear boat*” may be true, but does not lead to a conclusion on whether a rule has been broken. *Rights, Reason* should only be re-stated when they change, for instance when a boat becomes overlapped to leeward from astern.

Instead, an umpire should repeat the Action that determines whether the relevant rule is being complied with, or broken. For instance “*I am not keeping clear*”.

With practice, this standard dialogue becomes automatic. The umpire can then give more focus to watching what is happening, and listening to the other umpire.

4.1.2. Rights, Reasons, Obligations and Opportunities

Rights refer to which boat has (or does not have) right of way. This is phrased as “*I am right*” (shortened to just “*I’m right*”) or “*I am keep clear*” (shortened to “*I’m give*”).

Reason is why a boat has right of way or must keep clear so usually involve port / starboard, windward / leeward, clear ahead / clear astern and tacking. On occasion “*moving backwards*” or “*taking a penalty*” is the reason and may be stated.

Obligations are what a boat must do, or may not do, such as “*must keep clear*”, “*must give room*”, “*may not sail above proper course*”, “*may not interfere*” (with a boat on another leg or taking a penalty).

Opportunities are what a boat may do, or has a right to. “*I may luff*”, “*I may hail for room to tack*”,

“You must give me mark-room”.

When an umpire anticipates that his boat might do something, this should be stated so that the other umpire is aware. This is particularly important when the boats are large and the umpires cannot see over them, as the RIB may need to change position in anticipation of such an action to retain a good angle of view.

4.1.3. Dialogue: the Detail

Good umpire dialogue starts with agreeing the right-of-way rule that applies and any obligations and opportunities, then stating aloud the actions of the boats, and finally, if a rule is broken, agreeing a decision. This is explained in more detail below.

1. Establishing Right-of-Way

One umpire begins the dialogue by identifying the boat and whether that boat has right of way or must keep clear, with the reason. The other umpire responds similarly to confirm there is agreement at this stage

Umpire 1	Umpire 2's Response
“I am (boat) 7”	“I am 2” (the other boat in the incident)
“Starboard right”	“Port give”
“Windward give”	“Leeward right”
“(Clear) Ahead right”	“Astern give”

The umpires might also at this point agree an obligation or opportunity that applies, such as “Leeward right, luffing rights” with the response “Agreed, windward give”.

2. Actions

After the initial rights and reasons are agreed, rule 16 is usually the rule that applies to the right-of-way boat, so all her umpire needs to say is whether she is “holding” or “changing” course. The keep-clear boat must comply with whichever of rules 10 to 13 applies, so her umpire states whether the boat is “keeping clear”, or not. Many umpires prefer to say ‘luffing’ when the change of course is towards the direction of the wind, or ‘bearing away’ if it is away from it. ‘Changing’ should also be accompanied by either ‘up’ or ‘down’ to indicate the direction of the change of course.

“Holding” and “changing up/down” are only said when referring to a right-of-way boat. For a keep clear boat, what matters is whether or not she is “keeping clear”, not whether she is changing or holding course.

However, if the right-of-way boat changes course when the boats are close, the key issue is whether the keep clear boat is given room to keep clear. The keep clear umpire should say “reacted immediately” or “reacted late”. This fact will determine the umpires’ decision if the boat fails to keep clear. In a longer incident, an umpire may then say “doing all I can” or “not doing all I can”.

This conversation structure enables umpires to make decisions as incidents occur.

3. New facts or switching right-of-way

On occasion during an incident, right-of-way changes or a new fact means a different rule now applies, for example when a boat passes head-to-wind. The table below identifies the short word or phrase used to identify the precise moment this happens.

‘Tacking’	A boat passes head-to-wind. Rule 13 now applies to her.
-----------	---

'Done'	A tacking boat reaches close-hauled. Rule 13 ceases to apply.
'Overlap; Clear'	An overlap is broken or a new one is established. Rule 11 or 12.
'From astern, 17 on / No luffing rights'	A boat becomes overlapped to leeward from clear astern when she is within 2 boat lengths. Rule 17 applies to her.
'Zone'	The first of two boats reaches the zone. Rule 18 applies. Usually combined with "Overlap" or "Clear".
'Obstruction'	The boats are approaching an obstruction and rule 19 will apply.
'Layline'	A boat has reached a layline, and her proper course may now be to tack or gybe.
'May hail'	A hail for room to tack would now comply with rule 20.
'Hail'	A boat hails for room-to-tack and the other boat must respond.
'Taking penalty'	A boat begins taking a penalty and rule 21.2 applies
'Incident closed'	The time for hailing 'protest' has now passed. Any protest made after this is said will be invalid and will be green-flagged.

Example: When the ahead / leeward of two port tack boats tacks from port to starboard, the umpire should say: "Luffing tacking (so now 'give')..... **done!**"

The word 'done' communicates the moment when the boat re-acquires right-of-way.

"Gybing" is not listed, as in fleet racing a boat is not required to keep clear while gybing. However, a gybe does often change right of way, in which case an umpire may say, for example "Gybe [or Done], starboard right, holding".

4. Mark-room

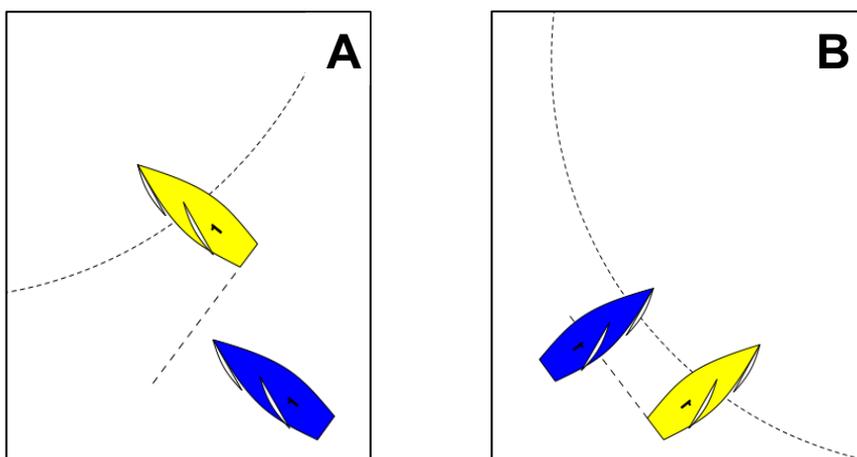
When the first of two boats reaches the zone of a mark, rule 18 may begin to apply between them. The umpire of the first boat should say "zone", and the umpires then confirm the mark-room obligations.

If the boat entitled to mark-room has right of way then rule 18 is largely irrelevant as the outside boat must also keep clear, which remains the subject of any dialogue.

If the boat entitled to mark-room is the keep clear boat, the key issue is whether she is sailing **within the mark-room to which she is entitled** and will be exonerated if she fails to keep clear(see rule 43.1(b)). The easiest way is for the umpire of the boat entitled to mark-room to say "in mark-room" [or "in corridor"] or "wide".

- a. If she is "wide", she must keep clear so again this is the subject of the dialogue.
- b. If she is "in corridor", the other umpire can then respond with "giving mark-room" or "not giving mark-room" as appropriate.

Example: Boats approaching a windward mark to be left to port



In **situation A**, Yellow reaches the zone clear ahead of Blue. Blue must therefore give Yellow mark-room (rule 18.2(a)) in addition to keeping clear.

Umpire Yellow	Umpire Blue
<i>“Ahead right, holding”</i>	<i>“Astern give, keeping clear”</i>
<i>“Zone, clear”</i>	<i>“I must give mark-room; keeping clear”</i>

The right-of-way boat Yellow is entitled to mark-room, so the only change to boats’ obligations is that Blue is also required to give Yellow mark-room.

In **situation B** when Yellow reaches the zone, Blue is overlapped inside and to windward of Yellow.

Umpire Yellow	Umpire Blue
<i>“Leeward right, holding”</i>	<i>“Windward give, keeping clear”</i>
<i>“Zone, overlap”</i>	<i>“You must give me mark-room. In corridor”</i>

The keep-clear boat Blue is entitled to mark-room, and will be exonerated for failing to keep clear only when she is sailing within that mark-room. Blue’s umpires should continually say whether Blue is *“in corridor”* or *“wide”*.

5. Decision

Every dialogue concludes with one umpire saying whether or not a rule has been broken, and a proposal on which boats (if any) are penalized. The other umpire then promptly agrees (or not). For example:

Examples for when a rule has been broken:

‘Contact’	Said by either umpire. With very few exceptions, contact confirms a rule has been broken.
‘Not keeping clear’	Said by the keep clear umpire when their boat is no longer keeping clear. The decision might be that the other boat has broken rule 15 or 16.1 and his boat is exonerated.

‘Changed to avoid you’	Said by the right-of-way umpire when their boat needed to change course to avoid contact (see definition <i>Keep clear</i>).
‘Invalid hail’ ‘No response’	A hail of room-to-tack that breaks rule 20.1 The lack of a response from a boat hailed that breaks rule 20.2.
‘I did not give you room’	For example, when rule 15 or 18.2 applies and a boat does not give room or mark-room as required.

The umpire should at the same time then propose the decision “*penalty on me / you / both, do you agree?*”.

The other umpire should then respond:

‘I agree, penalty on X’	The umpires agree the decision. If there is a valid protest and X does not take a penalty, an umpire will signal a penalty on X.
‘Disagree’	The second umpire disagrees with the decision – needs further discussion to resolve.
‘I did not see’	The second umpire did not see the incident

If “**Disagree**”, the response to any protest will be to signal “No penalty” unless the umpires can quickly resolve the disagreement. Umpires should not penalize a boat when there is disagreement between the umpires (section 3.2.1). However, an umpire should not disagree over a fact relating to a boat he is not watching.

If “**Did not see**”, the first umpire should, if sufficiently confident, confirm the decision which will be signalled if there is a protest and the identified boat does not take a penalty.

When an umpire believes no rule has been broken, and there is the chance a boat may still protest, this should be proposed as a decision: “*No incident, do you agree?*”. The other umpire is likely to confirm this.

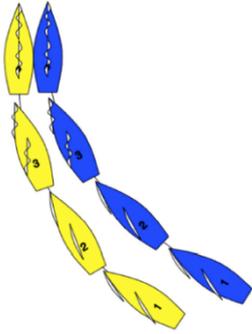
Once the umpires have confirmed the decision, they wait for a valid protest (red flag and hail of ‘protest’) if one has not already been made. They then wait 2-3 seconds to give a boat that broke a rule the opportunity to take a voluntary penalty. If both boats protest, or if it is clear that no penalty will be taken a penalty may be signalled sooner. It is important that this signal is not delayed, especially after a mark rounding when the boats will shortly hoist spinnakers. Any delay in signalling here will vastly increase the severity of any penalty.

If no boat promptly starts to take a penalty turn, one umpire proposes “*OK, penalize boat X?*” or “*Display Green flag?*”. The other umpire should respond by either agreeing or disagreeing, and the signal is then made by the co-driver.

4.1.4. Examples of umpire conversation

There is no single “correct” dialogue. The following examples represent good dialogue because the dialogue automatically leads to the decision.

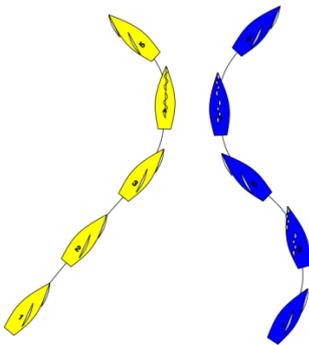
1. Leeward Boat Luffing



	Yellow Umpire	Blue Umpire
1	Leeward right	Windward give, keeping clear
2	Changing up (or luffing), must give room	Keeping clear
3	luffing	Doing all I can, keeping clear
4	luffing	Contact. I did all I could. Penalty on you, do you agree.
5	Agree	

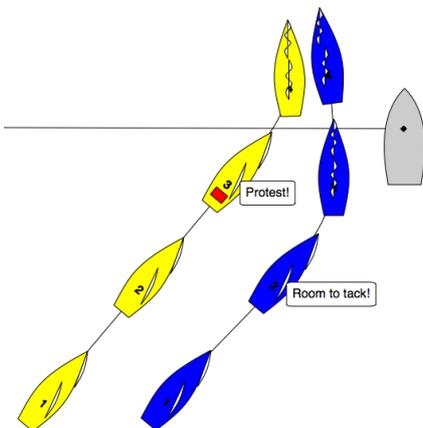
At each position, each umpire is saying the boat's actions and whether she is fulfilling her obligations, rather than repeatedly stating rights-of-way. The words also form a dialogue which confirms that the umpires are listening to each other. As a result, when a rule is broken in position 4, the umpires already know their agreed decision.

2. Rule 15



	Blue Umpire	Yellow Umpire
1	Ahead right, holding	Astern give, keeping clear
2	Luffing, tacking, give	Holding
3	Done! Starboard right	Reacted immediately, luffing
4	Changing; Giving room	Doing all I can.
5	No incident. I gave you room. Keeping clear	Agree.

3. Room to Tack



	Blue Umpire	Yellow Umpire
1	Leeward right, holding	Windward give, keeping clear
2	(Invalid) hail room to tack	Agree, I am Fetching. Penalty you? I must respond
3	Agree penalty me.	Protest.
	Luffing	No response, penalty me. Keeping clear
4	Tacking. Not keeping clear. Penalty me	Agree. No protest - last incident closed.
5	Penalty both boats	I agree.

4. Differences of Opinion

Umpires should speak clearly and be aware of what the other is saying, so that it is a single dialogue and is obvious when opinions differ. The umpires should stand or sit close together and speak clearly and loudly so they can hear each other over engine and wind noise.

If umpires clearly disagree on a conclusion, they must try to resolve it promptly before any rule is broken or competitor protests. For example:

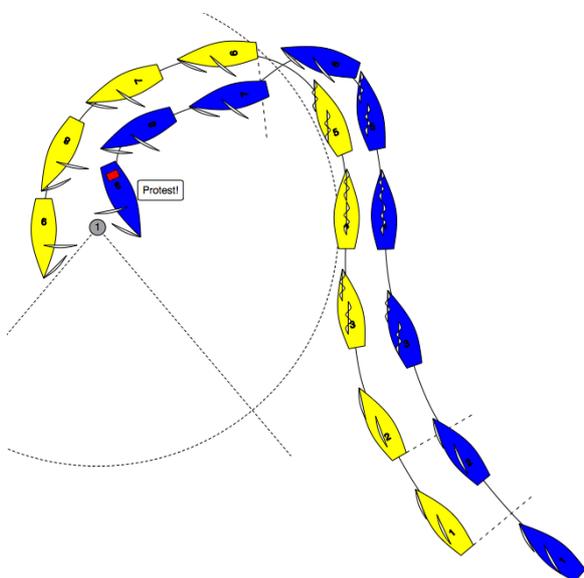
Umpire 1: I am leeward, right. I came from clear astern; I have no luffing rights.

Umpire 2: Disagree. You came from outside 2 boat lengths, you have luffing rights, I am keeping clear.

Umpire 1: I agree

This disagreement is immediately resolved. However, if the umpires are unable to agree how the overlap was established, the umpires' doubt would mean they decide rule 17 does not apply (sections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2).

5. Last Point of Certainty



	Yellow Umpire	Blue Umpire
1	Ahead right, holding	Astern give, keeping clear
2	Leeward right, luffing rights	Windward give, keeping clear
3	Changing up	Keeping clear
4	Changing up	Keeping clear. Are you in zone?
5	Negative. Changing	Keeping clear
6	Zone, clear	Must give mark-room
7	Holding	Keeping clear. Can't go inside
8	In corridor	Must give you room
9	No incident?	Agree. Not rounded mark

At position 4, yellow is on the edge of the zone. Yellow umpire applies “**last point of certainty**” (section 3.1.3) and calls Yellow outside the zone until certain she has entered it. At position 6 Yellow umpire is certain that Yellow has entered the zone, and Blue umpire confirms Blue has to give mark room.

At position 8, Blue establishes a late inside overlap and becomes the right-of-way boat, but the focus of the dialog at this point immediately switches to Blue’s obligation under rule 18.2(a).

6. In Summary

Umpires should avoid unnecessary repetition of agreed rights and reasons. And by communicating the decision as an incident happens, umpires:

- minimise disagreement between themselves, and identify and resolve disagreements before boats protest;
- maintain a concise dialogue that can keep up with the incident;
- make decisions promptly and with more confidence;
- are available for the next incident which may already be happening.

4.1.5. Summary Table

The table below provides a useful summary of the most commonly used words that umpires use to talk through an incident and make a decision.

Rights & Reasons	Actions	Protests
Right; Keep Clear (Give)	Holding; Changing (up/down)	Protest hail; Flag on X
Port; Starboard	Luffing, Bearing away	No incident (no issue; clean)
Windward; Leeward	(Not) Keeping clear; Avoiding	Incident closed (no protest)
Overlapped; Clear (+ahead, astern)	Reacted immediately / late	
Tacking (+ahead, astern, port-side)	Doing all I can / can do more	Decisions
Returning; Taking penalty; Backing (moving astern, sideways)	Dipping / Ducking / Passing to leeward; Crossing	Do you agree? I agree / disagree / didn't see
	Luffing; Tacking; Done	Incomplete / late protest
Obligations & Opportunities	(Not) (Above) Proper Course	Penalty (on) X (+ the breach)
(Negative) Luffing rights; 17 off, on	Tacked in Zone; Fetching	I gained advantage
Zone (+ Overlap, Clear)	In corridor (mark-room) / Wide	Sportsmanship breach
I have / must give (mark-)room	Pumping; Rocking; Sculling	
My / Your mark	Hail (for room to tack); Responding	Decision Signal
It's on me / I may .. / My option is ..	Tacking / you tack / late (rule 20)	Green
(Approaching, at) Obstruction	18 off; mark-room given	Red on X
I / you may hail in x lengths; 20 on	Close-hauled; Approaching start	Black Flag on Y
Different leg; Interfering	Contact	Started on port / starboard

4.2 Communication between umpire boats

On occasions there is communication between RIBs. This may either be to pass information about an incident, or to make sure all incidents are being covered. This communication is the responsibility of the co-driver.

Visual signals are usually simpler and less intrusive, but require the umpires to be looking at each other. They cannot be used to attract the attention of the other RIB.

Commonly used visual signals are:

- Repeatedly tapping hand on top of head – ‘Contact’
- Arm stretched horizontally (at the gap between bow and stern) – Not overlapped
- Arm raised vertically over the head – either ‘Overlap’, or ‘I have this call’
- Pointing at the other umpire boat – ‘You make the call’
- Pointing towards self – ‘I can make the call’
- Thumb up (in a movement) - Yes
- Thumb down (in a movement), shake head - No

At other times VHF radios are better. Transmissions should be short to minimise the interruption to other umpires’ dialogues; there is no need for formal radio etiquette. VHF channels are public, so umpires should not have private discussions over the radio. The radio is particularly suitable for:

- a. Quickly informing other RIBs any intention over positioning. For example: “*Umpire 1 going to windward mark*”.
- b. Informing another RIB of a fact its umpires might be unaware of, such as:
 - i. “*Protest flag on X*”, if that RIB is not in a position to see the red flag;
 - ii. “*X and Y, negative 17*” for overlapped boats sailing towards the RIB;
 - iii. “*X, zone clear*” when at a better angle to judge this correctly.

In some incidents, often at marks, the RIB that sees and calls a situation is in a poor position to signal the decision. The umpires may relay the decision to a RIB in a better position to signal it. This needs to be unambiguous; it is good practice for the receiving RIB to repeat the message and request confirmation.

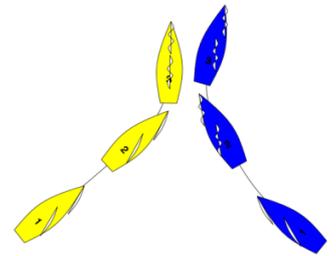
However, umpires should never rely on other RIBs to pass them critical information on an incident. At all times umpires should try to make sure they see all facts needed for their decisions. Any additional information provided by another RIB is a bonus.

4.3 The Critical Fact

In every incident, there will be one or two facts the umpires must establish in order to make a decision, known as the **critical facts**. They depend on the type of incident. With experience, umpires anticipate the critical facts in the next incident, position the RIB accordingly, and establish those facts in their dialogue.

4.3.1. Rule 10 Upwind

Yellow on port tack must keep clear of Blue on starboard. Yellow is keeping clear when Blue is able to sail her course with no need to take avoiding action. **The single critical fact is whether Blue needs to change course to avoid Yellow.** This is best seen when the RIB is between the boats and about 45° off the course of both boats.

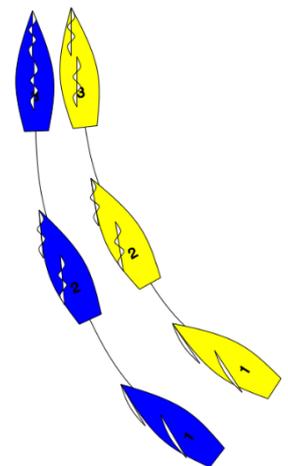


4.3.2. Rule 11/16.1 incident

Yellow to windward, must keep clear of Blue to leeward. When Blue luffs, she must give Yellow room to keep clear.

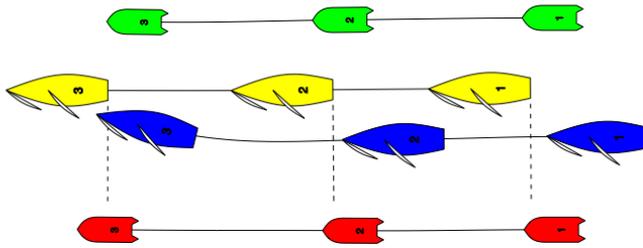
The critical facts are (1) the gap between the boats, and (2) whether Yellow responds promptly to Blue’s luff.

These facts enable the umpires to decide whether Yellow is keeping clear, and whether she has been given room by Blue to keep clear. This is best seen from behind the boats. The RIB will usually be as close to the boats as they are to each other, closing in as the boats get closer together



4.3.3. Rule 12/15 incident

The critical facts are boats’ positions and actions immediately after the boats become overlapped.



The green RIB to windward is in a good position. Its umpires can see the moment the boats become overlapped, and then see the gap. Umpires in the red RIB cannot see the gap at position 3.

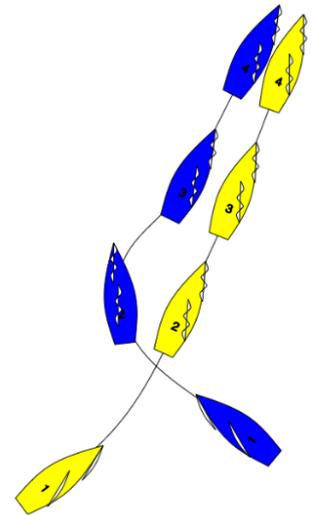
Also, once the boats are overlapped, it is also easier for the Green RIB to move to see down the gap, which is the best position to be thereafter.

4.3.4. "Slam Dunk" Covering Tack

Blue crosses Yellow and tacks onto port. Yellow luffs to prevent Blue from being able to complete her tack. Blue gives up right-of-way through her own actions, so rule 15 does not apply, and Blue must keep clear of Yellow while she is tacking (rule 13).

The critical facts are (1) whether Yellow changes course after becoming right of way, and (2) whether Blue keeps clear in positions 3-4.

Best is for the RIB initially to be to windward of Yellow, at 45° to each boat's course. This is a good position for the port-starboard cross, and if Blue tacks the RIB will be well placed to see the gap between the boats, and decide whether Blue keeps clear and whether Yellow changes course.

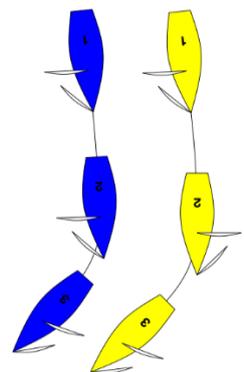


4.3.5. Rule 15 (Gybe)

Blue and Yellow are sailing downwind. Yellow gybes onto starboard. Blue must react promptly to keep clear.

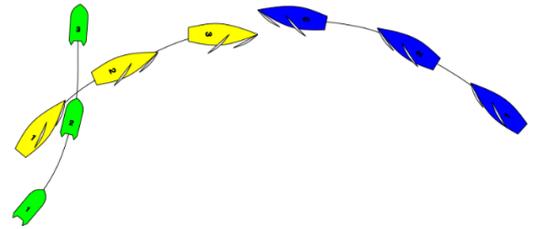
The critical facts are (1) the gap between the boats, and (2) whether Blue reacts promptly to determine if Blue breaks rule 10 or Yellow breaks rule 15.

The RIB should be close astern of the boats, watching the gap and moving closer as the boats become closer to each other.



4.3.6. Rule 16.2 – the ‘Anti-hunting Rule’

Sailing upwind, Yellow on port is sailing to pass to leeward of Blue on starboard. Rule 16.2 states Blue may not bear away if as a result Yellow must immediately change course to continue to keep clear.



The critical fact is the gap, and whether Yellow needs to immediately change course when Blue bears away.

Ideally the RIB is already to windward of Yellow, anticipating Yellow will duck Blue. However, if the umpires have anticipated Yellow will tack and are to leeward of Yellow, as soon as it becomes clear that Yellow will duck, the RIB should quickly cross behind Yellow as shown in the diagram.

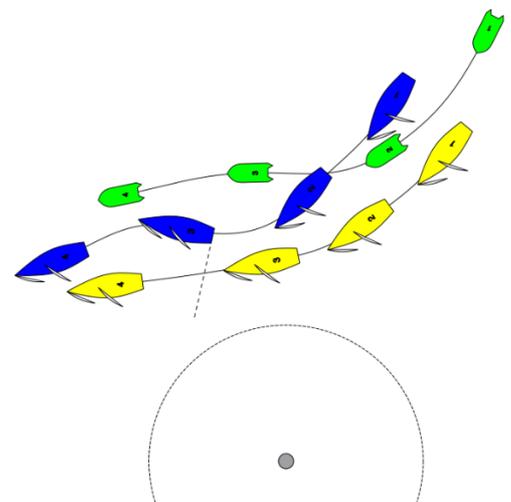
4.3.7. Rule 17 – Breaking an overlap

Blue and Yellow are overlapped sailing downwind towards a leeward mark and rule 17 does not apply.

Yellow luffs. Blue luffs further, claiming she breaks the overlap. Blue bears away and the boats become overlapped. Does rule 17 apply?

The critical facts here are (1) whether Blue becomes clear ahead, (2) whether Yellow is sailing her proper course, and (3) whether Blue is keeping clear.

The RIB is initially following the gap. When it becomes clear that Blue will luff, it moves to windward to judge the break of the overlap. When the boats become overlapped again, the RIB moves back into the gap.



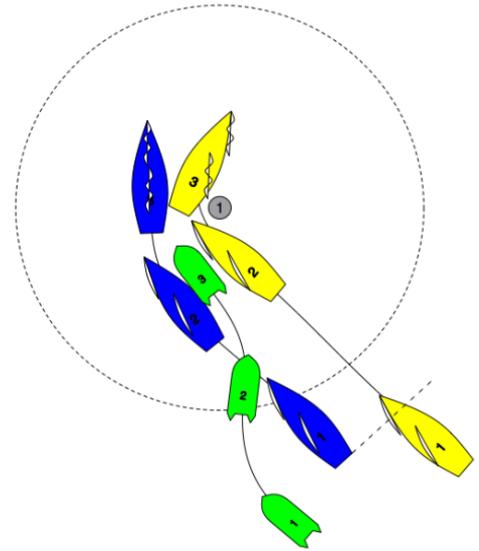
If uncertain whether Blue becomes clear ahead, the umpires should decide Blue has not become clear ahead (section 3.1.3, Last Point of Certainty).

4.3.8. Rule 18

Blue and Yellow are approaching the windward mark. Yellow enters the zone overlapped inside Blue, and so is entitled to mark-room. When the boats reach the mark, Blue luffs and Yellow tacks around the mark.

The critical facts are (1) the overlap between the boats as Blue reaches the zone, and (2) the gap between the boats as they round the mark.

The RIB is outside and to leeward, level with the transom of Blue to see the overlap at the zone. Once the mark-room relationship has been established, the RIB moves in to see the gap between the boats as they round, to decide if Blue has given Yellow mark-room which here includes room to tack.



4.4 Wing Umpiring

On occasion, one RIB's angle of view may mean it is able to provide extra information to another RIB, such as "overlap / clear" and "zone". Standard dialogue words are used over the radio. "Negative" should be used rather than "No".

At the finish, RIBs whose boats have finished should be alert to the opportunity to help another RIB call any tight incident.

In this incident, the green RIB's boats have finished and they are free to wing for the pink RIB.

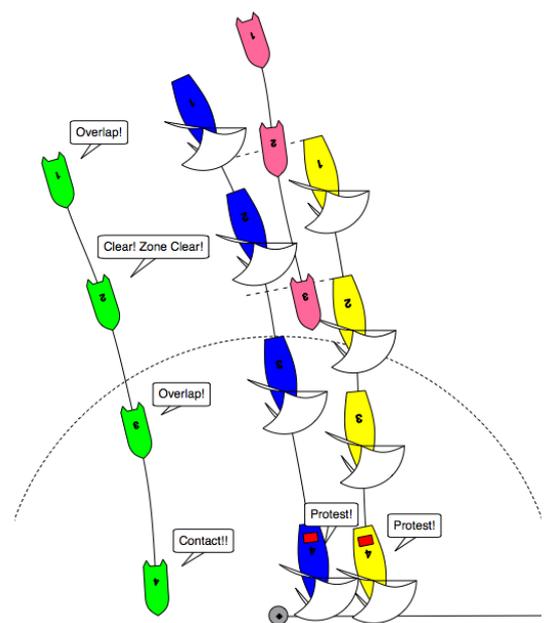
As Blue and Yellow approach the zone, the overlap between them will be critical. When the green RIB moves into the wing position, the pink RIB can move into the gap between the boats.

The wing umpire calls either 'overlap' or 'clear', then finally 'zone clear' to indicate that the leading boat Yellow enters the zone clear ahead.

This gives the pink RIB umpires critical information that will allow them to apply rule 18 with confidence.

A good general principle is that radio should be used to pass facts to another RIB that it may not be able to see, rather than to tell other RIBs where you intend to go.

Further information on wing-umpiring can be found in the World Sailing IU Match Racing Manual.



Section 5

Umpire

Mechanics

5 Umpire Mechanics

Umpires establish the facts in an incident, and apply the relevant rules, as an incident happens. By the time there is a valid protest, they should be ready to signal a decision, which they should do promptly after giving time for a boat to take a penalty.

5.1 Umpire Process

An incident is watched by two umpires in one RIB. Each umpire states the facts relating to the boats he is watching as they happen. Immediately a rule is broken, or at the end of an incident if no rule is broken, the umpires agree their decision. They then observe if there is a protest, and if a boat responds to the protest by taking a penalty.

Note: For Appendix MR a penalty is a One-Turn Penalty, for Appendix UF it is defined in the event-specific UF Version (UF3.2),

However, the co-driver only signals the umpires' decision if there is a protest. After a protest, any boat involved may respond by taking a penalty. The umpires will penalize any boat that broke a rule (and is not exonerated) that does not take a penalty, even if another boat takes a penalty.

If a boat responds by clearly indicating she will take a penalty, and then fails to do so and the umpires are confident that the signal was deliberately misleading then an umpire should penalize her under MR4.1(e)/UF3.4(a)(4) as a breach of sportsmanship.

In most incidents when a rule is broken, only one boat is penalized. Either only one boat breaks a rule, or other boats which also break a rule are exonerated under rule 43.1. Exceptions are leeward boat breaking rule 17 and windward breaking rule 11 or incidents involving rule 20.

5.2 Umpire Dialogue

As boats converge, each boat's rights, obligations and actions are stated in words by the umpire calling that boat. The dialogue always covers (a), (b) and (c), with (d), (e) or (f) included when they apply.

- a. Identification of the right-of-way boat, the keep clear boat and the reason;
"I am on starboard, right-of-way," or *"I am on port, keep clear"*.
- b. Any additional obligations and opportunities of each boat;
"I may luff"; "I must give mark-room".
- c. The actions of each boat;
"I am changing course"; "I am keeping clear".
- d. An action or event that changes the rules that apply between the boats;
"Tacking"; "Overlap broken"; "Zone"; "Hail for room to tack".
- e. A clear statement that identifies when a rule is broken;
"Contact"; "Not keeping clear"; "Changed course to avoid".
- f. Which boat breaks a rule (or a statement that no boat broke a rule);
"Penalty on me"; "Penalty on you"; "No incident".

This dialogue ensures the relevant facts are stated as the incident occurs. If the umpires disagree on the decision, neither boat should be penalized, even if there is contact. Section 4.1 has full detail on this umpire dialogue.

5.3 Voluntary penalties

A boat may respond to a protest by taking a penalty. This requires her to get well clear of other boats as soon after the incident as possible, and promptly make the required number of turns, each including one tack and one gybe (One-Turn Penalty in MR1.2(a) and as defined in UF3.2).

If a boat takes a penalty at or near the finishing line, she must take her penalty and sail completely to the course side of the line before finishing (rule 44.2).

Start and End of a Penalty Turn

A penalty turn starts when, after getting well clear, the boat begins to turn (rule 44.2). It ends when she completes the final tack or gybe. A tack is completed when the boat reaches close-hauled. A gybe is completed when the sail fills on the new side or, if the boat has already passed stern-to-wind, when the boom crosses the centre-line.

This timing determines when a right-of-way boat taking a penalty loses and then regains right of way (rule 21.2), and whether a boat taking a penalty completes her penalty before crossing the finishing line to finish.

5.4 Signalling the decision

Following a protest, the umpires **make no signal** if all boats that broke a rule (and were not exonerated) have taken a voluntary penalty. Otherwise, an umpire signals the umpires' decision, in accordance with rules MR3.1/UF 3.5.

The signal consists of two parts: one long sound (whistle) to draw attention to the decision, and a flag (green and white, red or black):

- a. **a green and white flag** signals that no boat is penalized;
- b. **a red flag** signals that one or more boats are penalized. The signalling umpire hails or signals to identify each penalized boat;
- c. **a black flag** signals that the identified boat is disqualified.



Flags should be easily accessible so that they can be promptly displayed

How long until the Umpire Signal?

The umpires must give boats time to respond but should keep this time as short as the rules allow. Prompt and firm decisions help the umpires keep control of a race. While there is an unanswered protest, the boats may continue to manoeuvre against each other, with the possibility of a second protest. Delay may impact a penalty's severity, especially at the finish or when the boat is about to hoist a spinnaker

In most cases between two and three seconds is more than sufficient time. The time may be longer if the boat that broke a rule is trapped by other boats, providing she is doing all she can to get well clear. The time should be shorter if both boats have protested and neither shows any sign of trying to get clear, or if the signal is to be a red flag and boats are continuing to manoeuvre against each other. In such cases, any delay in the umpire's signal will disadvantage the boat that is not penalized.

Making the Signal (rule MR3.1/UF3.5)

The flag is accompanied by one long sound, normally a loud whistle. The length and loudness of the sound is the same for all signals (red, green and white, and black flags). The flag should be held vertically overhead for two to three seconds so that all sailors, umpires and spectators can see it, except that a red flag is lowered when the penalized boat starts her penalty turn.

An umpire is required to hail or signal to identify a penalized boat. The umpire should continue to point and hail until confident the boat knows she has been penalized.

5.5 Taking a penalty – rules MR3.2, UF3.2, 44.2

A boat penalized with a red flag under Appendix MR is required to take a One-Turn Penalty; she must get well clear as soon as possible, and then promptly make her turn, including one tack and one gybe. Under Appendix UF, the version used at the event defines the required penalty. Unlike Appendix C (Match Racing), pre-start penalties must be taken at the time. Also, there is no requirement to have the spinnaker head below the gooseneck, although Sailing Instructions may add restrictions for safety or boat-handling reasons.

Prompt taking of penalties is important as it allows sailors and umpires to focus on the next incident, which may already be occurring. A boat that fails to take a penalty promptly should therefore be further penalized (rule MR4.1(f)/UF3.4(a)(5)).

The procedure for this is the umpire signals another penalty on the boat. However, as this cancels the original penalty (rule MR4.1/UF3.4(a) final sentence), the umpire waits for this penalty to be taken, and then signals one further penalty with another red flag.

Similarly, while taking a penalty a boat may break a rule such as rule 31 or 42 that is subject to an umpire-initiated penalty. The umpires wait until the boat has completed the first penalty, and then signal another red flag penalty (unless the boat takes an additional voluntary penalty).

To minimise risk of interference, as the co-driver signals a penalty the driver may need to increase the gap between the RIB and the penalized boat. To check a penalty is complete, the co-driver should say “*Started on port / starboard*” immediately after the boat is penalized.

Umpires should be alert to some possible issues:

- a. **Pre-start**, when boats are in position behind the line, there should be space between them and the RIB for a boat to sail backwards and then take a penalty.
- b. **After the start**, umpires should make sure penalties are taken promptly and completely. A boat that is delaying the final tack for tactical advantage should be promptly penalized again.
- c. **At a windward mark**, a boat usually sails above the mark to get well clear, then tacks first so she can gybe as she bears away onto a downwind course.

5.6 Interrupting or interfering with a penalty-turn

While one boat is taking a penalty, other boats may change course, and cause the boat taking the penalty to have to interrupt her turn in order to continue to keep clear (rule 21.2). Interrupting a penalty turn in this way does not breach the requirements of rule 44.2 providing the boat was well clear when she started the turn, and promptly resumes and completes her penalty turn after the interruption. See TR Call L2 and World Sailing Case 149.

If the boat taking a penalty fails to keep clear, she breaks rule 21.2. The other boat breaks rule 23.2 when she interferes with the boat taking a penalty, unless it is after the starting signal and she is sailing a proper course. These are Part 2 rules, so an umpire only signals a decision if there is a protest.

If there is a protest, any penalty under rule 23.2 is signalled at the normal time. Whereas if the umpires decide that the boat taking a penalty breaks rule 21.2, they must wait until the end of that

penalty turn and then signal another red flag penalty (unless the boat takes an additional voluntary penalty).

5.7 More than One Umpire Signal

Umpires in one RIB should never over-rule the decision of those in another RIB.

If an incident involves only two boats, there should only be one decision, signalled by the RIB responsible (unless that RIB asks another RIB to make the signal). Even if umpires in another RIB disagree, they should not signal a different decision. There may be facts they are not aware of.

However, at the finish after some boats have finished, two RIBs may be watching the same incident. Before any boat protests, if one RIB is confident of a decision, the co-driver should raise an arm to indicate this. After a protest, a RIB should check the other RIB doesn't have an arm raised before signalling a decision.

Multi-boat incident, a part of it being watched by each RIB.

The umpires in each RIB should decide, and signal the decision, for the part of the incident they are responsible for. Where possible the two boats should avoid signalling decisions that could be seen by the competitors to conflict. If two RIBs do signal different decisions, then all penalties signalled must be taken.

When there is only one protest, if one RIB displays a red flag, there is no need for the other RIB to display a green and white flag. The other RIB only displays a second flag when the umpires believe there were two incidents and should be two penalties.

It is therefore clearest for competitors if any red flag is flown first, and a second flag is only flown if there is a second penalty. An umpire intending to display a red flag should do so as soon as the rules allow. An umpire intending to display a green and white flag should delay slightly to allow time for any red flag to be displayed.

5.8 Errors in signalling – rule MR5.1/UF5.1

Once umpires have signalled a decision, there is no formal mechanism to cancel or change it. In addition, there can be no redress for a decision or action of an umpire, so great care should be taken to minimise the possibility of penalising the wrong boat. The only action the umpires can take is to apologise to the sailor at the end of the race.

The co-driver can reduce the chance of error by confirming the flag colour and the penalized boat(s) one final time immediately before signalling. Flag error can be reduced by having coloured flag handles, or by storing them in different places.

While signalling, there is the risk of interfering with boats. Best is to keep the RIB moving at the same speed as the fleet. A driver needing to slow down should check beforehand that the RIB is not in the path of a boat.

The black flag should be kept separate from the others. There is no need to rush this signal, and a black-flag disqualification cannot be reversed. Therefore, any decision to signal a black flag should be made only after umpires have given themselves time to focus on that decision alone and confirm 100% it is the correct decision.

5.9 Invalid protests – rules MR2.1/UF3.3(a)

A protest is only valid if the boat conspicuously displays a red flag and additionally under Appendix

MR hails “Protest”, at the first reasonable opportunity for each. Also, a protest under a rule of Part 2 is only valid if made by a boat involved in the incident.

The red flag is required to be conspicuously displayed so that any protested boat is able to see it. If neither umpire in a nearby RIB watching the boat sees a red flag, or if they see a red flag raised very briefly or tentatively and then concealed, they are correct to decide a red flag has not been conspicuously displayed. Under Appendix UF no hail is needed.

In Medal races a hail can normally be made immediately after an incident. If no boat hails at the first reasonable opportunity, or if a boat hails but does not then display a red flag, an umpire should promptly say ‘*incident closed*’. Any subsequent protest is invalid.

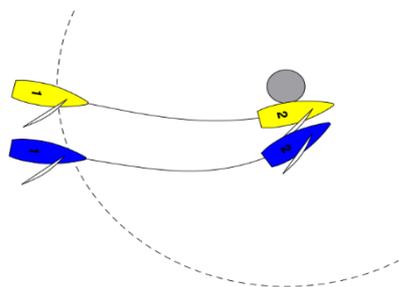
After an invalid protest, an umpire should display a green and white flag to close the incident.

5.10 Multiple Incidents; Exoneration

Providing a boat protests, umpires penalize any boat in the protested incident that broke a rule, was not exonerated, and did not take a penalty

Umpires should apply the rules accurately when deciding whether an incident is one incident or two, and which incident is subject to protest. For example, if when approaching a mark boat A breaks a rule in an incident with X, and four seconds later B and X have an incident in which no boat breaks a rule, and X then protests, the umpires should signal “No penalty” as there was no valid protest on the first incident.

Exoneration: When a boat is exonerated for a breach under rule 43.1, rule 43.2 states that umpires shall not penalize her for that breach. A common example is when a boat, sailing in the mark-room to which she is entitled, touches the mark as a consequence of the boat required to give mark-room not giving it. Although an umpire may penalize a boat for touching a mark without a protest (rule MR4.1(a)/UF3.4(a)(1)), the umpires must not do so in this case as Yellow is exonerated.



Also umpires may only penalize Blue for breaking 18.2(a) if there is a protest. In the absence of a protest, umpires make no signal. See also TR CALLS M11, E8 and J9

5.11 Identification of boats scored OCS, UFD or BFD

In medal races, boats which are OCS, UFD or BFD are removed from the course as soon as possible. This avoids the situation when leading boats are disqualified after finishing, which is unsatisfactory for media and spectators. Appendix MR therefore includes a provision for the umpires to signal these boats to leave the course.

Rule MR3.3(a) states:

- An umpire displaying flag X with one long sound means ‘A boat has been scored OCS, UFD or BFD by the race committee’.
- The umpire will hail or signal to identify each such boat.
- The identified boat shall promptly leave the course area.
- This signal may be given any time after 2 minutes after the starting signal.

As there is no possibility of redress, umpires should always follow the following five step process, with the same caution as they would a black flag signal.

1. At the starting signal, the race committee (RC) says on the umpire radio channel either **“Clear line”** or **“OCS boats”**.
2. 2 minutes after the starting signal, the RC informs the umpires by radio that one or more boats are recorded OCS / BFD.
 - The RC says **“N <quantity> boats are OCS/BFD, stand by for numbers”**.
 - All umpires hear this. The transmission may be deferred slightly if the RC sees that the umpires are busy.
 - The Chief Umpire (CU) confirms receipt by saying **“N boats are OCS / BFD”**.

If OCS was signalled and all boats returned, the RC will say **“Negative X-ray”**.

If no transmission is made at this time, the umpires know that they are not required to signal any boats.

3. The RC confirms to all umpires the sail numbers of the boats that are recorded as OCS / BFD.
 - The RC says **“Flag X-ray for boat XXX, Flag X-ray for boat YYY”** etc. The same wording is used both for OCS and BFD.
 - The CU confirms **“Flag X-ray for boat XXX, Flag X-ray for boat YYY”** etc.
4. If there are boats OCS / BFD, the RIB that is in the best position relative to the boat confirms to the CU that it will make the call, and repeats the sail number:
 - The umpire says **“Umpire Z is ready to display flag X-ray to boat XXX”**.
 - The CU confirms that the number is correct.
5. The relevant RIBs signal the relevant competitors with flag X. These competitors shall leave the course immediately.
 - Each RIB confirms to the CU that it has signalled the competitor. This may be done as a media call.
 - If a boat does not retire after being signalled as OCS, she breaks rule MR3.3(a) and an umpire should penalize her with a black flag under rule MR4.1(f).

The process above is carried out only when possible and when it does not disrupt other umpire duties. For example, in the cases below it may not be possible.

- a. The umpires are busy penalising boats that broke rule 42 at the start or are observing boats for possible rule 42 breaches. In that case, the CU should ask the RC to wait with the transmission.
- b. The weather makes radio communication difficult. If there is any doubt about the correctness of the information, the CU should decide that no boats are flagged during the race and inform the RC and other umpires of this decision.
- c. The radios do not work properly, or at all. In this case boats will not be flagged.
- d. The umpire boats or conditions make it difficult or impossible to get close to the competitors. This may be in very light conditions, where umpires must avoid creating wash, or in medium to strong wind with fast classes.

This process is not essential, and umpires should not use it if there is any possibility of flagging the wrong boat, or when its use would impede their other responsibilities.

5.12 Dealing with the media

Umpired fleet races are often covered by media – which may mean more boats and wake on the course. Umpires should see media boats as part of the event, and take them into account

accordingly. Most media boat drivers are experienced and know their way around the fleet without interference, and their view of sailors and boats should not be blocked by umpires or RIBs.

It is often advisable for umpires to let a media boat be between them and the boats and adopt a good angle of view behind or next to the media boat, preferably out of shot. However, the umpires should keep an eye on media boats and, if they interfere, talk to them in a polite and constructive manner. It is often best for the Chief Umpire to talk to media boats and discuss options to reduce interference.

At some events, and particularly during medal races, the media may be interested in the reasons for umpire decisions (both penalties and important no penalty decisions, such as ones that may affect a medal). Umpires should follow a clear process for giving media calls, for example:

- a. On the umpire channel: ***“Media, media, media! Standby for media call”***.
- b. Wait for a few seconds (no need for response) and call again.
- c. ***“Media call, penalty FRA 142 for not giving enough mark-room to GER 196”***

In general, rule numbers and complex incident descriptions should be avoided, as the person receiving the information will usually not be a rules expert.

Section 6

Umpire Initiated

Penalties

6 Umpire Initiated Penalties

In most cases, umpires only signal a decision in response to a protest from a boat, even when a rule has been broken. However, there are six situations below, known as **umpire initiated penalties**, where umpires may penalize a boat without a valid protest.

These situations relate to incidents where it might be unreasonable or inappropriate to require another boat to protest. Rule MR4.1/UF 3.4 states that an umpire may penalize a boat, and also gives discretion over the penalty. Consistency is important across umpires, both within an event, and from event to event. The aim of this chapter is to help umpires exercise this discretion in a consistent manner.

A red flag is used to signal each penalty in the normal way. More than one penalty requires more than one red flag signal (see section 1.2, MR3.2(a)/UF3.6(a)). When signaling a penalty, it can be helpful to hail to the competitor the reason for the penalty (if this is not obvious). For example *“Pumping before the mark”*.

6.1 Touching a Mark (breaking rule 31) – rule MR4.1(a)/UF3.4(a)(1)

When a boat touches a mark, and is not exonerated and does not take a penalty, an umpire should penalize her with a red flag. Umpires should be confident the boat has touched the mark. Seeing the boat actually contact the mark is required. Seeing the mark move or spin is not sufficient.

Note: under Appendix UF, if a Two-Turns penalty is adopted in UF3.2 of the version used at the event, then the penalty for breaking rule 31 is a Two-Turns penalty (UF3.1, UF3.2, UF3.3, UF3.4(a)(1)). Appendix UF allows other solutions, so a careful reading of the version used at the event is required.

6.2 Illegal Propulsion (breaking rule 42) – rule MR4.1(b)/UF3.4(a)(2)

Rule 42 is judged to the same standard as under Appendix P (Special Procedures for Rule 42), and the same World Sailing Rule 42 interpretations continue to apply.

However, under Appendix MR the penalty a boat receives for a rule 42 breach is always a One-Turn Penalty (the same as for a Part 2 rule breach), irrespective of how many rule 42 penalties the boat has already received at the event. The penalty for breaking rule 42 in a medal race is therefore different from penalties in the preceding series races.

This applies as well to Appendix UF, but the penalty may be changed by UF3.2

In light wind races, rule 42 breaches are often the most critical breaches for umpires to see and penalize. Breaches are split into two categories, **tactical** and **technical**.

Tactical breaches break rule 42.1. They are specific actions, usually deliberate, that increase a boat’s speed to achieve a particular advantage over nearby boat(s). Common examples are a single roll that propels at the start, a single sheet pull that creates or breaks an overlap close to the zone, and a single body pump to round a mark or cross ahead of a right of way boat.

To penalize a tactical breach, an umpire must be confident the action propelled the boat, so must usually see an increase in speed as a result of the action. A breach that is a single action is likely only to be seen by one umpire, as the other umpire will be watching a different boat. An exception is a boat that may be gaining speed on tacks or gybes. Both umpires can watch the boat’s next tack or gybe to decide whether or not the action amounts to a breach of rule 42.1.

Technical breaches are repeated actions that break rule 42.2, whether or not the boat’s speed

changes. These breaches are less likely to be deliberate and often they form part of the sailor's usual technique. Common examples are repeated rolling at the start, repeated sail fanning on a reach, and repeated rolling downwind. These breaches should normally only be penalized if both umpires see the action, and agree it breaks rule 42.2.

Before and during a race umpires should discuss the wind and wave conditions, and likely breaches for the class of boat being umpired. For example: is it planning / surfing conditions? Are there waves likely to cause natural rolling of the boats?

Before going afloat, umpires should ensure they are aware of, and understand, any changes to rule 42 introduced by the NoR, the SI or class rules. For example, the Melges 20 class modifies rule 42 to permit pumping of the spinnaker. For more information on judging rule 42, umpires should refer to the World Sailing Judges Manual (see Chapter 11).

6.3 Gaining an Advantage Despite Taking a Penalty - rule MR4.1(c) / UF3.4(a)(3)

It may happen that a boat breaks a rule and takes a penalty (voluntarily, or signalled by an umpire), and, despite the penalty, is in a better position in the race than she would have been if she had complied with the rules and an umpire should penalize the boat further.

In general, a boat has gained an advantage when, after having taken a penalty (or having been given one from an umpire), she is **either**

- a. in a better position or place relative to the rest of the fleet than she would have been had she complied with the rules **or**
- b. in a better position or place than the boat against which she infringed.

If a boat gains as a result of the breach, an umpire should penalize the boat with one or more penalties to remove the gain, and then **one further penalty**. If the boat is simply restored to the position, she would have been in without the breach, which is in effect no penalty, boats will be incentivised to break rather than comply with the rules.

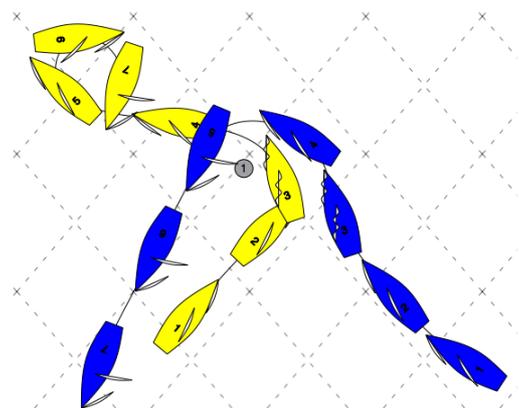
Umpires need to be alert to this possibility, and the need to make a judgement on the position a boat would have been in if she had complied with the rules. Three situations illustrate the application of this rule.

Situation 1

Blue and Yellow are approaching a windward mark. Yellow tacks inside the zone and breaks rule 18.3. Yellow takes a One-Turn Penalty.

After her penalty, Yellow is overall in a worse position than she was before the incident, 2 - 3 lengths behind Blue.

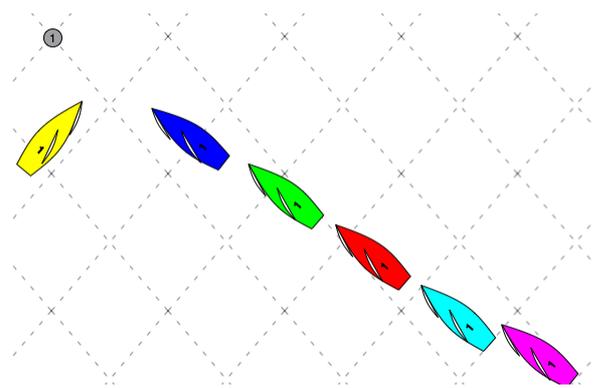
The umpires are not permitted to take any further action.



Situation 2

To comply with the rules, Yellow on port needs to pass behind all five starboard tack boats. If instead Yellow rounds the mark inside Blue, breaking rule 18.3, umpires should be alert to advantage.

After a One-Turn Penalty, Yellow is highly unlikely to be behind Pink. If Yellow is not behind Pink, an umpire should give her further penalties until she is one penalty turn behind Pink.



Situation 3

Boat A on port attempts to cross ahead of Boat B on starboard. B takes avoiding action but there is contact resulting in damage to the mast of B and B is forced to retire. There is a valid protest from B and A takes a One-Turn Penalty and continues in the race. What should the umpires do?

Answer

Boat B has been forced to retire. Even if there is no advantage relative to the fleet to consider, condition (b) is satisfied as Boat A has gained an advantage over Boat B and no number of Red-Flag Penalties to Boat A will correct this advantage. Therefore, the umpires would disqualify Boat A by displaying a black flag.

Summary: Decisions on advantage are difficult, and experience helps spot them. Umpires should be alert to the possibility, and when a boat breaks a rule, it can be helpful to consider aloud whether the incident is one where the boat might gain an advantage. Usually it is not, and a single penalty closes the incident.

Note that, in cases where advantage is gained despite a penalty being taken, no protest is required. All that is required is that a penalty has been taken and an advantage remains.

A very helpful rule of thumb is “**Saved a Turn, or Cost a Turn**”. Incidents where a boat either saves herself from making a turn (e.g. by barging in at a start mark instead of bailing out), or causes another boat to make a turn she should not have need to (e.g. by denying mark-room), are those most likely to lead to gaining advantage despite a penalty.

6.4 Breach of Sportsmanship (inc. deliberate breaches) – rule MR4.1(e)/UF3.4(a)(4)

A clear breach of sportsmanship should be penalized even if there is no protest. Allowing such breaches to go unpenalized implicitly condones the behaviour and may encourage others to behave similarly.

What is a breach of sportsmanship?

The [World Sailing Misconduct Guidance](#) is the best guide for what amounts to a breach of sportsmanship. It states that:

- knowingly breaking a rule and not taking a penalty
- deliberately breaking a rule to gain an unfair advantage

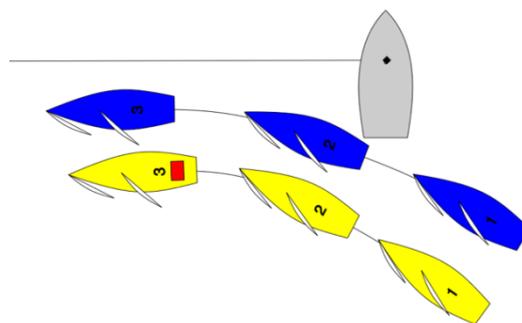
are breaches of sportsmanship. To penalize, an umpire must be completely satisfied the action was a deliberate or calculated move, was not a misjudgement and that there was no possibility of any

exoneration rule applying. Some possible breaches may be better addressed using the advantage rule MR4.1(c)/UF3.4(a)(3). Two examples:

a. Breaking a rule to avoid being OCS

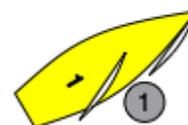
Blue and Yellow are approaching the starting line to start. Blue bears away to avoid being OCS. As a result, she fails to keep clear of Yellow who protests. Blue takes a One-Turn Penalty.

If the umpires decide Blue deliberately broke a rule to gain unfair advantage, they should penalize Blue with an extra One-Turn Penalty.



b. Knowingly Touching a Mark and not Taking a Voluntary Penalty

Yellow makes obvious mark contact and does not take a penalty. No other boats involved, so there is no possibility of being exonerated. The umpires penalize Yellow for breaking rule 31. If the umpires are sure that Yellow knew she touched the mark, they should signal an additional penalty for breach of sportsmanship when Yellow completes the first penalty.



Evidence to lead the umpires to conclude this may include particularly hard contact, the mark rolling along the side of the boat, or a sailor pushing the mark away.

Note: Appendix UF amends rule 2 to allow a boat not to take a penalty unless signalled to do so by an umpire (UF1.2). Therefore, not taking a penalty after knowingly breaking a rule cannot be considered a breach of sportsmanship under Appendix UF.

Some other examples of breaches of sportsmanship are:

- a. Verbal abuse, unnecessary shouting or foul language;
- b. Bullying, intimidating or harassing others;
- c. Sailing to benefit another competitor to the detriment of own position.
- d. Deliberately making misleading hails (e.g. hailing starboard when on port).

Match racing call M4 gives the following guidance on what constitutes verbal abuse towards a Race Official.

“If a sailor merely express unhappiness or disappointment, or that in her opinion the decision was wrong, then a penalty is not appropriate.

“However, if the total effect is to convey that the umpires are incompetent or are prejudiced against the penalized boat, a penalty may be justified, whether the meaning is directed only at the umpires or also to others nearby.

“If the meaning is clearly insulting to the umpires, a penalty should be imposed.”

Penalty. Any first breach of sportsmanship should normally be penalized with a red flag. For repeated or gross breaches, umpires should consider penalising with more than one red flag, disqualifying the boat with a black flag, or reporting the incident to the protest committee. The protest committee may then consider whether an allegation and hearing under rule 69 is appropriate.

6.5 Failure to Take a Penalty Signalled by an Umpire - rule MR4.1(f)/UF3.4(a)(5)

There are three possible cases when this rule applies. A boat may:

- a. simply not take a penalty signalled by an umpire;
- b. make an incomplete penalty turn (missing the final tack or gybe); or
- c. be delaying a turn's completion (e.g. delaying the tack until reaching a layline).

In all cases the umpire should promptly signal another penalty. Rule MR4.1 and UF3.4(a)'s last sentence states that when this penalty is signalled, the original penalty is cancelled. On occasion a second penalty signal could be just a 'reminder'.

The second penalty cancelling the first is sufficient in cases b and c above. However, if the first penalty was not started, and the umpires believe the boat was aware she had been penalized and was ignoring it or delaying taking it, the second penalty does not amount to the extra penalty that the boat should receive. The extra penalty should be signalled with another (third) red flag as soon as the boat completes her first penalty.

Unlike Appendix D, Appendix MR/UF has no provision to hail a number of turns with a red flag, so every penalty must be separately signalled with a red flag.

6.6 Failure to Sail the Course – rule MR4.2/UF2.1, UF3.4(c)

Rule 28.2 (Sailing the Course) is changed so that a boat may not correct an error after rounding the next mark or finishing. Rule MR4.2 states that an umpire shall disqualify a boat that does not correct an error, signalled with a black flag.

Therefore, on a windward / leeward course, if a boat does not round the marks of a leeward gate correctly and then fails to correct this error, an umpire disqualifies her with a black flag signal when she rounds the next windward mark. This is clearly a significant decision, and the umpires should be completely certain before displaying the black flag. It may be wise to check with the Chief Umpire before signalling.

In Appendix UF this is an option, which may not be enabled at an event. However, when this option is enabled, then the default wording of UF3.4(c) actually obliges the umpires to disqualify, so it is essential for the umpires to pay particular attention to the wording and act accordingly.

6.7 Breach of the Sailing Instructions (inc. Boat Handling Rules)

The Sailing Instructions may permit or require umpire-initiated penalties for breaches of specific SIs. These may be for sailing into a prohibited area or, when boats are supplied, for a breach of boat handling rules such as crew position, or when spinnakers may be flown or bow-sprits extended. There may be a list of required, permitted and prohibited acts while in a boat or while racing.

Umpires should review such Sailing Instructions carefully to identify:

- a. which Sailing Instructions are subject to umpire decision during a race;
- b. which of these can be umpire-initiated, and which require a boat to protest.

Unless the Sailing Instructions say otherwise, a breach of a Sailing Instruction can only be adjudicated on after a protest and by a protest committee after the race.

6.8 Red or Black Flag?

Rule MR4.1/UF3.4(a) gives an umpire the option to penalize with one or more penalties, each signalled with a red flag, disqualify the boat, signalled with a black flag, or report the incident to the protest committee.

For most infringements, the umpires should first signal a red flag penalty. They may signal additional penalties if the breach involves a breach of sportsmanship, or if the boat gains an advantage. Repeated breaches should normally lead to repeated penalties.

Disqualification signalled with a black flag should normally only be considered for:

- a. a major breach of sportsmanship that is repeated after a penalty;
- b. a breach of sportsmanship such that allowing the boat to continue to sail may put the event in jeopardy or others in danger (e.g. reckless sailing showing disregard for equipment);
- c. a breach of a rule of Part 2 that causes injury or serious damage to the other boat, especially if the other boat is unable to continue racing;
- d. failure to correct an error in sailing the course (Under MR always mandatory and under UF if activated by UF2.1, UF3.4(c)).

Section 7

Positioning I

7 Positioning 1: Positioning Principles Round the Course

The two umpires in a RIB need to be able to see all the facts required for a decision, and good RIB positioning is crucial for this. Umpires need to see an incident close up, and from a good angle. While umpires may fine tune their positioning as they gain experience, there are some general principles that should be common across all umpires.

In team and match racing it is possible to follow a standard positioning plan. In fleet racing courses are usually longer, the number of boats and RIBs varies, a fleet splits differently from one race to the next, and pairs or groups of boats may converge at any place on the course.

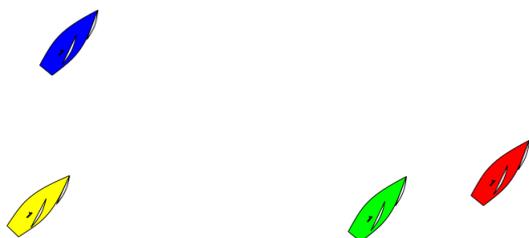
Good fleet race positioning is based on the umpires working as a team and following a consistent set of principles described in the following sections. The objective is to have one RIB in position to make a decision wherever two or more boats engage. This is most important at the start and finish, crosses on the upwind and downwind legs, and at marks.

Good umpires develop consistent and repeatable elements to their positioning that apply at certain times such as: pre-start; approaching, rounding and leaving marks; watching a port / starboard cross. These "mini-plans" enable them to be in the right position to gather the facts and apply the rules that govern the incidents that might happen.

In a medal race, there are normally 10 boats and 3 RIBs. This means that each RIB needs to be able to cover 3-4 boats at any given time. Unless stated, Chapters 7 and 8 assume this ratio, but all guidance applies whatever the fleet size and number of RIBs

7.1 Active and Inactive Boats

Umpires need to focus on boats which are most likely to be involved in an incident. Umpires should identify "active pairs" that are most likely to engage with each other.



The four boats shown are on the right side of the beat. There is one RIB covering them.

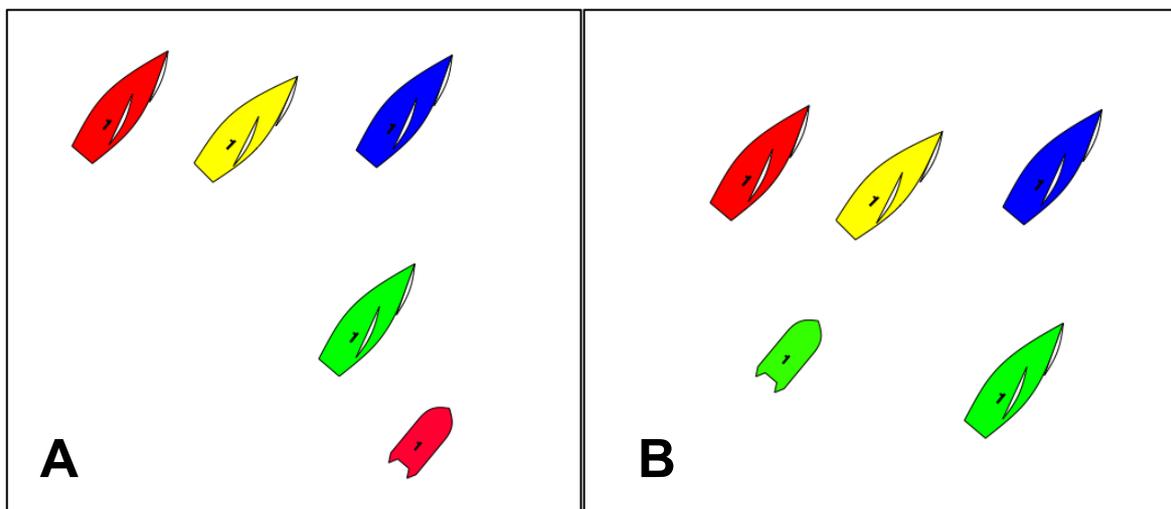
Blue is ahead of Yellow. She can change course freely and tack onto starboard without interfering with Yellow. Blue and Yellow are an **inactive pair** who can be watched from a distance.

Red and Green on the other hand, are an **active pair**. Red cannot tack without interfering with Green, and Green may overtake Red if she can stop Red from tacking until she reaches the layline. This pair is much more likely to have an incident, especially as Red nears the layline. The RIB should be close to this pair in anticipation of a possible incident.

Umpires should constantly reassess which pairs are likely to be active and position themselves accordingly. In the example above, if Green tacks onto starboard then she will become an active pair with Yellow. Positioning the RIB closer to the stern of Green rather than Red will make it easier to switch to this new active pair.

In the diagram below, Red, Yellow and Blue are all **active boats**. Green is not able to interact with any of the other boats, so is inactive. The red RIB in **A** is in a poor position, to leeward of Green and

unable to see the gaps between the active boats. The green RIB in **B** is in a good position to call any incident, but needs to be alert to Green's likely tack, and already know what she will do when Green starts to tack.



7.2 Nine Principles for Fleet Racing Umpiring

1. Cover Your Share of the Fleet

For a fleet race, it is normal to have more than one RIB. Each RIB should cover its fair share of the fleet, and avoid covering the same boats as another RIB.

2. Trust the Other Umpires to do Their Job

Umpires should at all times be aware of where the other RIBs are and which boats they are covering. This ensures all incidents are covered, and that the same incident is not being called by two different RIBs. The co-driver should check this continually as another RIB might be unexpectedly diverted.

3. Don't "Race Watch" at Marks – Stay with Your Boats

Umpires should avoid the temptation to remain at a mark as their boats leave it. Any active pair leaving a mark should have a RIB watching them.

4. Minimise Wake

Umpires should minimise their effect on the racing boats, and as far as is possible avoid driving in a way that creates wake. However, it is better to create wake than be in the wrong position for a call. Three specific tips:

- a. The earlier the driver sees a need to adjust position, the less the wake.
- b. If a RIB has to cross in front of a boat, best is to cross at 90° to the boat's course at a distance of >5 boat lengths. It also helps to move the throttle into neutral when crossing a boat's path, as this minimises the wake that is felt by the boat.
- c. If driving in a close-hauled direction on a windward leg, the driver should check that no boat, even one a long way astern, is caught in the wake as this would result in continuous slowing. Safer is to drive in a head-to-wind direction.

5. Drive at the Speed of the Fleet

Except when moving to a new incident, a RIB should normally match the speed of the boats round the course. This minimises wake, allows the umpires to stay close to the boats, and provides driver and co-driver with a constant angle of view which usually makes judgements

on facts easier.

6. Position to Make Your Intentions Clear

Umpires should position their RIB to make it clear to other umpires which boats they are watching and what they are likely to do next.

When stationary, a RIB should point in the direction of next travel. When covering four boats, none of which is active, a RIB should be in a position that makes it clear the umpires are watching all four. Watching all four from a distance, or from level with the last of the four, is unlikely to convey this message. This technique also lessens the need for radio calls.

7. Don't Fall into Appendix P "Scanning the Fleet" Mode

Consistent with 7.2.6 above, RIBs should at all times be close to the boats they are responsible for watching. From this close position, umpires continually look for the next possible incident, and adjust the RIB's position accordingly. If a RIB is too distant when umpires see an incident about to happen, there may not be time to get into a position for a good decision.

8. Never Let an Inactive Boat Block Your View of an Active Pair

On occasion an inactive boat will cross between a RIB and an active pair. The RIB should be ready, and adjust course so the loss of view is as brief as possible.

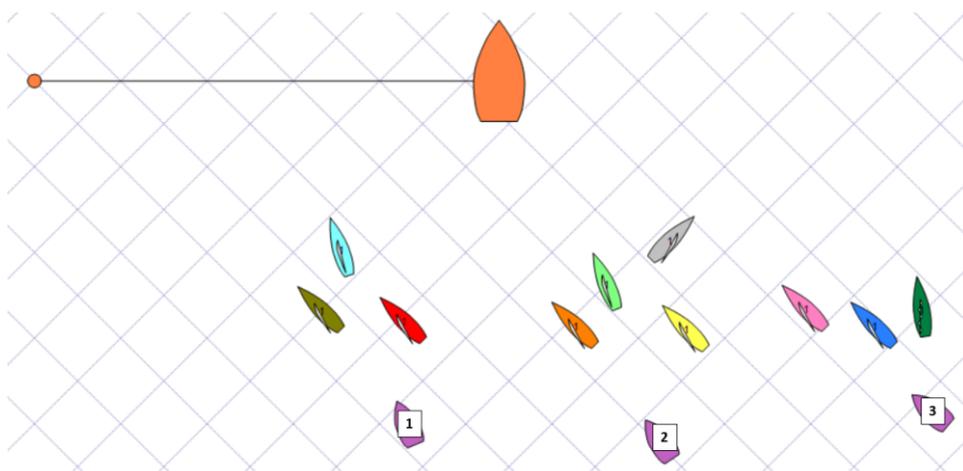
9. Don't Try to Predict what boats will do; Be Ready for anything they might do

All sailors at times do surprising things. If the driver positions the RIB according to what he thinks nearby boats will do, on occasion the boats will do something different and the RIB may be in the way, or may have to take avoiding action causing the umpires to lose sight of the incident they were calling.

Instead, the driver should be constantly aware of everything a nearby boat could do and have a plan. In particular, the driver should at all times know in advance what he will do if any nearby boat suddenly turns towards the RIB.

7.3 Positioning Guidance for Specific Areas of the Course

7.3.1. Pre-start



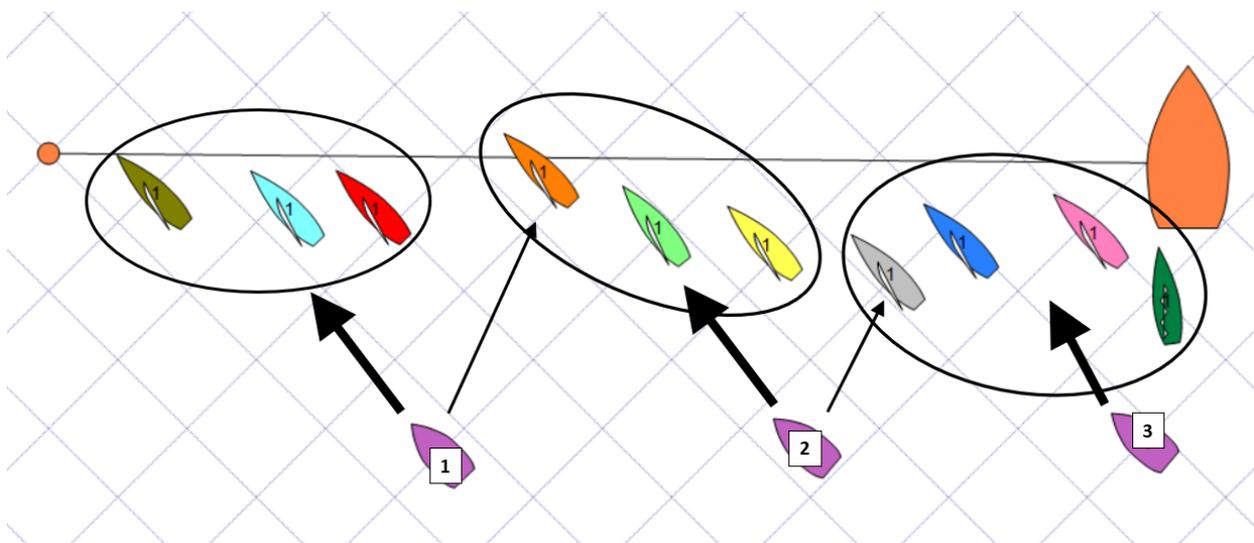
Umpires should be in the prestart area in their assigned positions from the preparatory signal. Although pre-start penalties are not usually race changing, incidents may occur as boats are crowded together behind the starting line.

RIBs should loosely follow the boats while remaining in their assigned position. Boats may rapidly reverse out, or bear away and gybe to escape or find a better position, so the RIBs should leave a gap between them and the boats for this. The co-driver should also make sure there is no boat in an unexpected position that the driver might not be aware of, such as astern of the RIBs.

Umpires should pay attention to the positions of the other RIBs, and where boats are bunched, to ensure that the whole fleet is being covered, and there is a RIB near every active group of boats. For instance, a starboard-biased line may lead to many boats being held to the right of the CV by boats to leeward of them. In such a case Umpire 3 is likely to need to be with the group to the right of the CV, Umpire 2 should move to astern of the CV, and therefore Umpire 1 should also move to the right. Umpires need to pay attention to any race committee signals (for example flag O or flag Y, and course designations) that may affect their decisions during the race.

7.3.2. Approaching the Start, and the Start

In the last minute before the start, the boats will begin to commit to a position on the starting line, and the umpires should move forwards, towards boats which are in positions to engage with each other. The most common incidents at the start are windward / leeward incidents, and so the umpires should be watching the gaps between boats.

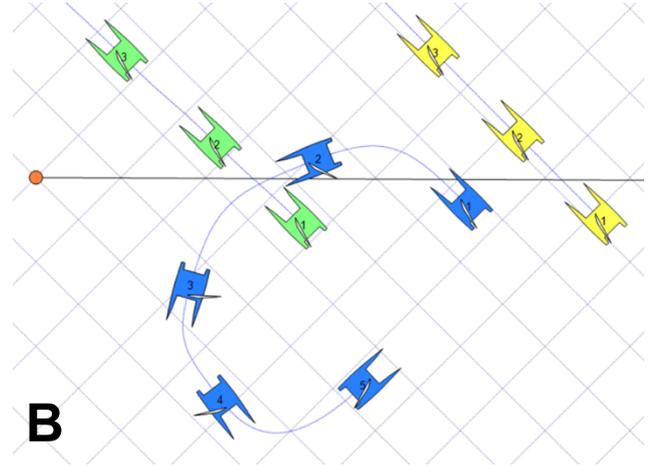
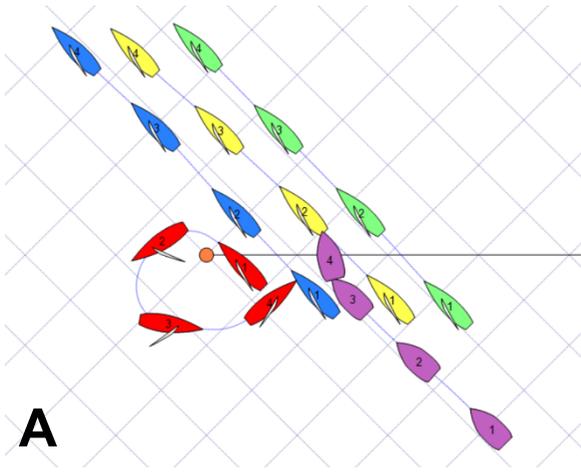


Each RIB covers their own group (big arrow) but should also be aware of the nearest boat in an adjacent group, as she may interact with boats from the RIB's own group (small arrow).

It is not necessarily the RIB closest to a pair of active boats that has the best view of an incident. In the situation above, if Orange protests Green for breaking rule 11, RIB 2 probably has the better view. If the protest is for rule 12 (bow / stern), RIB 1 may have the better view.

If resources are limited, the umpires should focus on the places on the line where incidents are most likely. This is usually the CV or pin end.

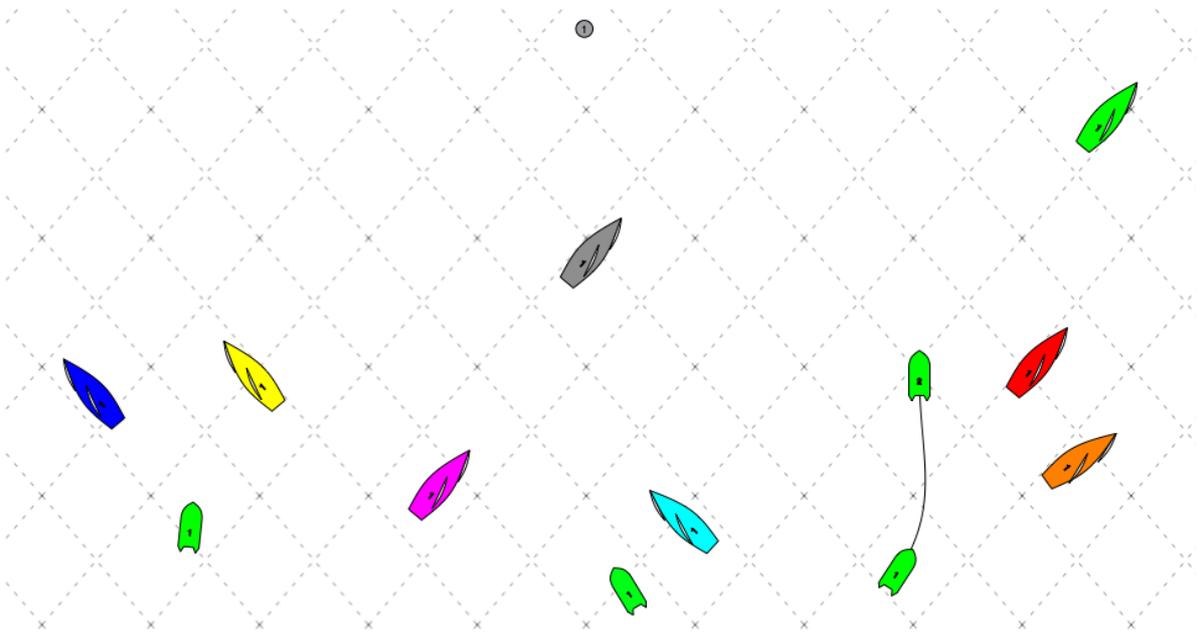
Individual Recalls. At the start, RIBs should **not** immediately move forwards. A boat might be OCS, or take a penalty, and should have the space to make a turn in front of the RIBs. The space needed for such manoeuvres depends on the class - some boats accelerate quickly as they bear away. In monohulls it is common for OCS boats to return around the pin-end starting mark (**A**). In catamarans and other faster moving classes (e.g. Nacra) an OCS boat will often make a large turning circle in order to return so the umpires should be alert for such a manoeuvre.



In such cases a boat might delay the final tack of a penalty turn to secure clear wind. An umpire may only penalize that delay if permitted to do so by rule MR4.1(a)/UF3.4(a) (umpire-initiated penalty). This is only likely if the original penalty was signalled by an umpire, or if the rule broken was rule 31.

7.3.3. The Windward Leg

On a beat, the RIBs should be spread left-to-right and front-to-back (not all behind the fleet). Whenever possible, a RIB should drive in a head-to-wind direction to minimise speed and therefore wake. Boats may unexpectedly tack, and the driver should know in advance what to do if a boat nearby tacks towards the RIB.



The most common breach on a beat is a port tack boat failing to cross, or tacking too close to leeward of, a starboard tack boat. In the diagram, Purple on port is approaching Light Blue on starboard. The nearby RIB is in a good position as it appears Purple will need to tack. If Purple were to try to cross, the RIB should either be more advanced and closer to Purple, or on the other side of Light Blue, to judge the bow / stern gap as Purple crosses.

Dark Blue and Yellow, and Red and Orange, are the two other active pairs. Each is being watched by a nearby RIB.

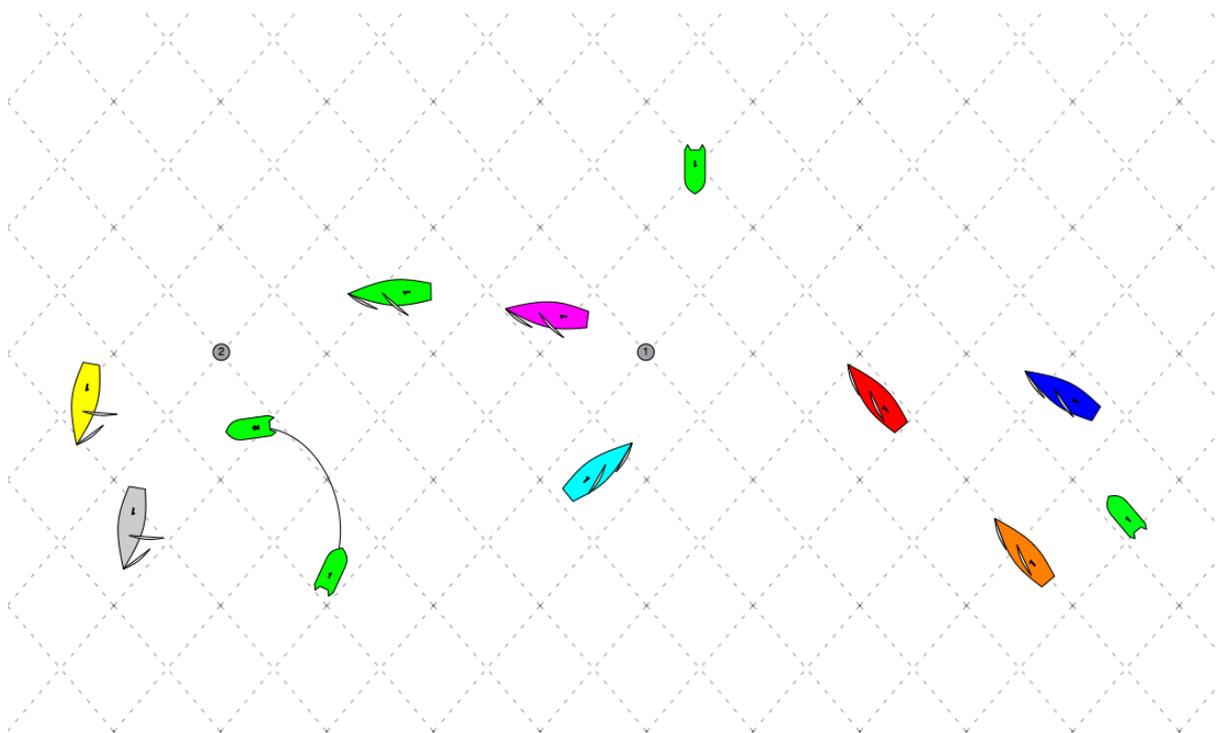
Towards the end of a beat, one RIB (either left or right) needs to move to windward of the mark in time to watch the first boats (Green and Grey here) approach and round it. Here the RIB on the left has an active pair, whereas the back-right pair Red and Orange are unlikely to have an incident, and Green and Grey will soon become an active pair in the front-right area of the course.

The RIB on the right is therefore making an early move forwards, advising the other RIBs that it will go to windward of the mark. The RIB takes the opportunity presented to move through the fleet by crossing behind Orange and Red. In response the middle RIB should move further to the right as soon as it is free to do so.

On the first beat the majority of the fleet may be on the left side and it will be easier for the RIB on the right-hand side of the course to move to above the top mark. If the majority is on the right side, it may be easier for the left RIB to make this move. When a RIB makes this move, the other two RIBs should adjust their positions. The umpires make their intentions clear through their positioning and use of the radio should not be necessary here.

On subsequent beats, if the fleet is spread out, one RIB will be front and will watch the leading boats round the mark and either remain there for the rest of the fleet, or leave the mark with the front group, depending on other RIB and boat positions.

7.3.4. The Windward Mark



When a close fleet converges at the first windward mark, the RIBs need to be in positions so that between them they can see all critical facts. With three RIBs it is normal to adopt the **ABOVE**, **BELOW LEFT**, and **BEHIND RIGHT** positions shown. With two RIBs **ABOVE** and **BEHIND RIGHT** is usually best. Radio communication may be essential for a decision requiring facts from more than one RIB.

Usually a boat with mark-room also has right-of-way, so rule 18.2 is not the main issue. Rules 18.3, 11, 12, 13, 15 and 31 are more likely to decide an incident.

BELOW LEFT is best placed to judge the zone, and crucially whether a port tack boat passes head to wind inside or outside the zone when she tacks. **BELOW LEFT** should usually then turn and take the leaders as they leave the mark.

ABOVE should be on the extension of the starboard tack layline, able to see the gap between overlapped boats approaching the mark, and whether a boat touches the mark. The umpires can also judge rule 18.3 (i.e. whether a boat that tacked causes a fetching boat to sail above close-hauled), and rule 13 when a port boat tacks to leeward of a starboard boat for the front half of the fleet.

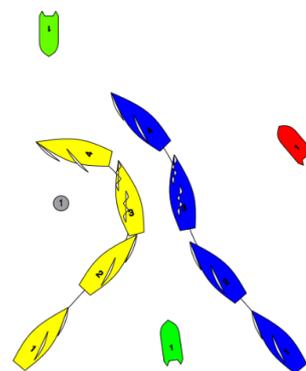
BEHIND RIGHT is able to judge these incidents for the back half of the fleet, and is likely to have the best view of whether a boat breaks rule 31 as she bears away.

When a fleet is more spread, it is usually better for RIBs to stay with their groups, watching from close behind and then if possible passing to leeward of the mark.

For a race umpired by two RIBs, the diagram on the right shows good positions. Usually the left-side RIB goes **ABOVE** the mark and right-side RIB is **BEHIND**, on or just below the starboard tack layline.

ABOVE moves away with the leaders unless they gybe, when **BEHIND** should take them.

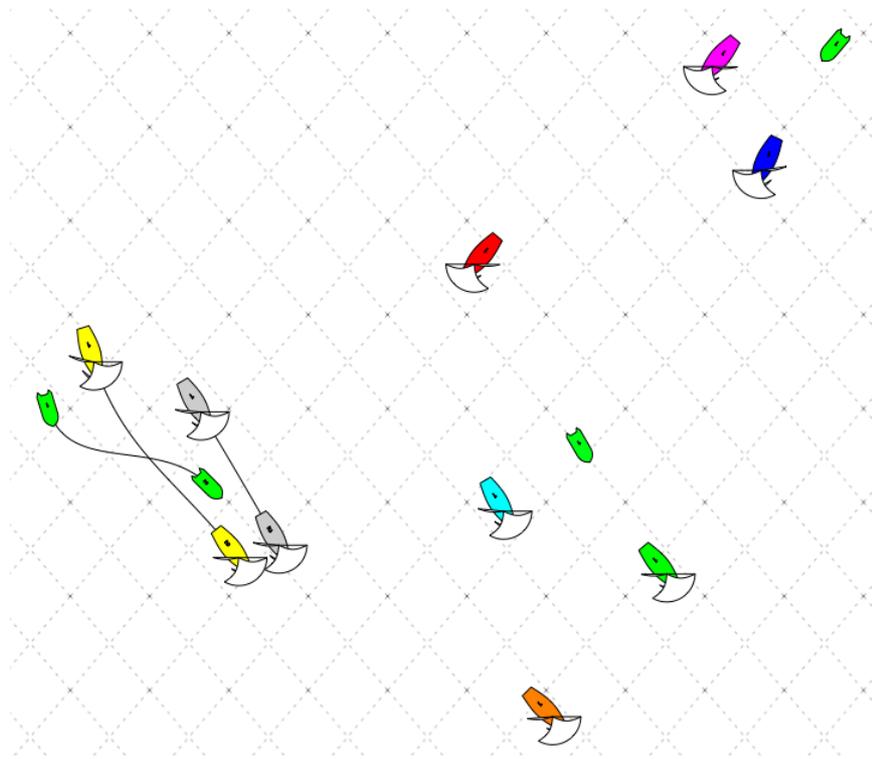
The red RIB is a poor position for windward mark incidents. The umpires cannot see when boats complete their tacks, the gap between starboard boats, nor whether a boat touches the mark



7.3.5. The Downwind Leg

Usually, when **ABOVE** leaves the mark, it will be on the outside of the fleet, and the other RIBs will be inside. With fast boats, being outside the fleet is generally not desirable, as if boats gybe it is difficult to catch up. In general, RIBs should be level with the boats they are watching, aligned with a critical point (e.g. the bow of the second boat), and moving to close astern when the gap between boats becomes the issue. The most common incidents downwind are windward / leeward engagements and port / starboard crosses. The left-hand RIB is in a good position to see the overlap between Yellow and Grey (and whether rule 17 applies).

As Yellow gets closer to Grey, the RIB moves to the gap between the boats to judge whether Grey keeps clear. Whereas the other two RIBs are behind where they should be, as if the boats start to engage they will have to accelerate to get into a good position. It is not easy to call an incident while catching up.



The front RIB should be level with Green, the middle of the three boats, and the back RIB should be level with Dark Blue. At this time no RIB needs to be close to Red.

For windward / leeward incidents it is usually best to be level with the bow of the boat behind, but on the side of the boat ahead. If the leeward boat is ahead, she is likely to luff and a windward RIB would be in the path of the windward boat.

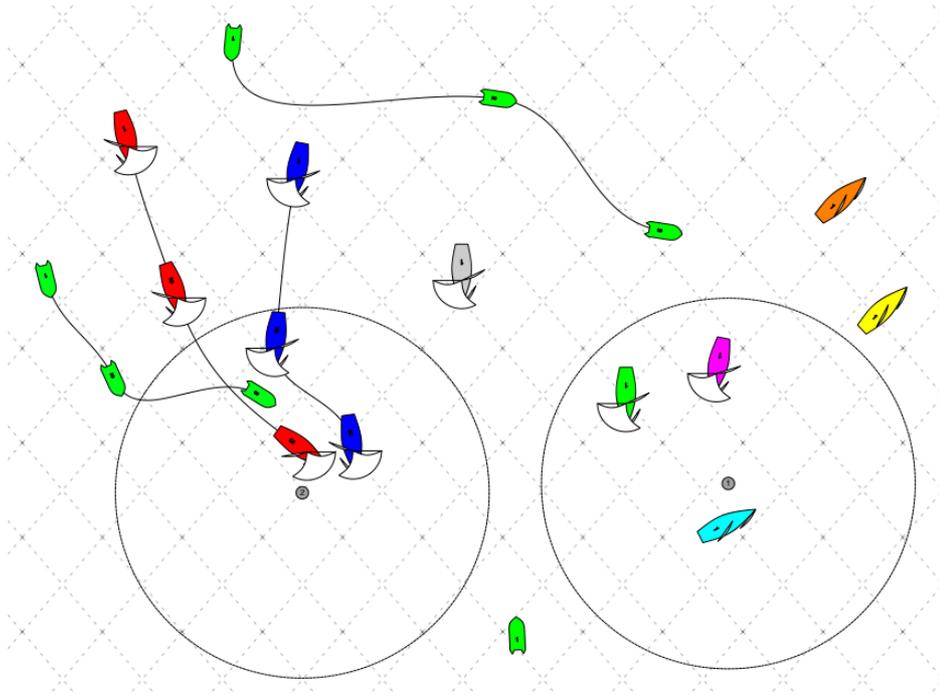
If the windward boat is ahead (see diagram), only a windward RIB can see the gap as it narrows. Also a windward RIB can easily move to be astern of the gap. In this situation, if there are two RIBs, one can move into the gap, and the other can ‘wing-umpire’ and provide overlap information over the radio. See section 4.4.

7.3.6. Leeward Mark or Gate

If the fleet is close, it is usually best for the front RIB to reach the zone level with the leading boats, and then take a position to leeward of the mark or gate. The back RIB should be ready to turn and take the leaders upwind. If the fleet is well spread, the RIBs should normally stay with their groups and only “swap” when obvious.

The diagram shows an example of such a handover. **FRONT** calls Orange and Yellow round the right-hand mark and remains below the gate. **MIDDLE** stays with Red and Blue as they approach and then leave the left-hand mark. **BACK** leaves Red and Blue (as they are now being watched by **FRONT**) and picks up Orange and Yellow. Light Blue and Grey, on their own, are still watched round the mark by **FRONT**.

Zone Calls. As it is hard to judge zone overlaps from below the gate. **BACK** remains responsible for the call of whether Pink and Green were overlapped at the zone.



If this were a finish, (not a leeward gate):

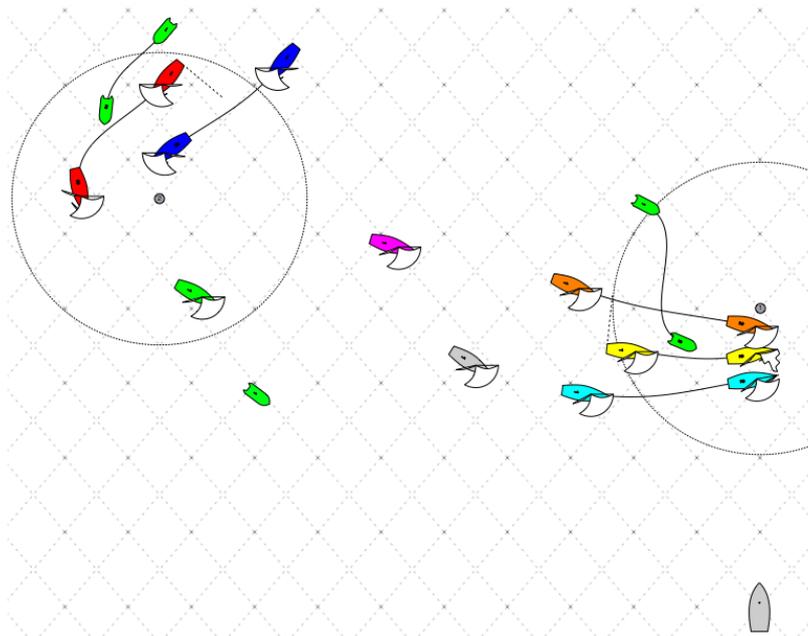
FRONT should instead remain level with and outside the right-hand mark after Orange finishes.

MIDDLE is then in position for the left-hand mark finishers.

BACK is responsible for mid-line finishers.

7.3.7. Reaching Finish

Umpires should be close approaching the finish line, Decisions here have a big impact on boats' finishing positions, so must be signalled quickly.



FRONT at the leeward mark should normally be to windward on the final reach, able to see the overlaps and if necessary move to see gaps between boats at the finish mark.

Being to leeward is less good unless the leg is leeward-biased. Sails can restrict the view of hulls, and in strong or gusty wind space needs to be left for boats to bear away to accelerate or keep control of the spinnaker.

Section 8

Positioning II

8 Positioning 2: Macro and Micro Positioning

In fleet race umpiring no two races are the same. RIBs should adjust position to cover each incident taking into account the rest of the fleet and where the other RIBs are. Good positioning can be thought of as a combination of “macro” and “micro” positioning.

Micro positioning is how a RIB is positioned relative to boats to decide an incident between them. In a typical windward / leeward incident, the correct micro position may be behind the boats to see the gap between them. It can be likened to the typical match race umpire position for the same incident. However, this position may not be available because of other boats and RIBs.

Macro positioning is how all the RIBs are positioned relative to the fleet. It can be thought of as the ‘big picture’. Are all boats in the fleet being covered by the RIBs? Are there are RIBs watching the same incident?

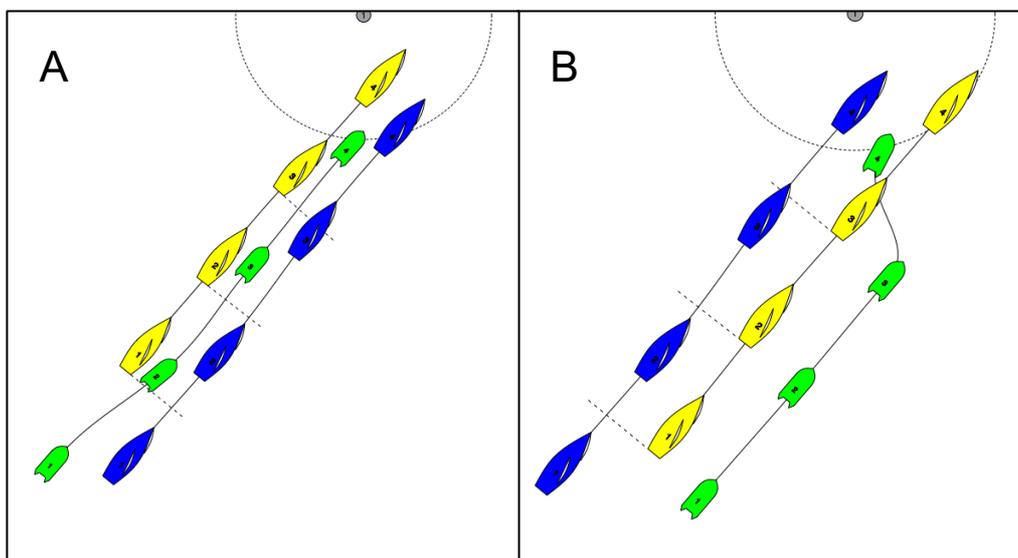
This chapter explains how to combine micro and macro on each leg of a typical course

8.1 Combining Micro and Macro Positioning

8.1.1. Anticipation

Umpires need to anticipate potential situations so they can position themselves suitably, establish the facts of any incident, and then make and signal a decision. With experience, umpires become familiar with moves boats may make in given positions, and where to be to get the best view of a potential incident.

Example: Approaching a Port-hand Windward Mark



In **A**, calling the zone is not critical as Blue will be required to give mark-room whether or not the boats are overlapped at the zone. The umpires do not move to call the overlap; they stay in the best position to see the gap between the boats.

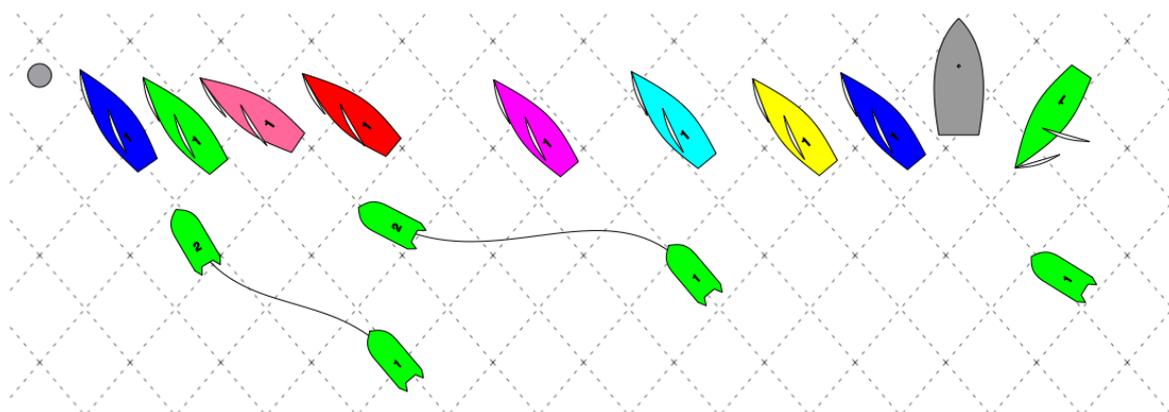
In **B**, the overlap at the zone is critical, so the RIB is to leeward, aligned with the clear ahead boat's stern-line. As soon as the mark-room relationship is established, the RIB moves into the gap between the boats.

Umpires should try to include likely tactics and moves in their dialogue, and rules switches that may occur. This maximises the chance of being in the right place and calling the relevant facts to make a correct decision.

8.1.2. Working as a Team

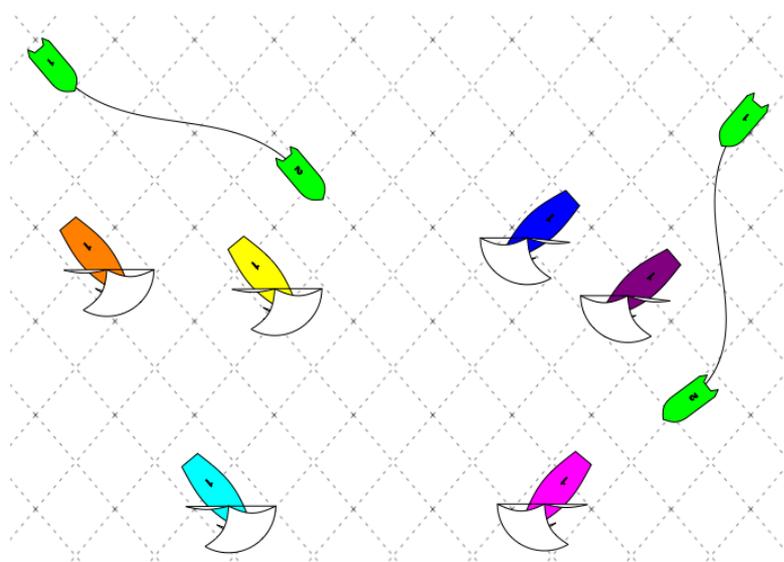
The mark of a good umpire team is that every incident is covered, with a minimum of rushing around, and the RIBs effortlessly moving in sync with each other.

Example: Approaching the Start



In the last 30 seconds before the start, the boats are lining up along the start line, and the three RIBs are watching approximately a third of the boats each. As the start nears, Umpire 2 in the middle sees the middle boats are not active, so moves towards the pin to watch Dark Pink in her engagement with Green and Red. Umpire 1 at the pin-end can now focus only on the pin mark, Blue and Green. These position changes should be automatic. Each RIB continually checks if other RIBs need help, and moves to support them as necessary. No radio call is needed

8.1.3. On a Downwind Leg



Two groups of three boats are converging on opposite tacks. In each group the back pair is active, with a RIB astern watching the gap.

When the groups meet there will be three port-starboard crosses, and the RIBs need to move into positions to call them.

The crucial thing is that both RIBs are not “spat out the back”, missing the front pair’s incident and then having to catch up.

The RIB watching Orange and Yellow can easily move to the middle and watch the two back crosses, first between Blue and Yellow, then Purple and Orange.

By moving, this RIB signals to the other RIB that it is watching both back crosses. The other RIB responds by moving forwards to cover the cross between Light Blue and Pink that the back RIB is unable to see. By following the track of the starboard boats, the RIB moving forward is safe and will not disturb any boats with wake.

If the port boats do luff and pass astern (as is likely), the RIBs should maintain their courses and swap sides.

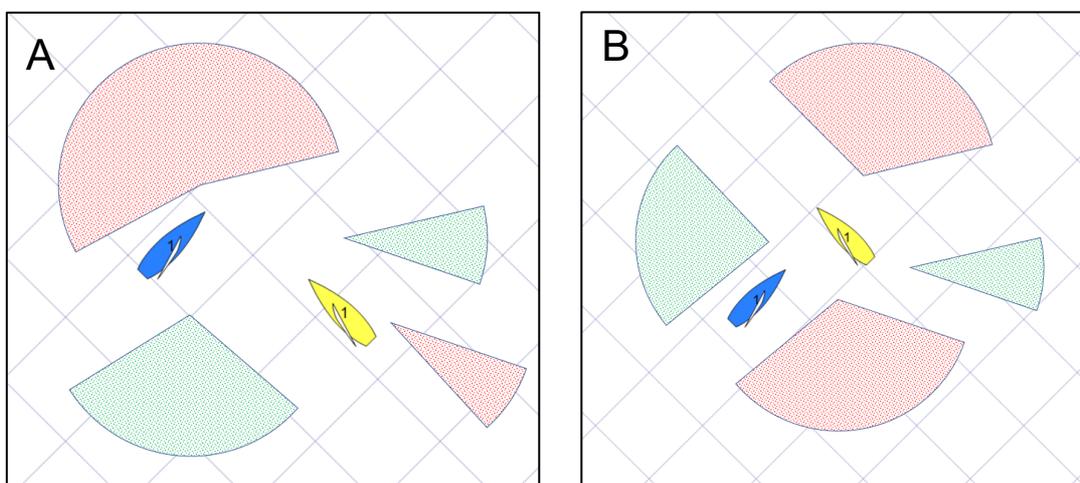
8.2 The Windward Leg

8.2.1. Micro Positioning

The most common incident on upwind is a port / starboard cross. To decide if rule 10 is broken, the umpires need to see:

- i. the distance between the starboard boat’s bow and the port boat’s stern;
- ii. any action by the starboard’s helmsman or rudder to alter course.

In **A**, port-tack Blue is aiming to cross ahead of starboard tack Yellow. The RIB should not be in the red areas as from there it is difficult to judge the distance between the boats when they cross. The green areas are the better positions.

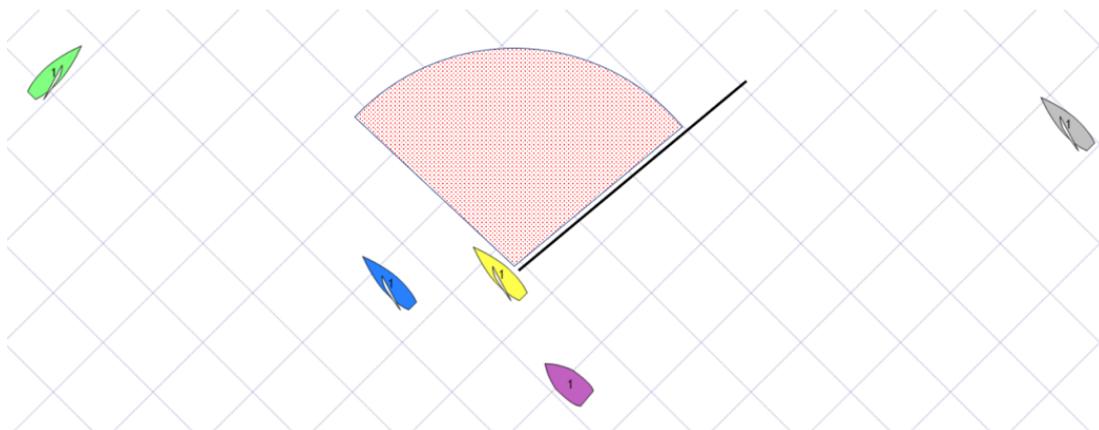


In **B**, starboard-tack Yellow is crossing ahead of port-tack Blue. A rule breach is unlikely, but the umpires should watch for two possible incidents. Blue may misjudge the cross, resulting in contact, or Yellow may cross and immediately tack, creating a windward / leeward incident. A RIB in the red areas will not be able to see contact as boats cross. The left-hand green area is best if Yellow is likely to tack as it gives a good view of the next incident. The right-hand green area is also good, especially if Yellow is unlikely to tack or the umpires want to stay with Yellow after the cross.

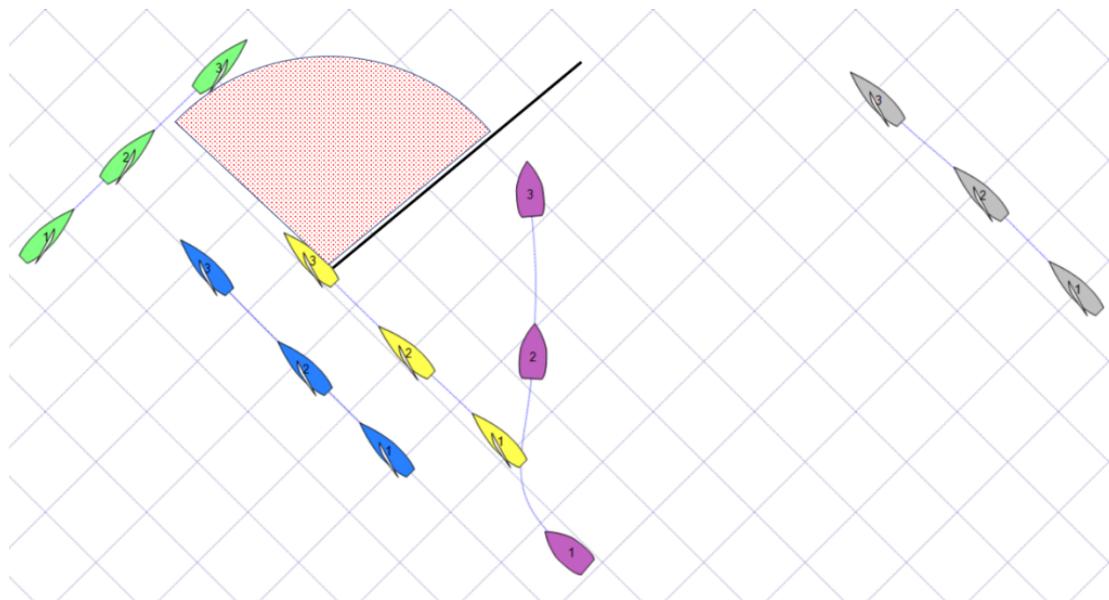
8.2.2. Macro Positioning

Moving Upwind Between Boats

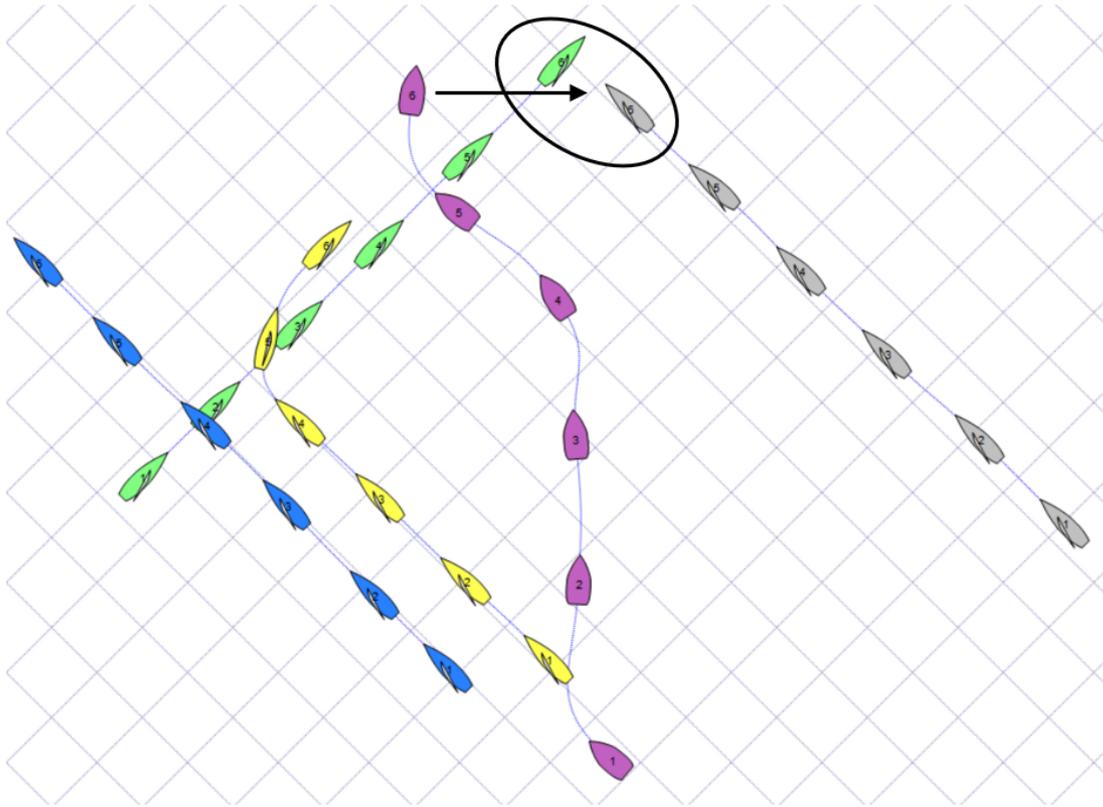
The correct micro positioning for all port / starboard incidents needs to be achieved in a fleet with many boats and several potential incidents. This is usually harder for a RIB in the middle than for the RIBs on either side of the fleet. RIBs should never cross at speed in front of boats sailing upwind, so the most important factor is to see potential crosses early, in plenty of time to move slowly to the new position.



In the diagram, the purple RIB (middle) is watching Blue and Yellow, and there is a potential incident in the front-middle of the fleet between Green and Grey. Purple RIB needs to leave Blue and Yellow to the RIB on the left, and move forwards without putting wake across boats. The RIB's route should have two main elements.



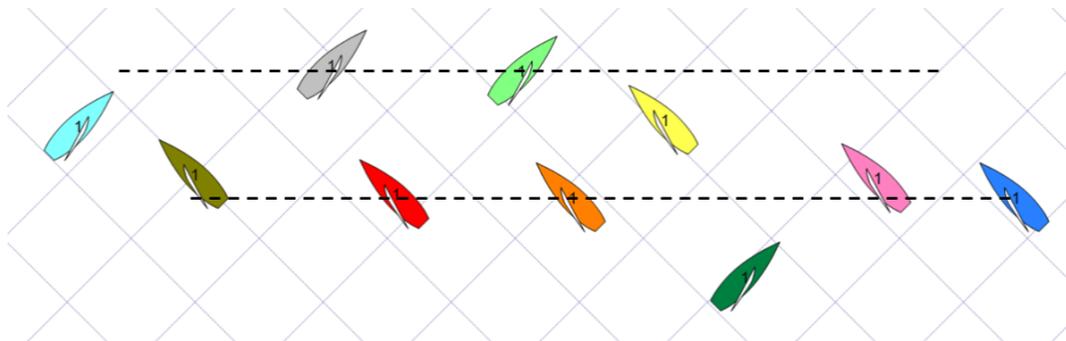
Initially the RIB should turn and drive head-to-wind with a small increase in speed. At this time the RIB stays behind Yellow's stern-line. This avoids putting wake across boats, and means that if Yellow tacks she will still cross ahead of the RIB (which might have to slow).



At Position 4, the RIB is far enough from Yellow that, if Yellow tacks, the RIB can cross in front without disturbance. At this point the umpires focus on being in a good micro position to call the incident between Green and Grey. As Green is trying to cross, the RIB slows and turns to pass astern of Green to reach the ideal position.

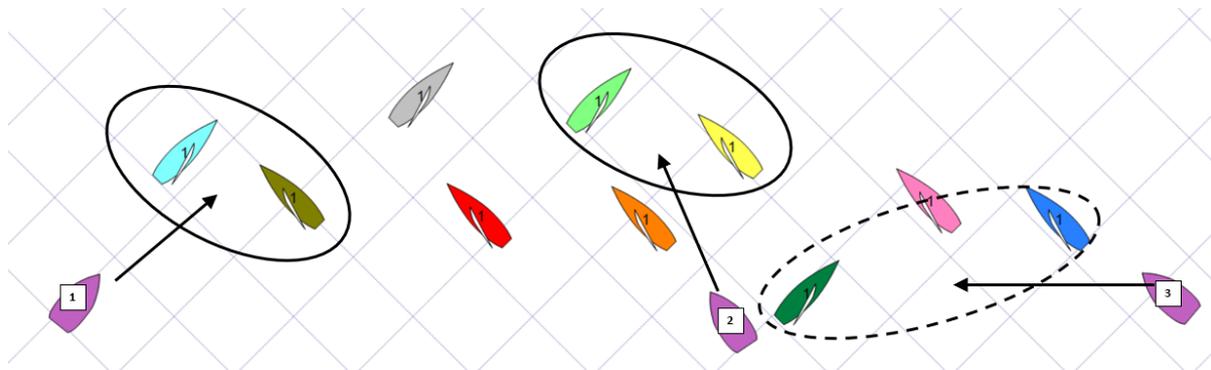
The RIB position is also perfect if Green passes astern of Grey. If it appears Green is preparing to tack to leeward of Grey, the RIB would not turn at Position 4, and would then be in the gap and well positioned to make any call.

RIB Interaction (Upwind)

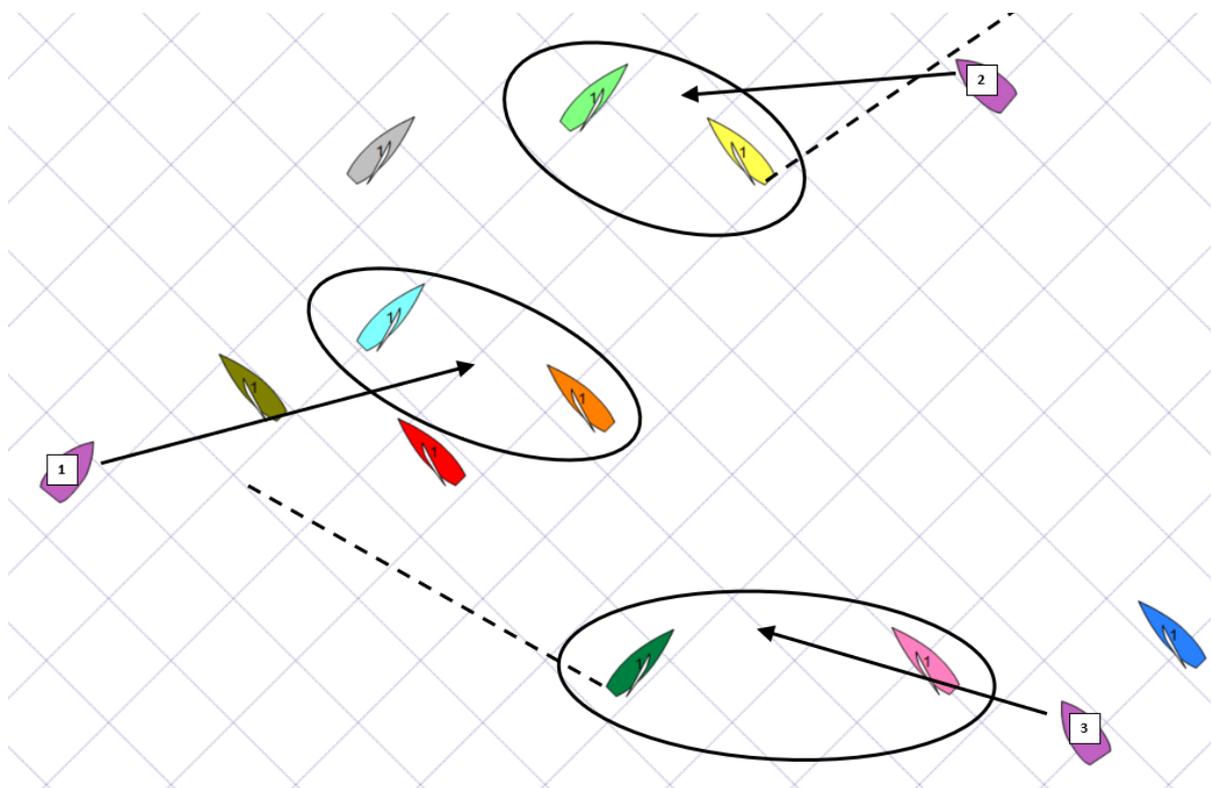


For most the first upwind leg, boats will be close and on the same 'rung of the ladder'. Even if there are two lines of boats; it is usually neither possible nor wise to position a RIB between them. The umpires should be able to see most incidents from behind the fleet, and RIBs can move left or right to maintain a good angle of view.

The RIBs split the incidents amongst themselves. RIB 2 in the middle may have the hardest job as there may be some back-markers (such as OCS boats) in the middle of the course, but with careful positioning RIB 2 can still see the crossing incident shown below between front rank boats Green and Yellow.



On the second windward leg boats are likely to be more spread out, and RIBs should switch from 'line' mode to 'group' mode, and stay level with their group.



RIB 2 (front) calls the cross between Green and Yellow and the next one between Grey and Yellow (or Grey and Green if Green tacks). RIB 2 needs to be careful not to move too far forward in case Yellow tacks, and to keep an eye on Light Blue to avoid causing any wake or disturbance.

RIB 1 (middle) calls the cross between Orange and Light Blue. RIB 1 needs to take account of the Red boat, making sure Red does not block its view at the critical moment. After the cross, RIB 1 should turn to port and stay with the group of three on starboard tack.

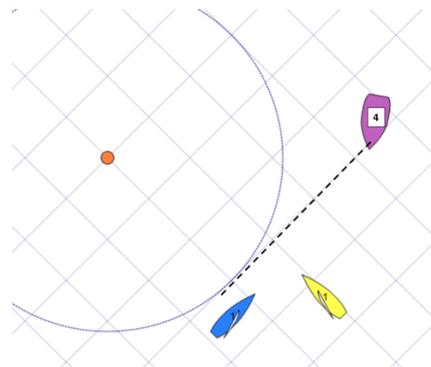
RIB 3 is easiest position, calling the incident between Green and Pink from behind. If Green tries to cross, RIB 3 should move up slightly for a perfect view of the bow-stern gap when Pink passes astern, and the ensuing Green / Blue incident.

8.2.3. The Windward Mark – Umpiring with 4 RIBS

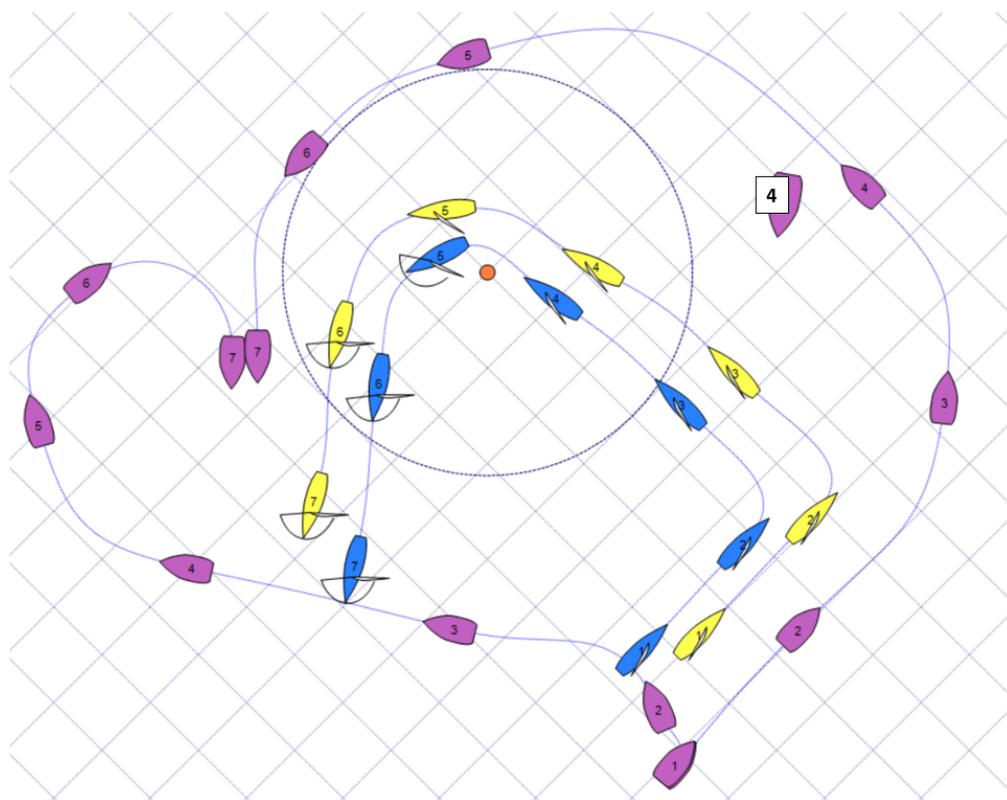
Incidents are most likely to occur at the windward mark, especially on lap 1. When resources permit, many events use a 4th RIB to assist at the windward mark. RIB 4 is at this mark from the start of the race until the last boat rounds it for the final time, and then stays level with this last group to the finish.

Calling the Zone becomes Umpire 4's responsibility.

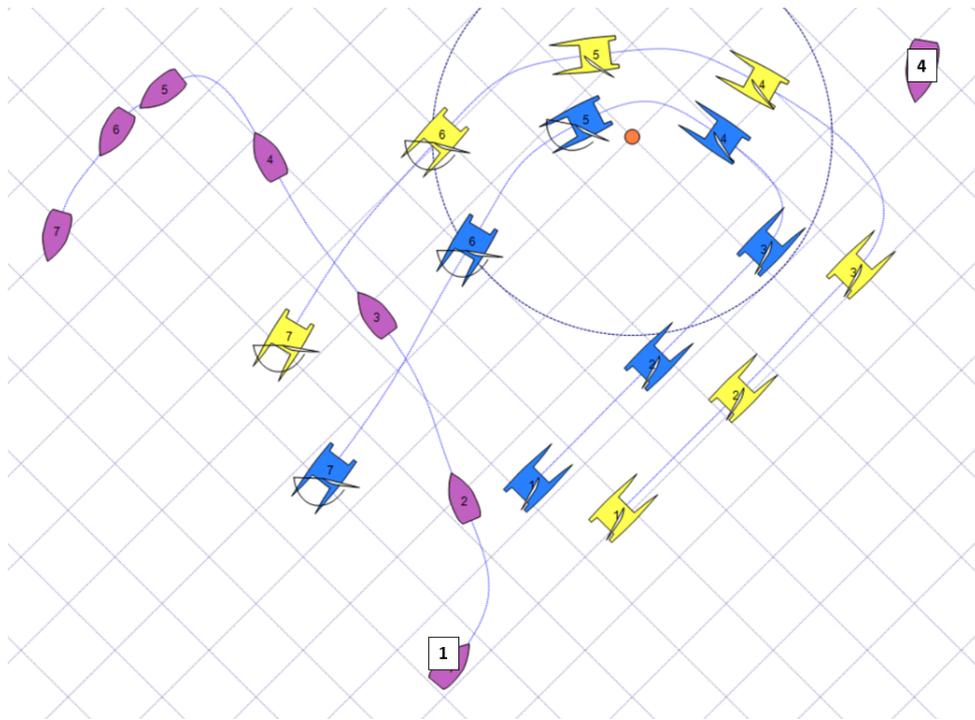
It cannot be done accurately from above the mark; the diagram shows a good position which can usually be held with light use of reverse gear. The other RIBs do not need to rush to be at the windward mark when the leader gets there, and instead can take-up positions ready to watch boats as they leave the mark (usually downwind).



The diagram below shows the two options the other RIBs have for positioning for the downwind leg. Either they round the mark passing behind Umpire 4, or they move left, ready to pick up the boats as they bear away. The latter is usually much the better option. It does not interfere with RIB 4, and does not create wake near the mark. Also the RIB to leeward is more likely to see mark contact and then be in a position to signal a penalty, while RIB 4 may be busy with the boats behind.



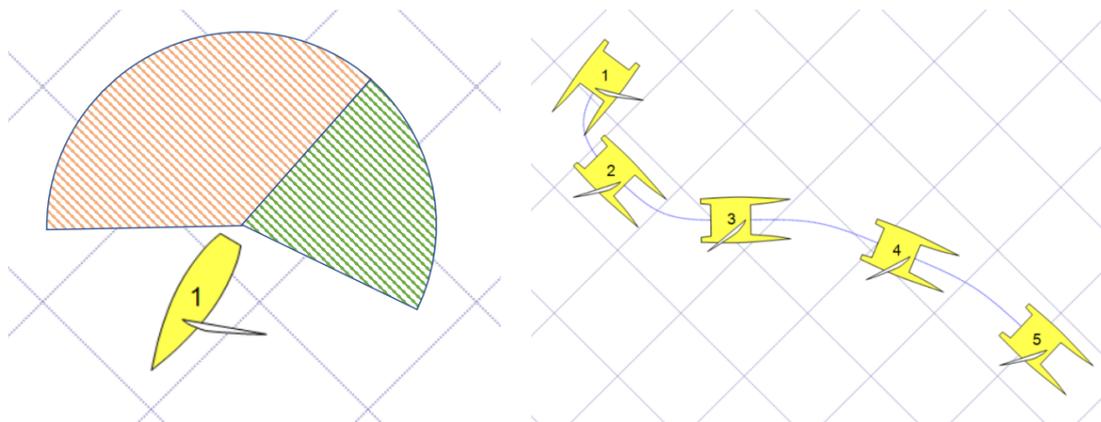
With faster boats such as foilers and skiffs, the RIB which will be covering the leading boats on the downwind leg should always move to the left, and then usually turn left (not right, as shown above) to be on a down-wind course. Rounding the mark will take too long, and wake can be particularly devastating to these types of boats.



8.3 Downwind leg

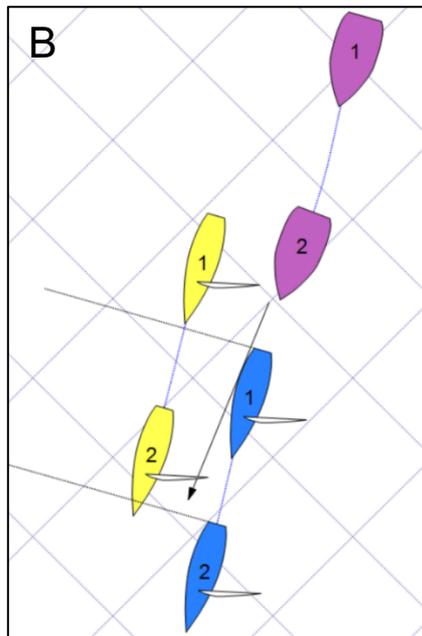
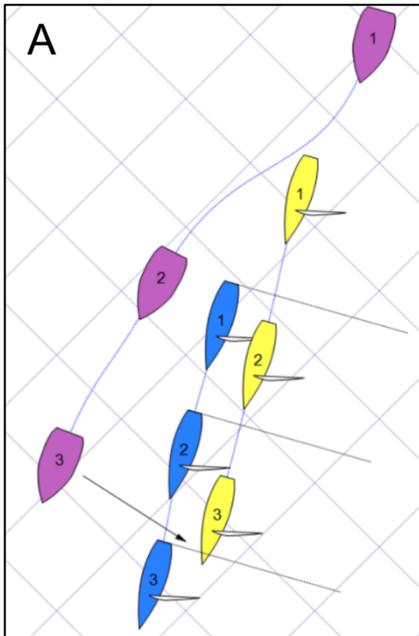
8.3.1. Micro positioning

On a downwind leg the RIBs must be in a good position if boats gybe, and not disturb boats with wake. When close, best is to be behind. A RIB in the orange area may disturb the boat with noise or wind shadow, so green is the better area. However care must be taken to give fast boats the space to luff to accelerate after a gybe.



8.3.2. Positioning for overlaps

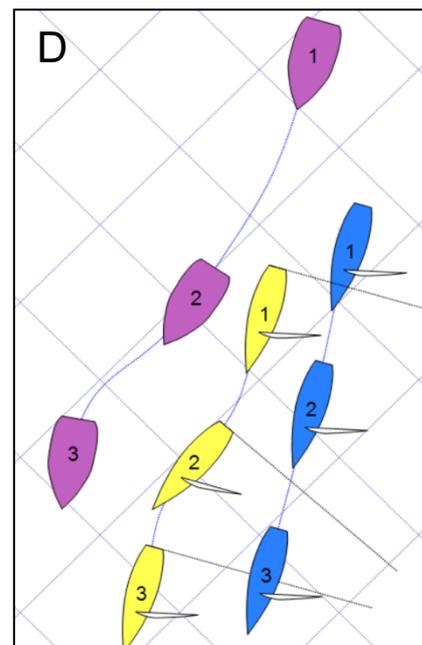
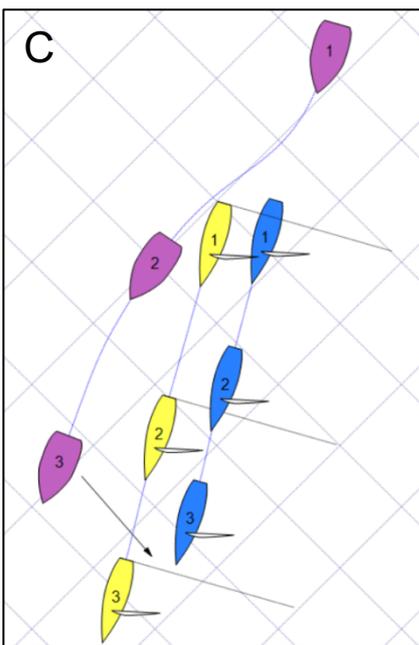
Downwind incidents frequently involve two boats sailing on the same tack, one becoming overlapped from astern. Rules 11, 15, 16.1 and 17 may apply and the RIB needs to be in a position to see the critical facts. The two possible scenarios depend on whether the astern boat becomes overlapped to windward or to leeward.



A. Astern Boat becomes Leeward. Yellow, sailing faster, becomes overlapped to leeward of Blue. Yellow acquires right of way and must initially give Blue room to keep clear (rule 15). Also Yellow may not sail above her proper course (rule 17).

The umpires anticipate this and move forwards and to windward to judge the moment the overlapped is established, whether Yellow gives enough room, and whether Blue promptly acts to keep clear. Because Yellow may not sail above a proper course, the windward position is safe.

B. Astern Boat becomes Windward. There is no change in the right-of-way, and Blue may luff. The moment that the overlap is created is not important, and so the umpires remain astern watching the gap between the boats to call rules 11 and 16.1. Likewise it is more important to see when a windward boat becomes clear ahead, and right of way switches, than when a leeward boat becomes clear ahead.



C. Windward Boat, sailing faster, becomes Clear Ahead. The umpires, who had been watching the gap, make the same manoeuvre as in **A**, so are in the right position if the boats become overlapped again.

D. Windward Boat Luffs to Break the Overlap. To require leeward Blue to sail her proper course, Yellow luffs to break the overlap, then bears away. The umpires move to windward to see whether the overlap is broken.

8.3.3. Port/starboard crosses

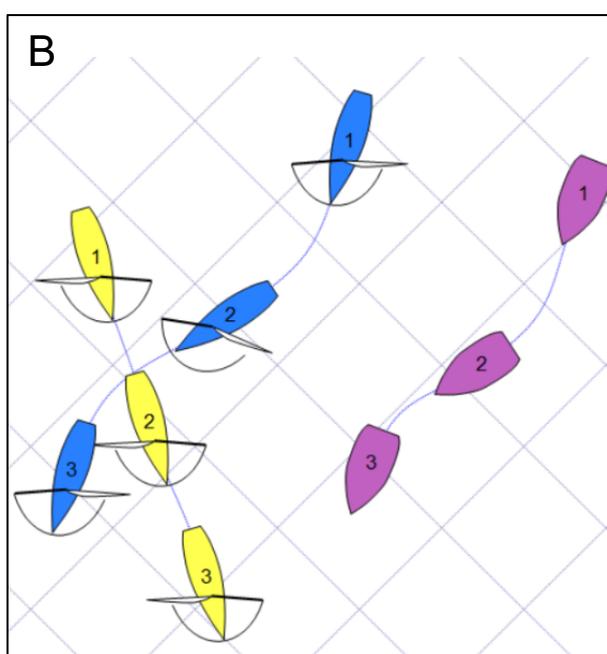
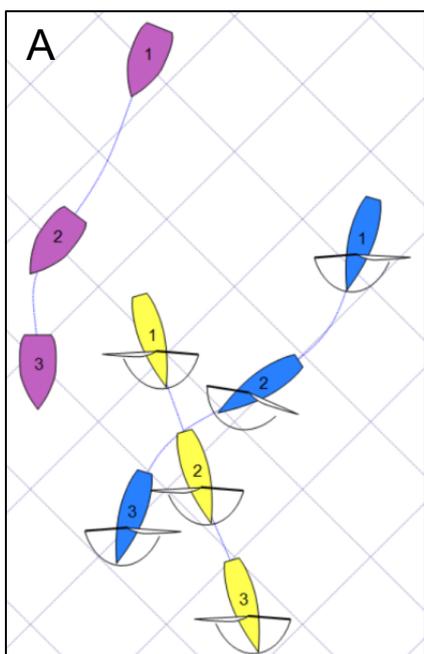
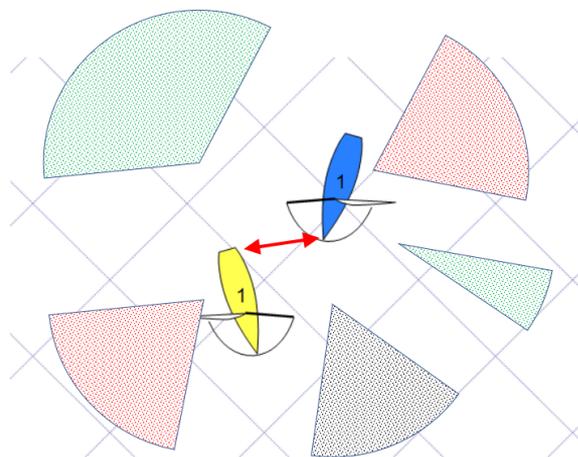
If a starboard boat is crossing ahead of a port boat, the umpires only need to be in a position to see contact if port misjudges her course.

The more important scenario is when Yellow on port can potentially cross in front of Blue on starboard. The two important facts to be seen by the umpires are:

- i. the distance between the boats (red arrow); and
- ii. any alteration of course by the starboard boat Blue.

This cannot be seen from the red areas. The black area is even worse as this puts wake in front of the boats.

Best is the left-back green area from which everything can be seen clearly. The right-hand green area can be a solution if the RIB is on that side, but care needs to be taken with wake, and in case Blue gybes.



On occasion, the starboard boat may luff to try to convince the umpires that this was necessary to avoid contact (a so called 'Hollywood'). Especially with fast boats, a luff will increase a boat's speed which can lead to the perception that it was necessary. To call this incident correctly, it is crucial to be able to see accurately the actual distance between the Blue's bow and the corner of Yellow's transom, and (by watching Blue's rudder) the moment Blue changes course.

In **A**, the umpires move to windward to be able to see these facts clearly. The closer and further forward the RIB is, the easier this move is. In **B**, where the RIB is to leeward of Blue, the umpires are likely to be further away making it slightly harder to judge the distance between the boats.

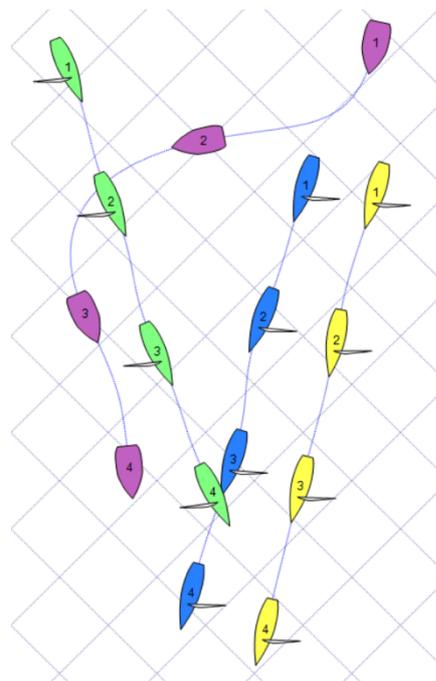
8.3.4. Macro positioning

More than two boats introduces some additional positioning considerations.

The diagram shows a typical three-boat incident. Yellow and Blue are close, and Green is aiming to cross behind them. If the umpires don't change position, they will lose sight of Yellow and Blue while Green crosses.

When the umpires are sure that Green will pass astern of Blue and Yellow, and that Green is an inactive boat, they move quickly across Green's stern. Initially they do not move too far forward in case Green gybes at the last moment. Once Green is passing astern, they can move forward to assume the correct micro position for calling in the incident between Yellow and Blue.

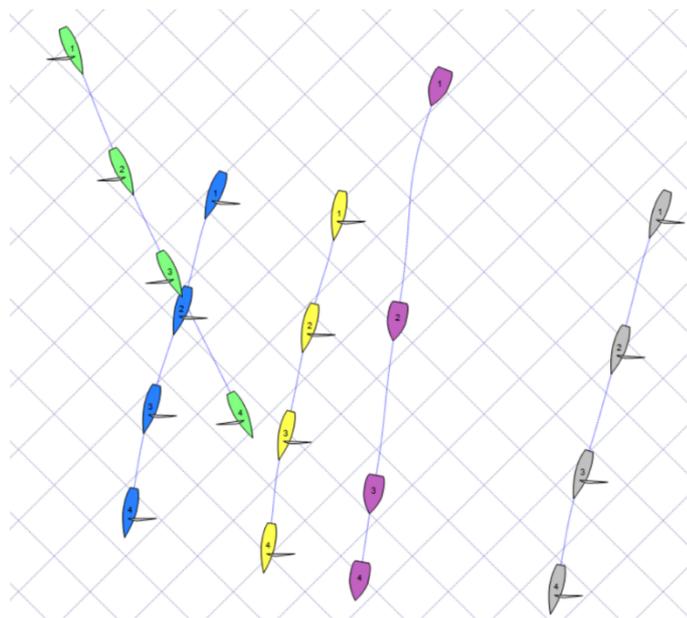
In this way, the umpires bring forward and shorten the time Green blocks their view, lessening the risk of being unsighted.



In a second example, the umpires are watching three boats Blue, Yellow and Grey, and there is no doubt that that Green is an inactive boat who will cross behind all three.

However, the umpires see they are on collision course with Green, and do not want to disturb her.

The umpires don't want to pass astern of Green as they will be too far from the action. The umpires therefore move forward, ahead of the boats they are watching, and then slow down to minimise their wake as Green crosses astern.



8.3.5. Umpire interaction

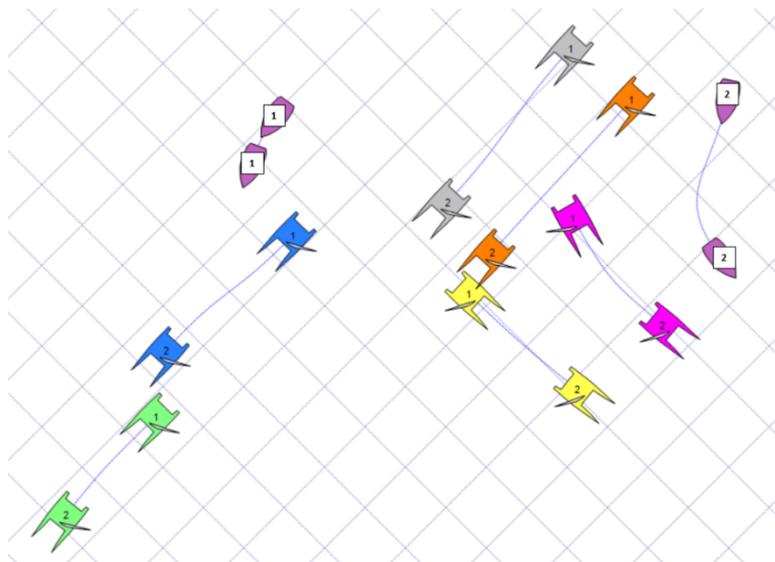
No two situations are ever exactly the same, and umpires need anticipation to apply these principles to each particular situation, especially when umpiring fast boats.

On a run, both RIBs are watching 3 boats, one ahead and an active pair. The leading group is more to windward, so RIB 1 can be to windward of his group without disturbing the other group behind.

The umpires need to plan how they will move when boats start to gybe. They should realise that if Yellow or Blue gybe first, RIB 1 will not be able to follow as it would mean crossing close in front of Pink.



When Yellow and Pink both gybe, RIB 1 does not need to follow Blue and Green. There is little possibility of them becoming active. The two active pairs are now Grey and Orange, and Yellow and Pink which RIB 1 cannot take. RIB 2 should promptly move to take Pink and Yellow. This allows RIB 1 to slow and take Grey and Orange



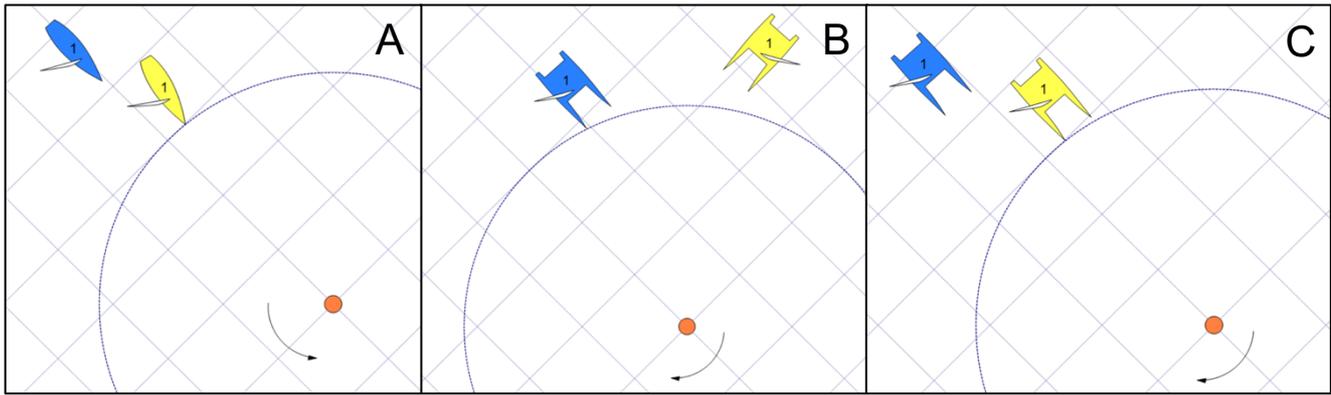
By switching which RIB covers which active pair, the umpires remain in a correct micro position for every potential incident, and minimise wake to the racing boats.

8.4 Leeward Marks and Gates

At a leeward mark there is the potential for many different incidents. Umpires must know in advance the facts they need to see in order to decide where they should be.

For example, in **A** and **B** below, whether there is an overlap at the zone is not relevant as the same boat is entitled to mark-room regardless of whether the boats were overlapped. What is critical is to know is when the first boat reaches the zone, as that may be when a keep clear boat becomes entitled to mark-room.

In contrast, in situation **C**, whether there is an overlap at the zone is critical as it determines which boat is entitled to mark-room.



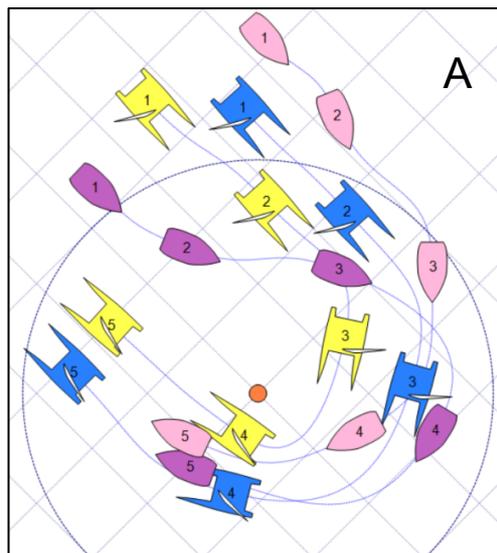
8.4.1. Micro and macro positioning

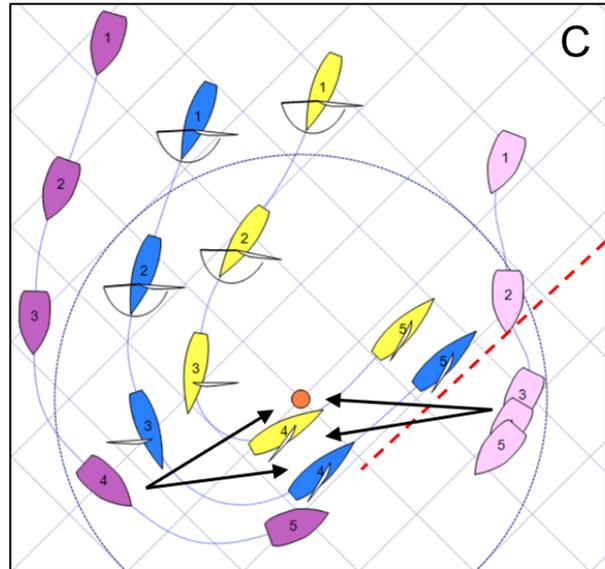
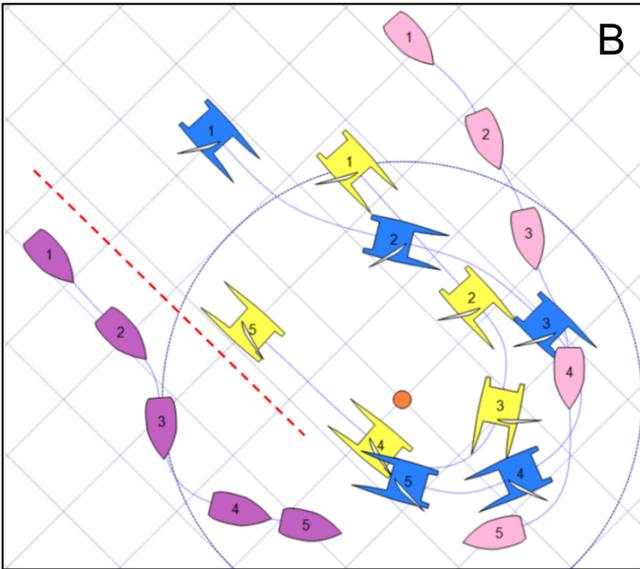
When watching boats round a leeward mark, umpires have two positioning options:

- i. **Inside:** umpires round the mark behind, and on the same side as the boats (both RIBs in **A**);
- ii. **Outside:** umpires pass the mark on the opposite side to the boats, and are stationary when boats round the mark (purple RIB in **B** and pink RIB in **C**).

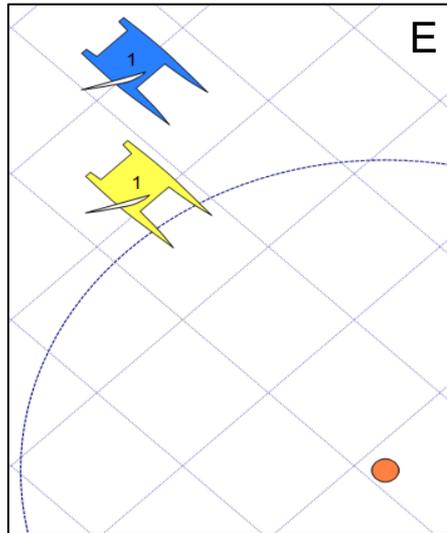
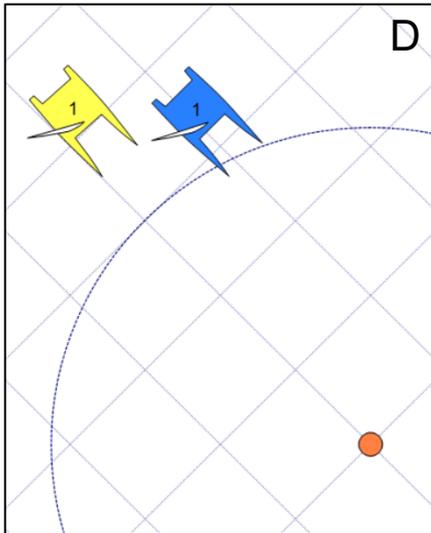
An **outside** RIB should:

- a. be to leeward of boats' close-hauled course leaving the mark (the red dashed line);
- b. if possible turn to point in the direction of next travel before becoming stationary (not shown).

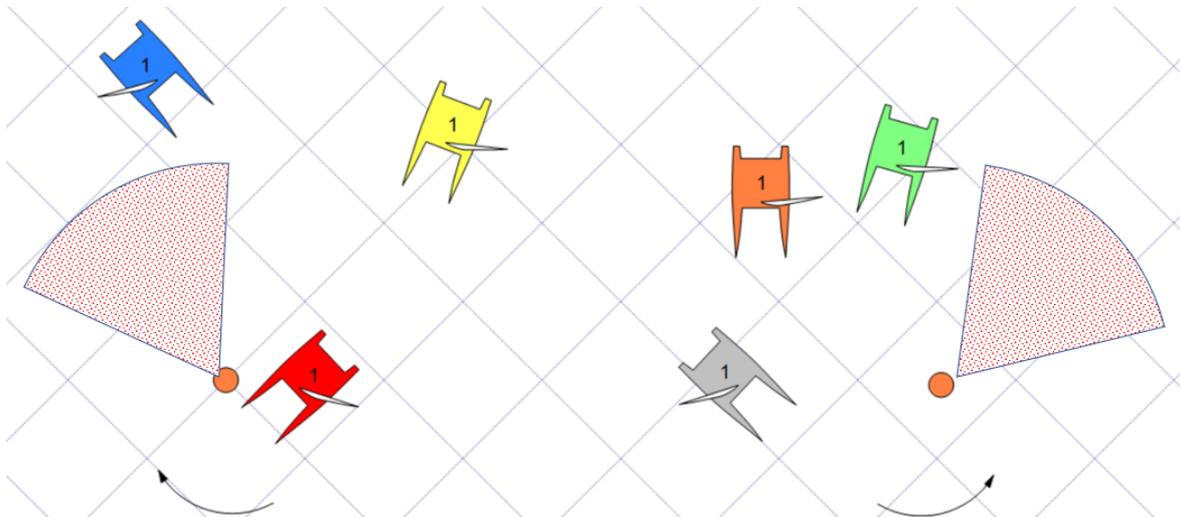




Normally there will be a better side of the boats to be. In **D** (mark to starboard) being to windward / astern gives the better view of the gap between the boats. In **E**, leeward / astern is better, and the RIB can then go either inside or outside.



At gate marks the red areas are to be avoided. They are dangerous and give a poor angle of view.



The table below provides a summary of when umpires should prefer **outside**, and when **inside**.

Situation	Position	Reasons
Fast boats sailing angles	Outside	Inside can be dangerous when boats are arriving on port and starboard at the zone.
Slow boats light wind	Outside	Inside gives RIB very little space to manoeuvre. Especially in light winds, you must avoid wake.
Big distance between your group of boats and the next	Either	Neither option interferes with other boats.
Small distance between your group and the next one	Outside - or - Inside	Does not disturb other boats especially at leeward mark or gate Avoids crossing the close-hauled course of previous boats. Going inside needs an early decision.
Last group of boats	Inside	No boats behind. Inside avoids crossing other boats.

Section 9

Damage, Hearings & Redress

9 Damage, Hearings and Redress

While Appendices MR and UF reduce much of the formality of hearings, it remains important to adhere to the hearing process.

9.1 Redress

Availability of redress is very limited under Appendix MR. Rule MR1.2(e) removes rules 61.4(b)(1)(2)(3) and (5), leaving only redress under rule 61.4(b)(4). In addition, MR5.1 prevents any kind of proceedings relating to action or non-action of an umpire.

This means there is **no** redress available for:

- a. improper action or improper omission of a committee or the organizing authority;
- b. physical damage or injury caused by a boat breaking a rule of Part 2 or a vessel not racing that was required to keep clear;
- c. action by another boat or a crew member or a support person of that boat which resulted in a penalty under rule 2 or a penalty or a warning under rule 69;
- d. an incorrect decision of the umpires;
- e. the absence of a decision of the umpires (when there should have been one); or
- f. interference by a RIB.

Redress is only available under rule 61.4(b)(4) for giving help to a person or vessel in danger. The nature of umpired fleet racing, and the resources and official boats needed to run it, make it very unlikely that redress will be requested under this rule. However, if the conditions are satisfied, then redress may be given by the protest committee, and this is governed by rules 61.4(c) and (d).

Although other requests made by competitors will not succeed when Addendum MR applies, it is important to note that a boat still has the right to request redress under MR2.4(c). A protest committee must not refuse to hear a request just because it knows that it is doomed to fail – it must still conduct a hearing and rule on its validity - a process that should not take long.

To request redress, a boat must hail the race committee before or during the display of flag B (rule MR2.4(c)), and the protest committee may extend this time limit if there is good reason to do so. There is no requirement for the boat to display a red flag. The race committee then informs the protest committee.

Under Appendix UF, UF5.2 specifies how a boat requests redress and UF5.10 specifies when a redress is possible.

9.2 Fair racing

With the changes to rule 61.4(b), it is vital that the race committee provides fair racing, and ensures the results (including any OCS calls) are correct. There is no ability for anyone – the race committee and umpires included – to correct errors through the redress procedure after the race (although the race committee may still act under rule 90.3(c)), Scoring.

It may be better for the race committee to abandon a race rather than allow it to continue in an unfair way that cannot be corrected later. The Chief Umpire and Race Officer should therefore agree in advance any procedures for discussing issues concerning fairness of a race. The umpire team as a whole must understand how to communicate any concerns in a timely way.

9.3 Damage or Injury

To protest another boat for breaking rule 14 when damage or injury occurred, a boat hails the race committee before or while flag B is displayed (rule MR2.4(b)/UF5.2(b)). Umpires cannot impose a penalty on the water for such a breach of rule 14, although they may still penalize a boat in the incident for a breach of the other rules of Part 2 or sportsmanship.

Also the protest committee may protest a boat for a breach of rule 14 when there is damage or injury (rule MR5.5/UF5.4). Any umpire may, based on his own observations or following a report from any source, inform the protest committee of such an incident, and the protest committee may then protest under rule 60.1.

However, an umpire must not inform the protest committee of a potential breach of rule 14 unless there is damage or injury and the protest committee itself cannot protest under rule 14 unless there is damage

In any hearing, the protest committee must decide the penalty for any breach of rule 14. If the damage is not serious, rule 44.1(b) does not apply and any penalty taken at the time under rule 44.1 is also an appropriate penalty for the breach of rule 14.

If the protest committee decides the breach of rule 14 had no effect on the outcome of the race, rule MR5.3(d) gives it complete discretion over the penalty. If a boat broke rule 14 causing injury or serious damage, and the breach affected the outcome of the race, the protest committee must disqualify the boat. Even if under Appendix UF rule 60.5 (UF5.8) is changed the outcome is unlikely to be different.

9.4 Hearing procedure

Race umpires may or may not be members of the protest committee. Even though hearings are unlikely, it is vital that the umpires and protest committee have discussed and agreed in advance the chair and members of the protest committee that will hear any protests or requests for redress at the end of a race, and the procedures to be used to conduct hearings. This should include:

- a. Ensuring all umpires, whether on the protest committee or not, are aware of the rules and procedures governing hearings under Appendix MR/UF;
- b. Designating who will liaise with the technical committee over any pre-race inspection issues;
- c. Where and when both pre- and post-race hearings will be held (and who will make this decision);
- d. Confirming the B flag procedure with the race committee, and advising who the race committee should inform if a boat protests at the end of the race;
- e. Identifying who will decide whether or not the protest committee will protest following receipt of a report;
- f. Agreeing the procedure for notifying boats under MR5.3(e)/UF5.7(d)
- g. How the media will be informed about (a) what is happening and (b) the results of any decisions

Rule MR5.3(a)/UF5.7(a) states that protests or requests need not be in writing. Rule MR5.3(c)/UF5.7(c) allows the protest committee to take evidence and conduct the hearing in any way it considers appropriate and to communicate its decision orally. Nevertheless, it is appropriate to follow rule 63 and it is good practice to write up any decision at the first convenient time.

Section 10

Umpire

Development

10 Umpire Development

A global pool of competent and consistent umpires is important for the success of fleet racing. Improvement and consistency is self-driven, and the purpose of this manual is to help that process. World Sailing runs seminars and clinics to coach umpires and prepare them for International Umpire assessment and qualification. Some MNAs have national umpire programmes and course material.

10.1 Umpire Evaluation

10.1.1. Personality of an umpire

An umpire is responsible for making and signalling decisions on incidents as they happen, so has to be comfortable and competent making immediate decisions in accordance with the rules.

A good umpire has concentration and stamina, and accuracy in observation. A good umpire is a good listener, and a clear and concise communicator, who remains calm and focused in complex and challenging situations.

An umpire needs to command authority and respect, even though some decisions may not be correct, and some errors will affect race outcomes. Respect is built through being clear, firm and fair, while at the same time being open and approachable. Errors are reduced by reviewing and analysing incidents, and by not allowing a mistake to influence the impartiality or quality of the umpiring thereafter. A good umpire is a team player, well-organised and thorough in their preparation and punctuality, and always listening to and seeking to help and learn from others.

10.1.2. Skills and Experience of a Good Umpire

Good umpiring depends on a clear understanding of the responsibilities of an umpire, and concentration on them. Accuracy in RIB positioning, rules knowledge and umpire dialogue is essential. Fast thinking in a dynamic situation, being decisive, and signalling the decision confidently, all help an umpire to remain in control of the race and ready for the next incident. Maintaining a peripheral awareness of other action reduces the risk of unexpected surprises.

A good umpire has the experience to know which facts are necessary to apply a rule and make a decision. This ensures the dialogue is concise and relevant. Precise RIB positioning is a prerequisite for accurate calls; a good umpire will be a skilled RIB driver, able at all times to maintain or swiftly recover position.

A good umpire will be seen to be acting fairly and impartially at all times, on the water and off, by competitors and fellow umpires. A good umpire respects confidentiality and does not talk of past incidents in a manner that may prejudice decisions at a future regatta.

10.1.3. Self-Assessment & Self-Improvement

All umpires, no matter how experienced, should continually review themselves against the skills and personality above, and identify any opportunities to improve. Repetition, through regular and frequent umpiring, helps raise and then maintain an umpire's ability and consistency.

Before a regatta, an umpire may contact the Chief Umpire or an experienced umpire on the team, and ask for an informal evaluation. The more specific the feedback requested, the easier it is for the experienced umpire to provide constructive guidance. After a regatta, an umpire can self-review against World Sailing's umpire performance assessment criteria.

10.2 Applying to become an International Umpire

World Sailing Regulation 17 and Policy L3 defines the requirements and process for applying for appointment as an International Umpire (IU). Prior to applying, an umpire must have attended a World Sailing IU seminar and passed an IU rules test and an on-the-water performance assessment.

World Sailing does not have a separate qualification for a Fleet Racing International Umpire. The performance assessment criteria, and the standard required, are the same for fleet, team and match racing umpires, and many umpires are expert at more than one discipline. However, as the rules and procedures differ between the disciplines, any seminar, clinic and rules test will relate to just one discipline.

10.2.1. World Sailing Seminars and Clinics; Umpire Performance Assessment

A World Sailing IU seminar is held in conjunction with a regatta, and brings together a number of experienced umpires, from different countries and background, all of whom aspire to be appointed as IU. In a workshop environment, they are able to broaden their awareness and experience.

At a seminar participants may take the IU rules test, and, while umpiring the regatta, the on-the-water performance assessment. If not passed at the seminar, the rules test can be re-taken separately from the seminar, and the performance assessment can be re-taken at a future regatta.

In contrast, an IU clinic is designed for umpires who do not yet have the experience to pass the IU performance assessment. The focus of a clinic is coaching, not assessment. At the end of a clinic an umpire will know how to umpire at IU level, and should then umpire at enough regattas to grow in ability and experience to a level suitable for attending a seminar and taking the performance assessment.

The performance assessment form and associated evaluation criteria are available on the World Sailing website under “How to Become a World Sailing Race Official”.

10.2.2. World Sailing’s International Umpire and Race Officials Committee

World Sailing’s International Umpires Sub-committee is responsible for developing umpiring procedures and coaching, assessing umpires, and making recommendations to the Race Officials Committee on appointments and re-appointments of International Umpires (Regulation 17.4/Policy L3).

World Sailing’s Race Officials Committee (Regulation 17.4) is responsible for all appointments, re-appointments and suspensions of World Sailing Race Officials. Its primary role is to ensure correct and consistent standards are applied across all race official disciplines

10.2.3. National Umpire Schemes

World Sailing encourages MNAs with the necessary regattas, resources and processes to run national umpire programmes. The threshold to become an International Umpire is high, and to maintain this qualification an International Umpire needs to umpire at top-level international events. A national umpire programme can develop, recognise and reward umpires who can deliver a good quality of umpiring within their country.

World Sailing recommends that the material used for umpire coaching within a national umpire programme is consistent with World Sailing’s, that the assessment form and criteria for appointment are the same, but that the standard for national appointment is lower than the standard for

international appointment. These helps ensure that a national appointment is a stepping stone to a future international appointment.

10.3 Improving skills as an umpire

Every event an umpire does is a valuable learning opportunity. All umpires make mistakes, and these usually identify an opportunity to improve. Umpires often learn most from the calls they got wrong, not those they got right.

10.3.1. Improvement as a team

Events provide the opportunity for the umpire team to work together and improve as a team. End of day debriefs for the umpire team can be useful to identify common challenges. Possible discussion topics include perfecting a positioning plan for the particular event, interesting calls which should be shared, and common issues that might need to be brought to the attention of the whole team.

10.3.2. Learning from Incidents; Writing up Scenarios

Umpires in a RIB should quickly debrief on RIB positioning, dialogue and decisions at the end of each race. If there was an incident during the race where the conversation did not lead directly to the decision, or there was some confusion about the correct call or signal, the umpires should agree what to change for the next race.

One good way to learn from a complex incident is to write it up after the race as a draft call, identifying the rules that apply, the critical facts, and whether there were other issues such as advantage or sportsmanship to consider.

This should also identify the umpire dialogue necessary to ensure the correct decision flows automatically from the dialogue.

10.3.3. Shadow Umpiring

One low-stress way to practise or “warm up” is to shadow umpire a race being umpired by others. Without interfering, umpires can loosely follow a race that precedes their own (or just part of a race - for example the pre-start) and practise their dialogue and decision-making.

10.3.4. Other Ideas for Self-Improvement

- a. Umpire other disciplines (match racing, team racing etc.)
- b. Coach sailors
- c. Write up calls and submit as rapid response calls
- d. Do different events (keelboat, dinghy, medal races)
- e. Do more lower level events (with fewer resources, and hence more challenging)
- f. Mentor other umpires

10.4 Coaching Novice Umpires at a Regatta

Umpire teams should have a mix of experienced and less experienced umpires. A challenge for many novices is precision in umpire dialogue, rule application, and RIB positioning. It is important that experienced members of the team coach novices and give consistent guidance, while still delivering good service to the competitors.

One well-proven approach is the experienced umpire initially drives all races, with the novice as co-driver, responsible for half of the dialogue and signalling decisions. Once dialogue has reached a suitable standard, the novice may then start driving.

Dialogue. Stating what is seen in clear, concise, relevant, and accurate words takes practice, and comes more easily to some than others. It is hardest when boats are manoeuvring rapidly against each other. The best opportunity to develop familiarity in the dialogue's structure and words is when incidents are not taking place. Therefore both umpires should maintain the dialogue even when no incident is taking place.

Rules Application. A novice umpire may have good general knowledge of the rules but lack some precise detail (for example: the exact definition of mark-room). It also takes time for a novice umpire to learn which specific facts are needed to apply a rule and decide an incident.

An experienced umpire can help by leading the dialogue, including questions to the novice such as “*Are you holding or changing?*”; “*Did you react immediately or late?*” and “*Are you in the corridor?*” Between races, the experienced and novice umpire should discuss the rules involved in incidents in their race, and the facts needed for a decision, whether or not the competitors actually protested.

The Decision. A novice may take time to master the switch to agreeing a decision as soon as a rule is broken. The experienced umpire should expect initially to lead and propose the decision “*Penalty on X, do you agree?*”, “*No incident, do you agree?*”.

Repetition is Key. When the experienced umpire drives, the novice should see repeated and consistent positioning and angle of view to incidents. The novice is able to focus on improving dialogue while becoming familiar with the required position and angle of view for incidents. After a full day, a novice umpire can be expected to have developed consistent umpire dialogue and may be ready to drive.

Coaching Two Novices. If resources allow, a variation that accelerates novices' improvement is for an experienced umpire to ride with and coach two novice umpires, nudging their dialogue with the questions above, ensuring their decisions are sound, and then quickly de-briefing them between races.

Initially the coaching umpire should drive. A novice whose dialogue is good should then be given the opportunity to drive. This arrangement also permits one novice just to drive, with the dialogue being between the other novice and the coach.

Section 11

Reference

Documents

11 Some Other Reference Documents

11.1 Documents on World Sailing's International Umpires Page

<https://www.sailing.org/our-sport/race-officals/resource-centre/>

World Sailing Umpire Manual for Team Racing (*updated version: 2025*)

The Team Racing Umpire manual provides information relevant to all umpiring. The umpiring rules for team racing are very similar to those for fleet racing, so much of this manual is also relevant for fleet race umpires.

World Sailing Umpire Manual for Match Racing (*current version: 2025*)

The Match Racing Umpire manual is a useful resource for guidance on the correct positioning plan for umpiring two boats, referred to in fleet racing as 'micro' positioning.

World Sailing Misconduct Guidance (*current version: 2021*)

This document provides the best guide to what should and might be considered breaches of sportsmanship, how umpires should assess them, and what action umpires should take.

Race Officials Roles, Qualifications and Competencies Document (RQC)

This document is published annually by World Sailing and defines the requirements to become a World Sailing International Umpire.

11.2 Rules Documents

The Racing Rules of Sailing, Case and Call Books

<https://www.sailing.org/inside-world-sailing/rules-regulations/racingrules/>

The latest version of the Racing Rules of Sailing can be found at this link, as well as any corrections that have been published. There is also a study guide which helps clarify the changes to the previous version of the rules.

The Call Book for Match and Team Racing

The team and match racing call books provide umpires with authoritative guidance on how to apply the rules in particular typical incidents on the water. Each call presents a set of facts and then outlines how the rules apply to that incident, as well as what the umpire call should be. Incidents in fleet racing are similar to team and match racing, and although these calls are not authoritative outside their discipline, they are very helpful for fleet racing too.

Rapid Response Calls

Rapid response calls, as the name suggests, are calls which are issued quickly after a question has been submitted by an International Umpire. They follow the same format as published calls, but are only valid until a certain date (indicated on the call itself). After this time they are either adopted into the main call books or allowed to expire.