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ROYAL BRIGHTON YACHT CLUB

SMART Classes



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SMART *Classes*

5th June
19th June
3rd July
17th July





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Sailing Mentorship And Race Training



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Introduction:

Paul Pascoe

Past Commodore

International Judge since 1994

National Race Officer

Coach, British Olympic Team 1993 - 1996



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About the rules

- Rules are published by World Sailing, updated every four years
- Australian Sailing adds their own prescriptions
- New edition January 1st, 2025
- Download PDF from the website sailing.org.au
 - Australian Sailing no longer print hard copies
- The rule book is made up of:
 - Definitions
 - Signal flags
 - Parts 1 through 7
 - Appendices A through T
- There is also a comprehensive Case Book used by Judges to provide clarification on the rules



Sections of the Rule Book

- Definitions - Important to be able to understand the rules
- Signals - Mostly start sequence flags
- Part 1 – Fundamental Rules
- Part 2 – When boats meet (5 pages and only 3 are generally relevant)
- Part 3 – Conduct of a race
- Part 4 – Other requirements when racing
- Part 5 – Protests
- Part 6 – Entry and Qualification
- Part 7 – Race Organisation
- Appendices – Optional, e.g. Match Racing, Recommendations on SI's



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But (there is always a “but”)

There are *lots* of details that are extremely significant



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Who in the room has a reasonable knowledge
of the rules of footy?

How many of you have read an AFL rule book?



A few quick quiz questions:

- When do the rules start? i.e. when does port/starboard take affect?
- *“The rules of [Part 2](#) apply between boats that are sailing in or near the racing area and intend to **race**, are **racing**, or have been **racing**. ”*
- *“However, a boat not **racing** shall not be penalized for breaking one of these rules ”*



A few quick quiz questions:

- Are you entitled to mark room at the finish line?
- Yes
- Are you entitled to mark room at the start boat?
- It depends
- *“Section C rules (mark room) do not apply at a starting **mark** surrounded by navigable water or at its anchor line from the time boats are approaching them to **start** until they have passed them.”*



A few quick quiz questions:

- Are sound signals mandatory?
- It depends
- *"Times shall be taken from the visual signals; the absence of a sound signal shall be disregarded."*
- This text is within Rule 26 which describes the 5,4,1,Start sequence, so only applies to these signals. All other situations where sound signals are in the rules, they are mandatory
- So is it mandatory to get a sound signal for the first place boat?
- No It is just a generally accepted tradition



Definitions

- Like any legal document, before you can get into the meat of the document, you need to define certain words and their meaning throughout the remainder of the document
- For each of the rules that we are going to look at there are generally some relevant definitions
- But we will first have a look at a few important definitions



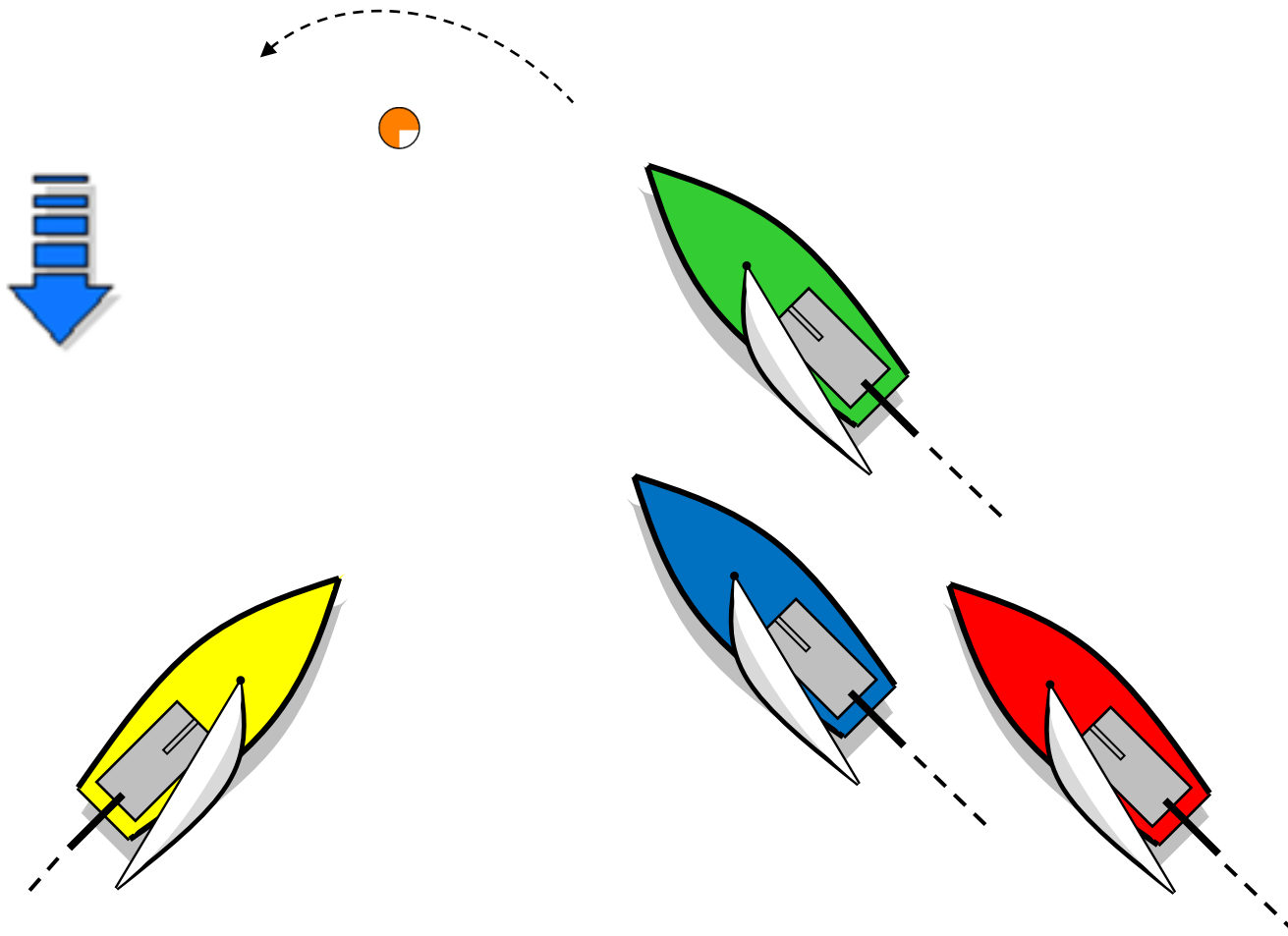
Definitions

- **Racing:** A boat is *racing* from its preparatory signal until it *finishes* and clears the finishing line and *marks* or retires, or until the race committee signals a general recall, *postponement* or *abandonment*.
- **Room:** The space a boat needs in the existing conditions, including space to comply with its obligations under the rules of [Part 2](#) and [rule 31](#), while manoeuvring promptly in a seamanlike way.
- **Zone:** The area around a *mark* within a distance of three hull lengths of the boat nearer to it. A boat is in the *zone* when any part of its hull is in the *zone*.
- **Keep Clear** A boat *keeps clear* of a right-of-way boat
 - (a) if the right-of-way boat can sail its course with no need to take avoiding action and,
 - (b) when the boats are *overlapped*, if the right-of-way boat can also change course in both directions without immediately making contact.



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Rights and Obligations

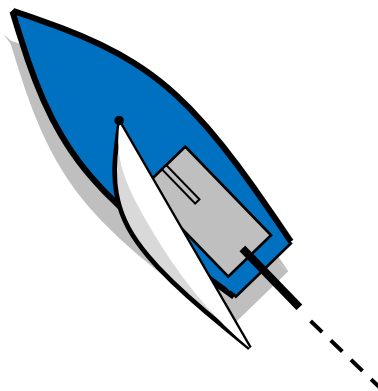
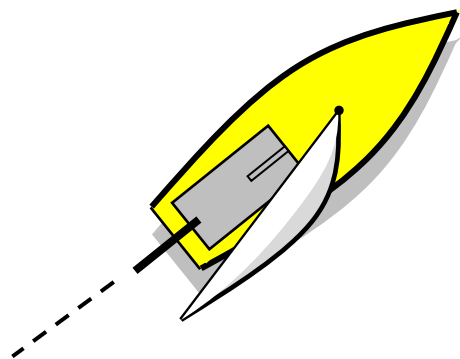


- Every boat at every point has both Rights and Obligations
- Green has the right for the yellow boat to keep clear, and the obligation to keep clear of the blue boat
- The yellow boat has the obligation to keep clear of all three boats, but the right to expect that the blue boat will not immediately bear away into him perhaps in an attempt to gybe



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Port / Starboard

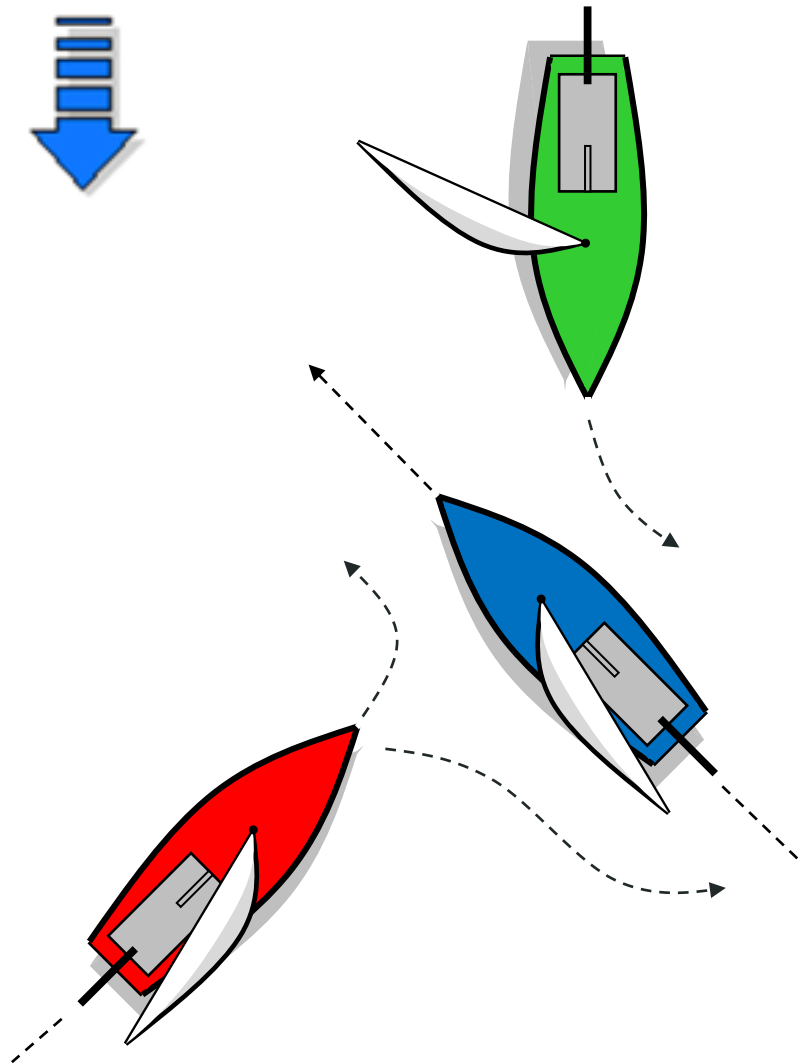


- Rule 10: "When boats are on opposite *tacks*, a *port-tack* boat shall *keep clear* of a *starboard-tack* boat."
- As the two boats get closer, it is the obligation of the port boat to recognise that there is a problem and take avoiding action.
- As they get closer the starboard boat has the obligation to not alter course so as to prevent the port boat from avoiding her
- Case 50: If there is a *genuine and reasonable apprehension* of collision on the part of the right of way boat, she shall alter course to avoid contact
- What about a hail of "Hold your course" from the port boat?



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Port / Starboard



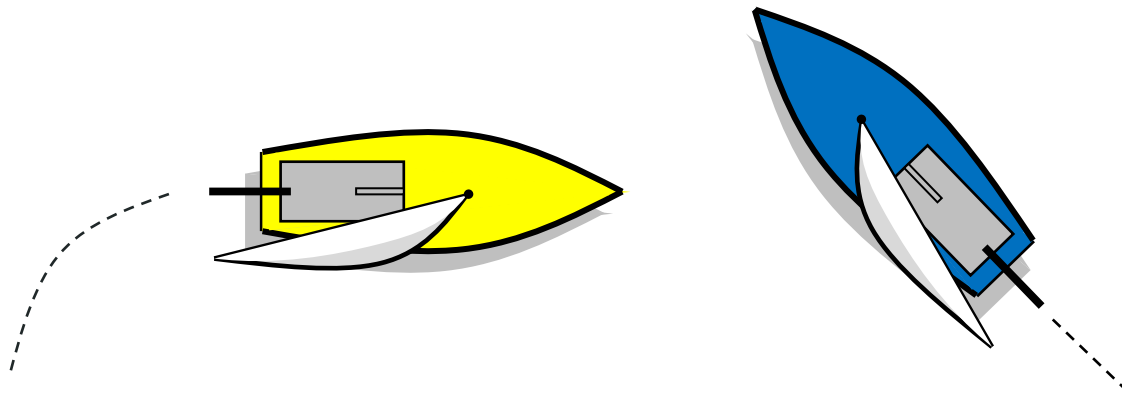
It doesn't matter if one boat is going upwind and the other is going downwind, the port boat must avoid the starboard boat

A hail of "starboard" from the blue boat to the port boat is not required, makes no difference in a protest hearing but obviously a good idea especially if you think that the port boat hasn't seen you.



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Port / Starboard

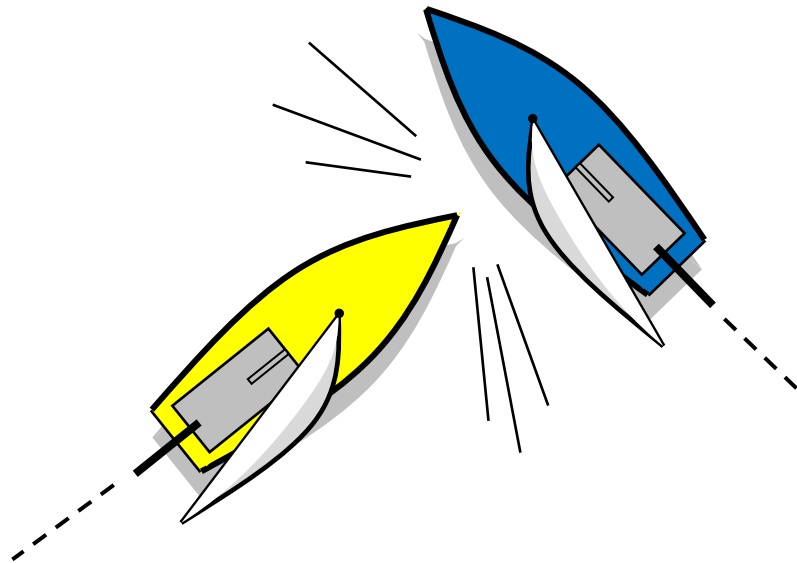


- Rule 16.2: " when a *port-tack* boat is *keeping clear* by sailing to pass to leeward of a *starboard-tack* boat, the *starboard-tack* boat shall not bear away



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Avoiding Contact



Rule 14: “A boat shall avoid contact with another boat if reasonably possible.”

Even if you are the right of way boat, if it becomes obvious that the give way boat is not going to give you room, you need to do everything you can to avoid contact

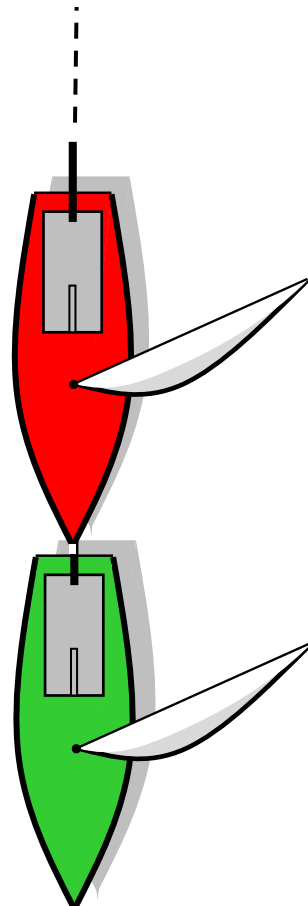
In this situation, both boats would most likely be disqualified if it went to protest. The port boat for failing to give way to a starboard boat, and both boats for failing to avoid a collision

Importantly: “Doing everything you can to avoid contact” includes having an effective lookout



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Clear Ahead / Clear Astern



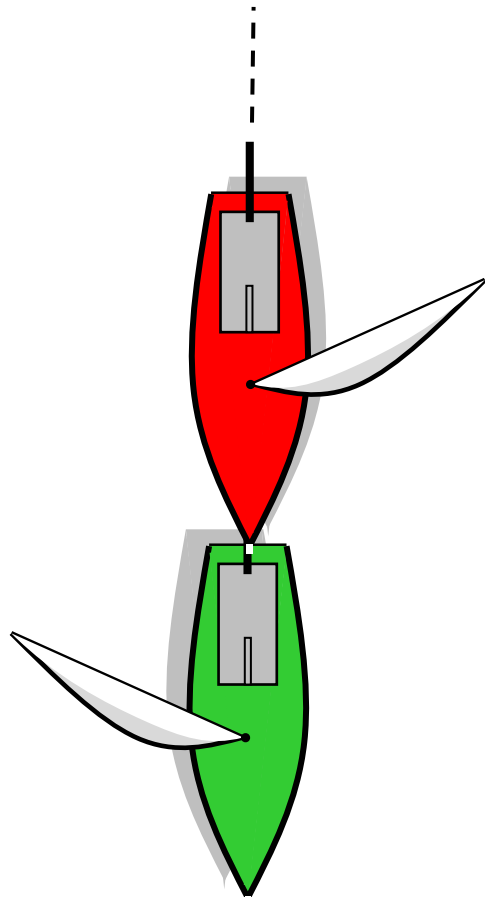
Definition: "One boat is *clear astern* of another when her hull are behind a line abeam from the aftermost point of the other boat's hull and equipment in normal position. The other boat is *clear ahead*."

Rule 12: "When boats are on the same *tack* and not *overlapped*, a boat *clear astern* shall *keep clear* of a boat *clear ahead*."



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Clear Ahead / Clear Astern



Which boat is the right of way boat?
Red or Green?

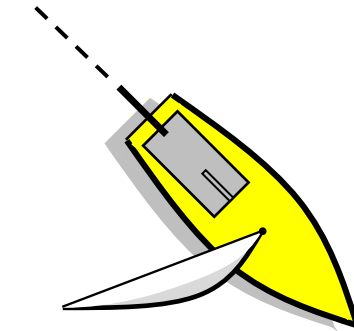
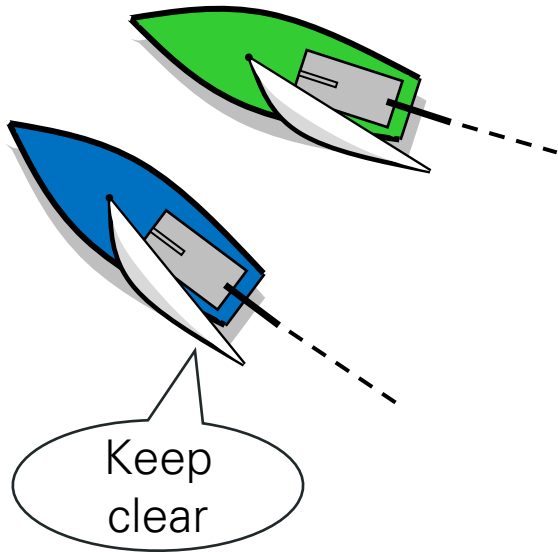
The Red boat as she is on starboard
tack and the green boat is on port tack

The red boat has right of way



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Windward/ Leeward



Definition: "A boat's *leeward* side is the side that is away from the wind. The other is the *windward* boat."

Rule: "When boats are on the same *tack* and *overlapped*, a *windward* boat shall *keep clear* of a *leeward* boat."

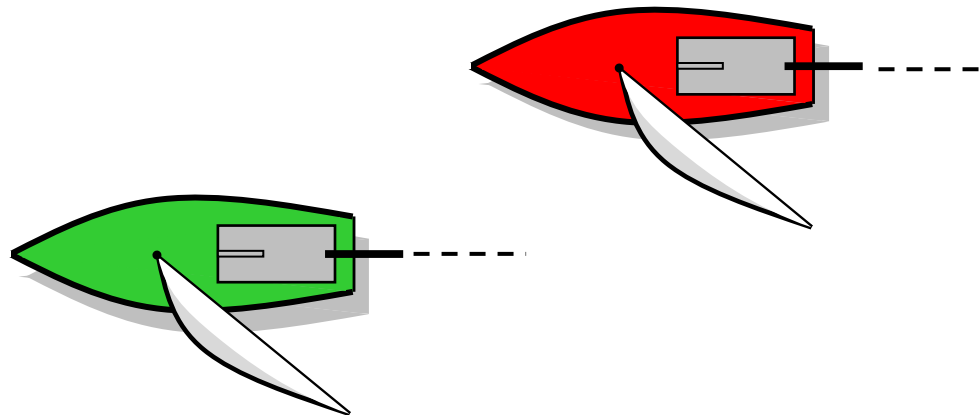
Important is to understand the definition of "keep clear".

".... if the right-of-way boat can also change course in both directions without immediately making contact"



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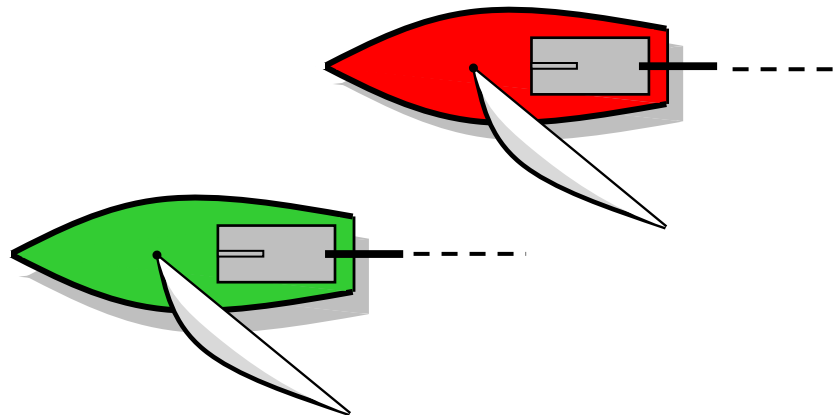
Windward/ Leeward – establishing the overlap





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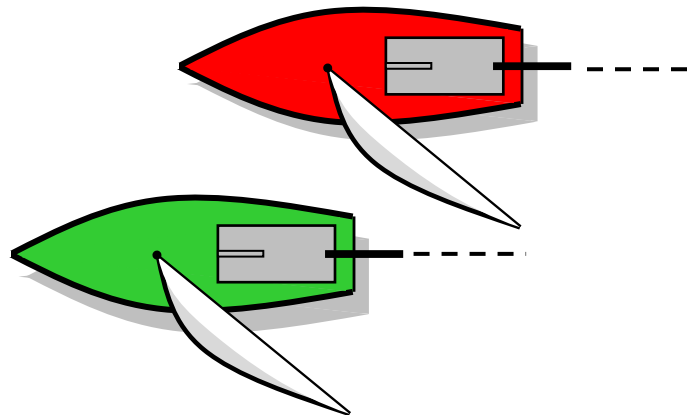
Windward/ Leeward – establishing the overlap





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Windward/ Leeward – establishing the overlap

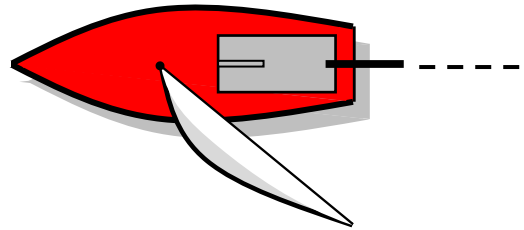
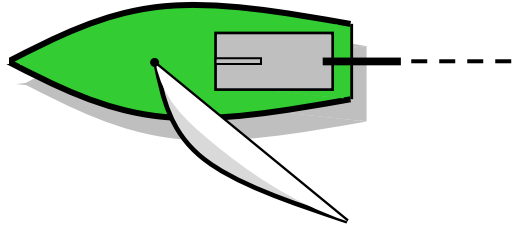


- Rule 11 applies to the red boat – Windward boat keep clear
- The green boat can luff the red boat up to head to wind, as long as they give the red boat *room* to keep clear



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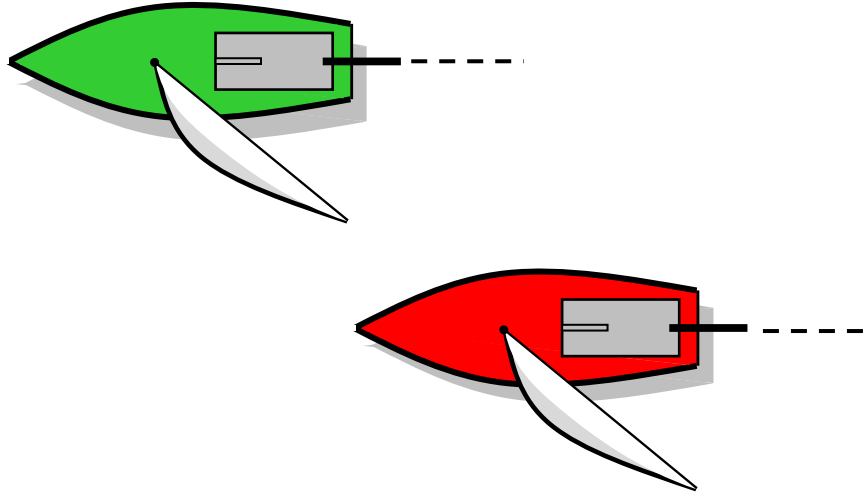
Windward/ Leeward – establishing the overlap





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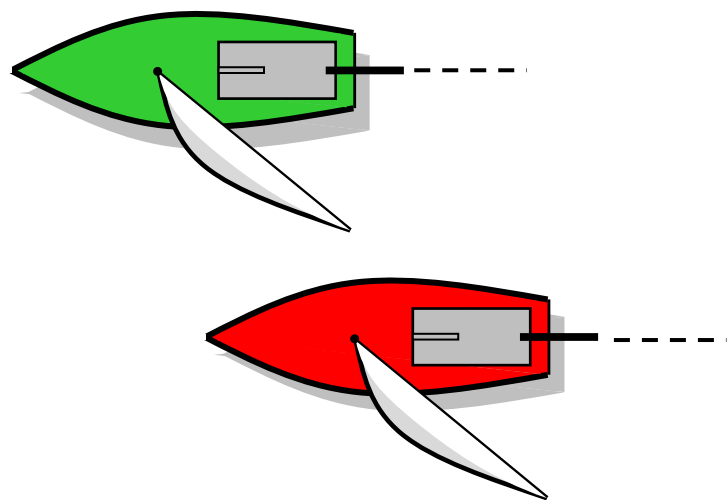
Windward/ Leeward – establishing the overlap





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Windward/ Leeward – establishing the overlap



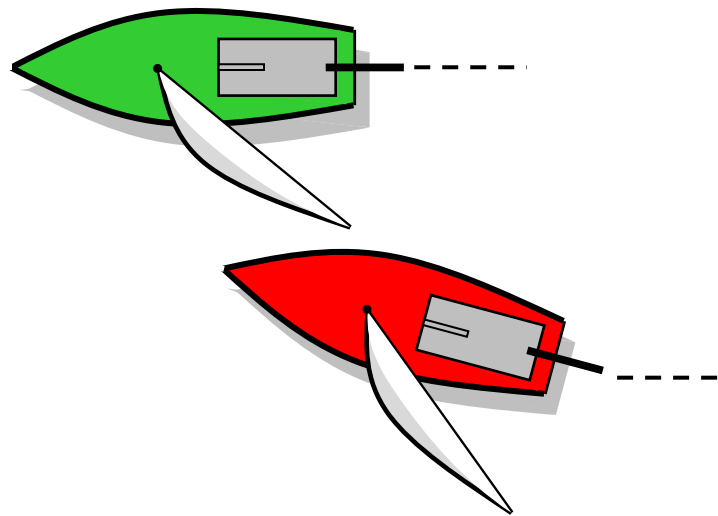
- Rule 11 still applies to the green boat – Windward boat keep clear
- Rule 17 applies to the red boat –

“If a boat *clear astern* becomes *overlapped* within two of its hull lengths to *leeward* of a boat on the same *tack*, it shall not sail above its *proper course* while they remain on the same *tack* and *overlapped* within that distance, unless in doing so it promptly sails astern of the other boat.”



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Windward/ Leeward – establishing the overlap

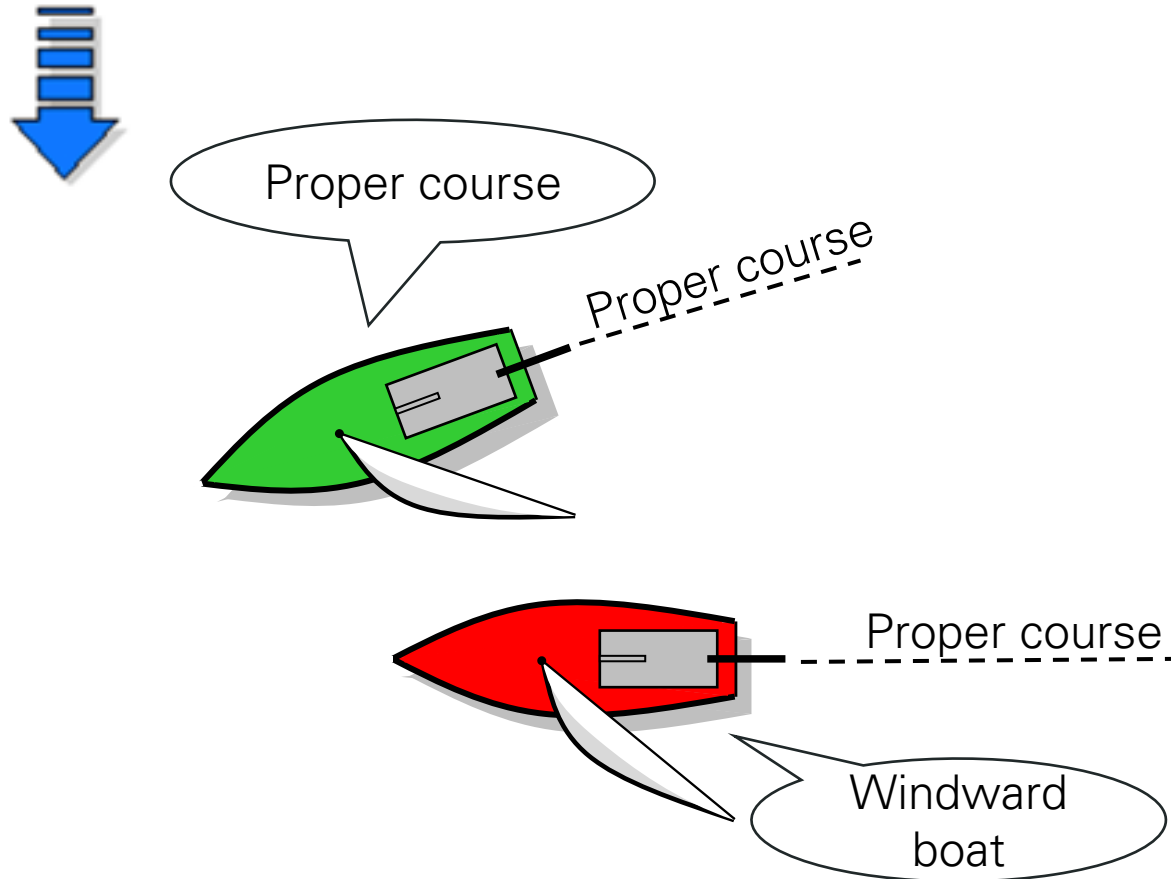


- If the red boat sails above her proper course, she has broken rule 17
- If the green boat does not respond, she has broken rule 11
- In a protest, both boats would be disqualified for breaking a rule
- The only recourse for the green boat is to alter course to windward to keep clear and protest the red boat for sailing above her proper course



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Windward/ Leeward

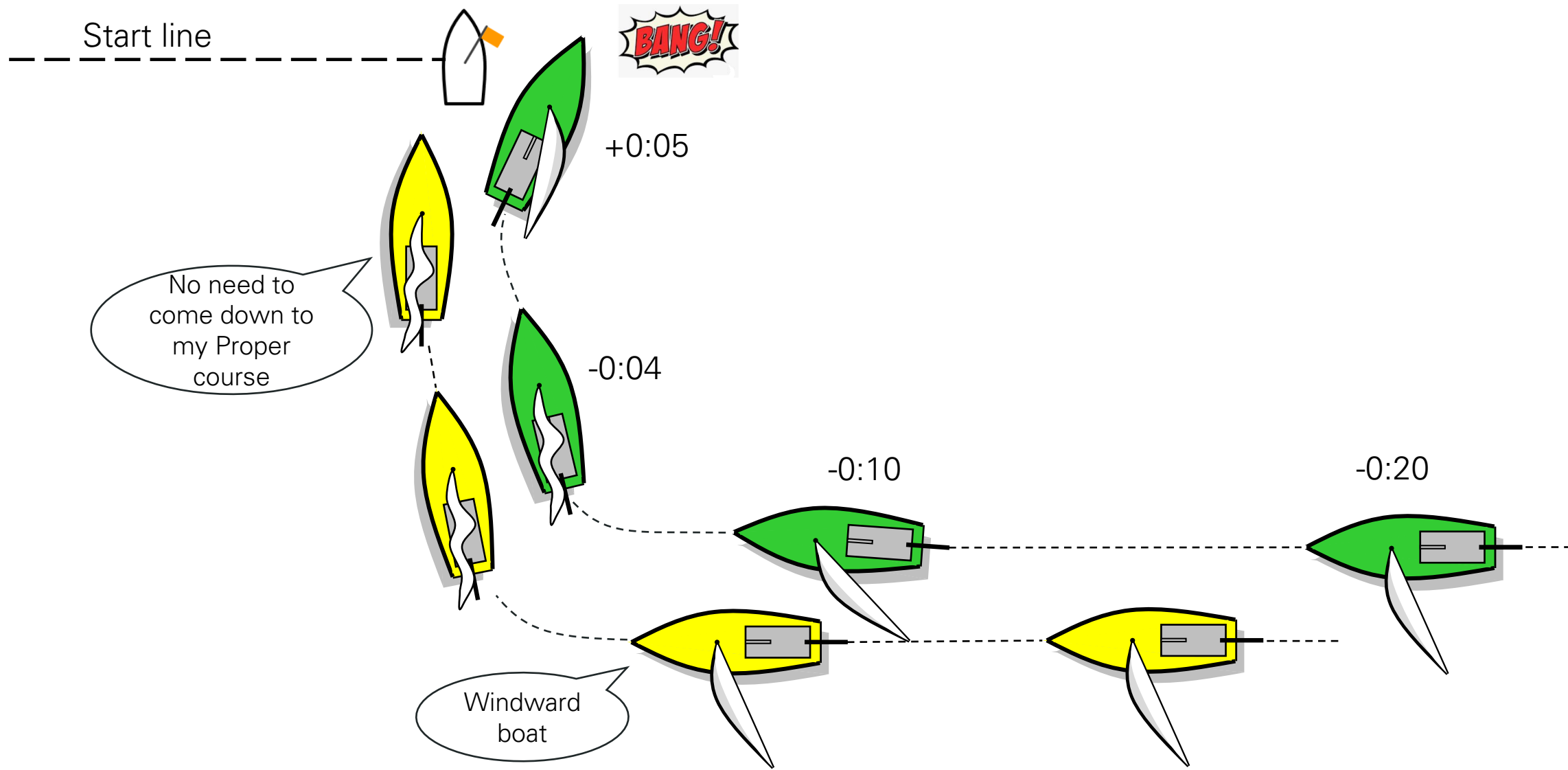


- The proper course of the windward boat is irrelevant
- Definition: *Proper Course*: "A course a boat would choose in order to *sail the course* and *finish* as soon as possible in the absence of the other boats"



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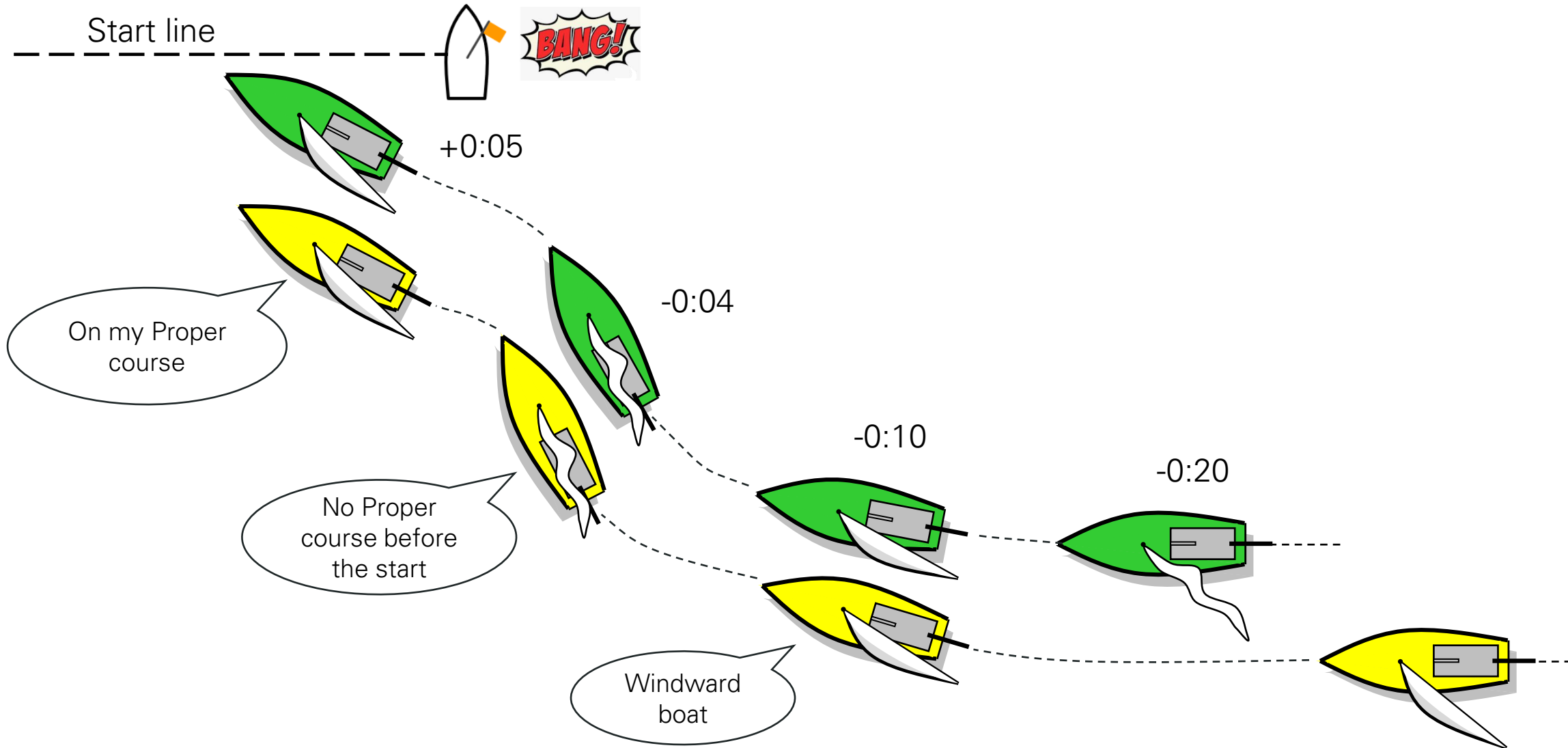
Windward/ Leeward – at the start





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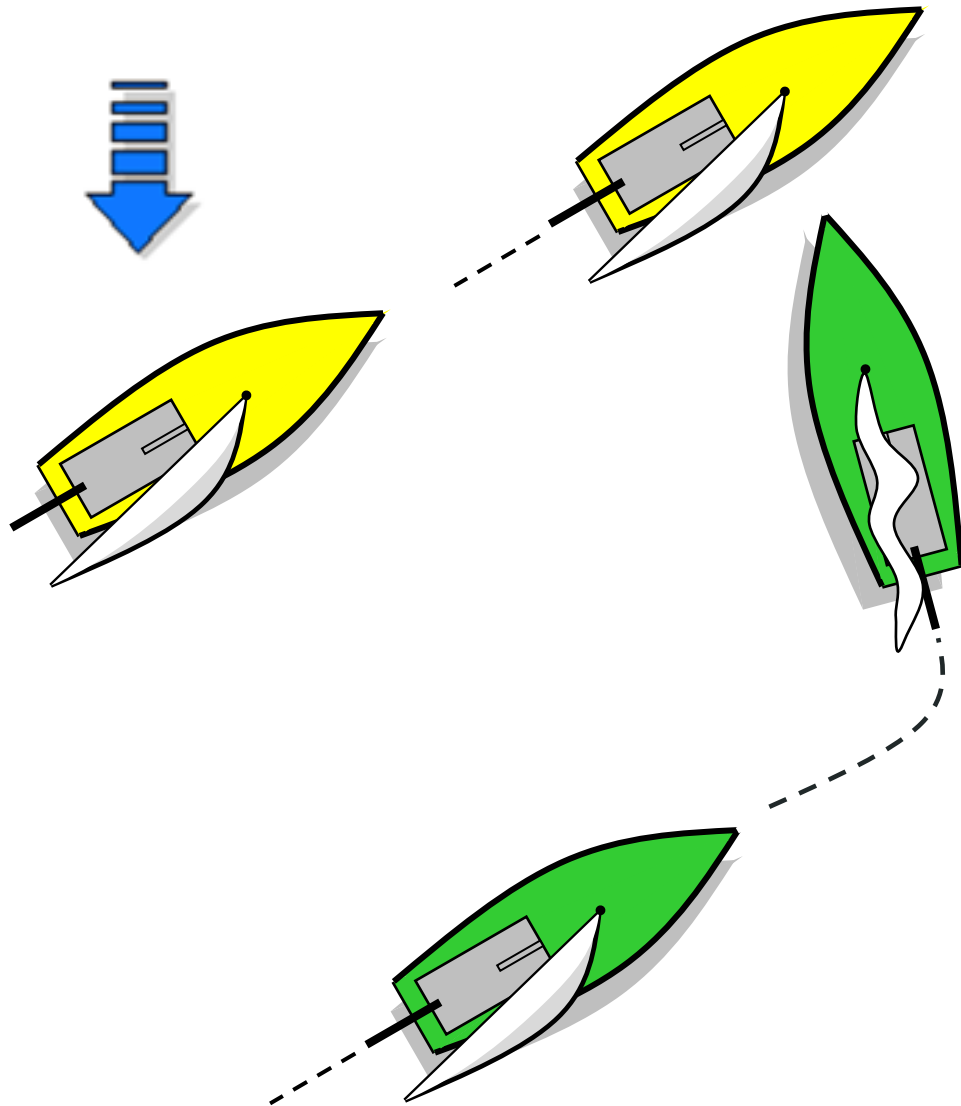
Windward/ Leeward – at the start





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Tacking



Rule 13: "After a boat passes head to wind, she shall *keep clear* of other boats until she is on a close-hauled course."

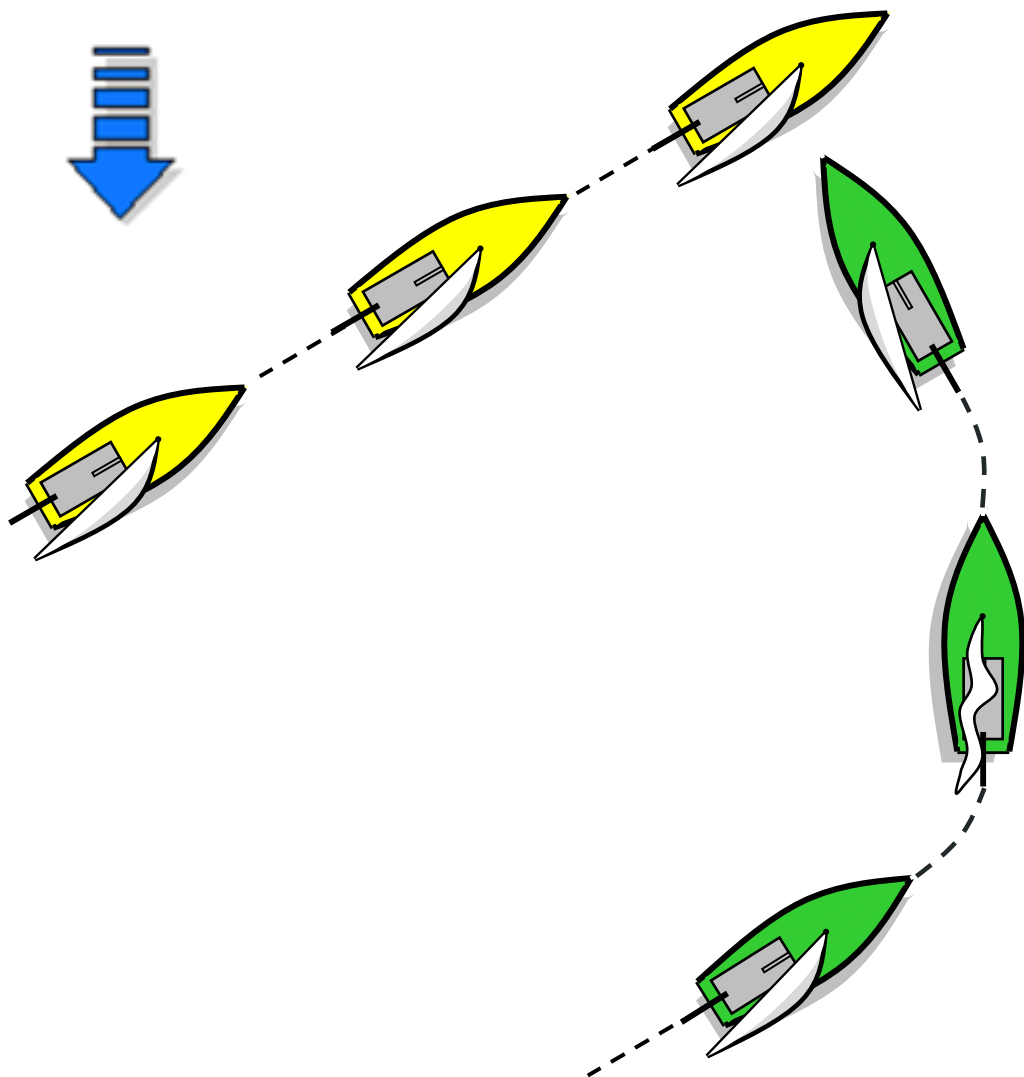
During the first part of a tack, the green boat is altering course to windward and is still the right of way boat. As soon as she passes head to wind she must *keep clear* of the yellow boat until the "hull" is in the close hauled position, i.e. tack is "complete".

Note that the trim of the sails has nothing to do with when you tack is "complete".



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Acquiring Right of Way



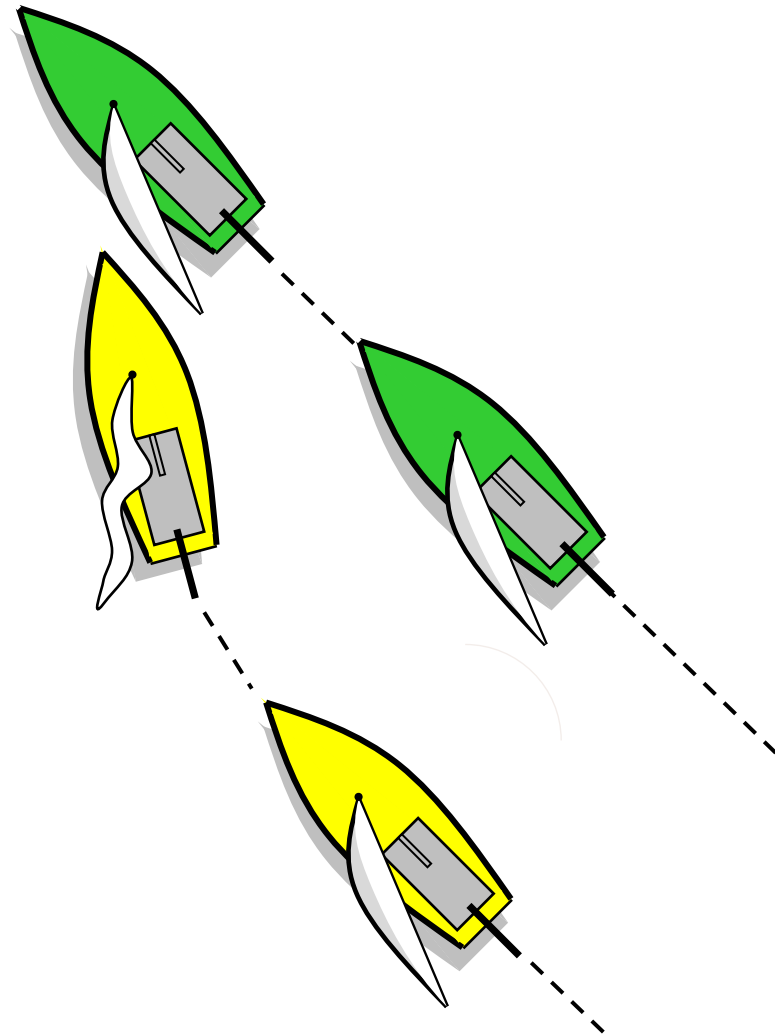
Rule 15: "When a boat acquires right of way, she shall initially give the other boat *room* to keep clear"

In the tacking situation, once you are on a close-hauled course and you become the right of way boat, you then have to give the yellow boat room to keep clear.

The yellow boat does not have to anticipate what you are going to do, she does not have to take any avoiding action until you are on your close hauled course.



Changing Course

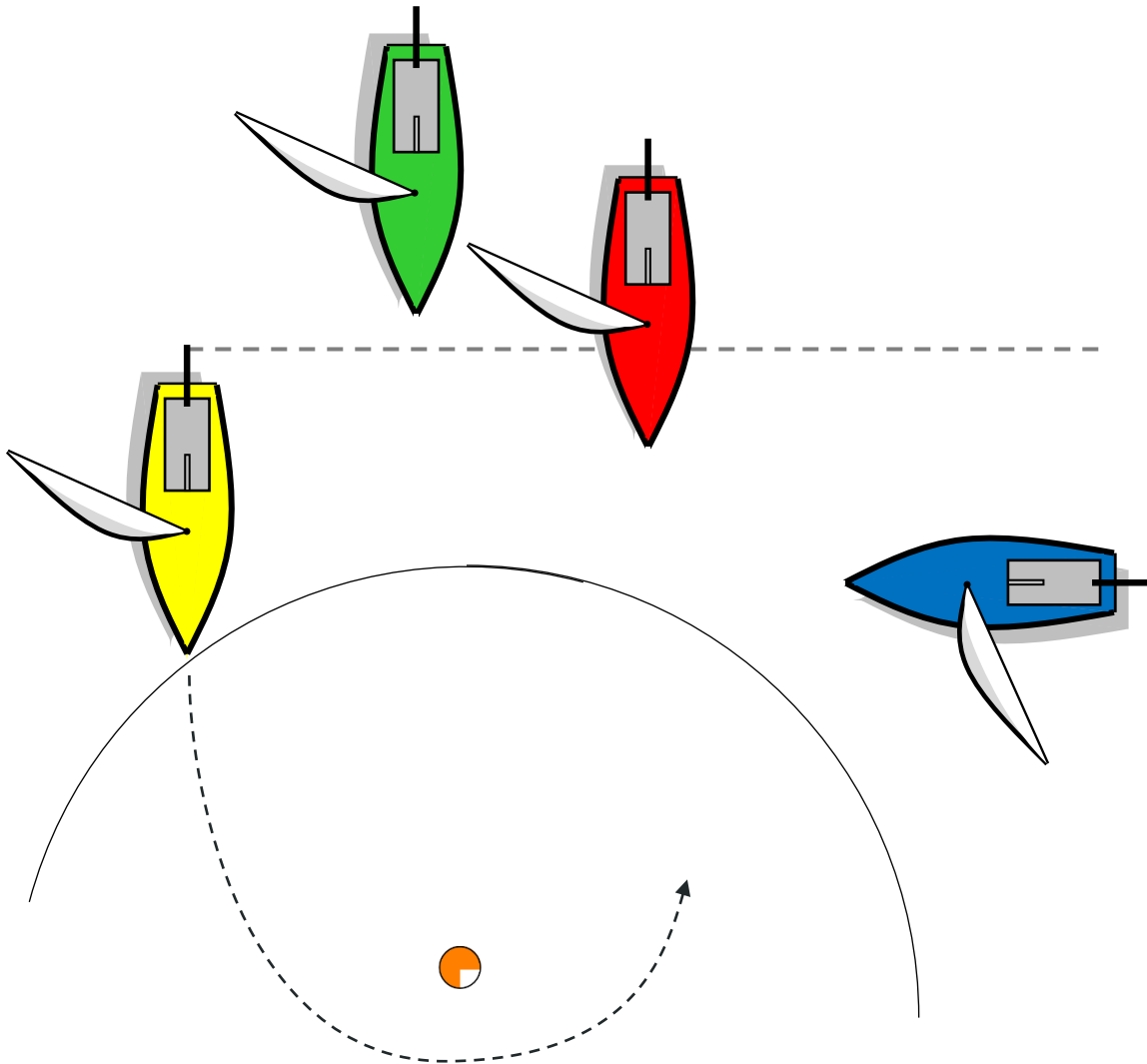


- Rule 16: "When a right-of-way boat changes course, it shall give the other boat *room to keep clear.*"
- The first movement of the green boat in keeping clear would result in their stern moving to leeward and the yellow boat must give room for this action
- In the pre-start, a windward boat that is sitting with sails out, must not just put the helm down, but must also trim their sails in to get under way



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Leeward Mark Rounding



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

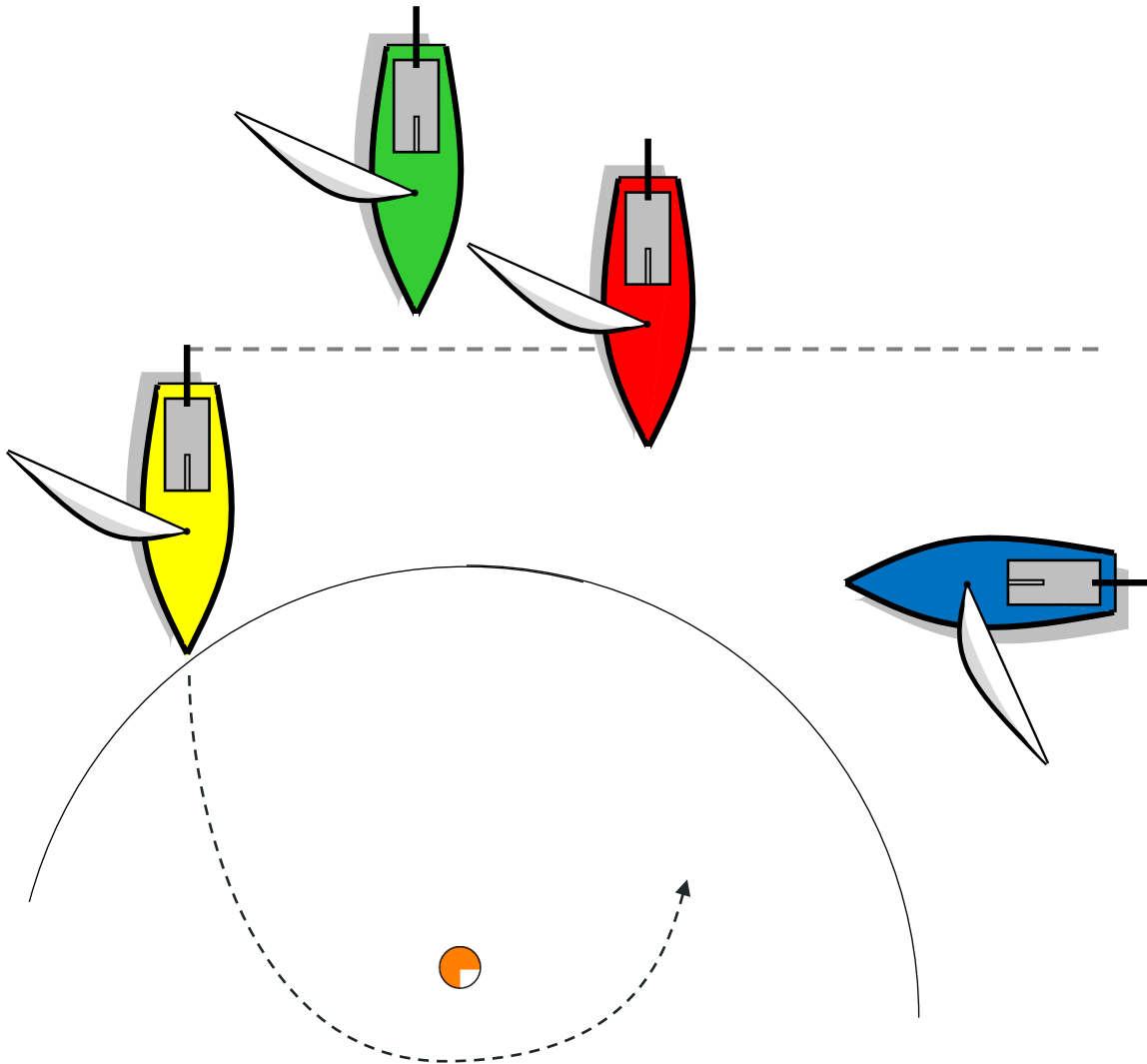
Rule 18: "When boats are *overlapped* (at the zone) the outside boat shall give the inside boat *mark-room*"

Port/starboard and Windward/Leeward rules do not apply



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Leeward Mark Rounding

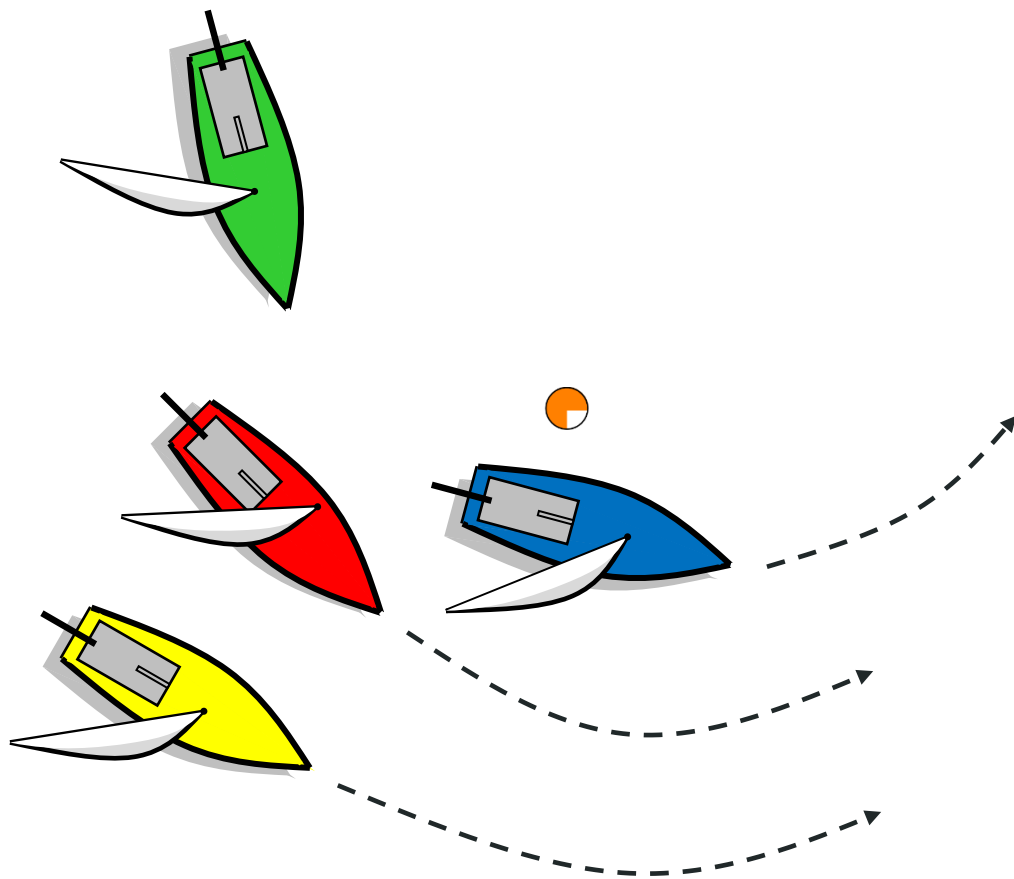


Most common rule in the protest room.
Only rule where there is an onus of proof.
Rule 18.2(e): "If there is reasonable doubt that a boat obtained or broke an overlap in time, it shall be presumed that she did not"



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Leeward Mark Rounding



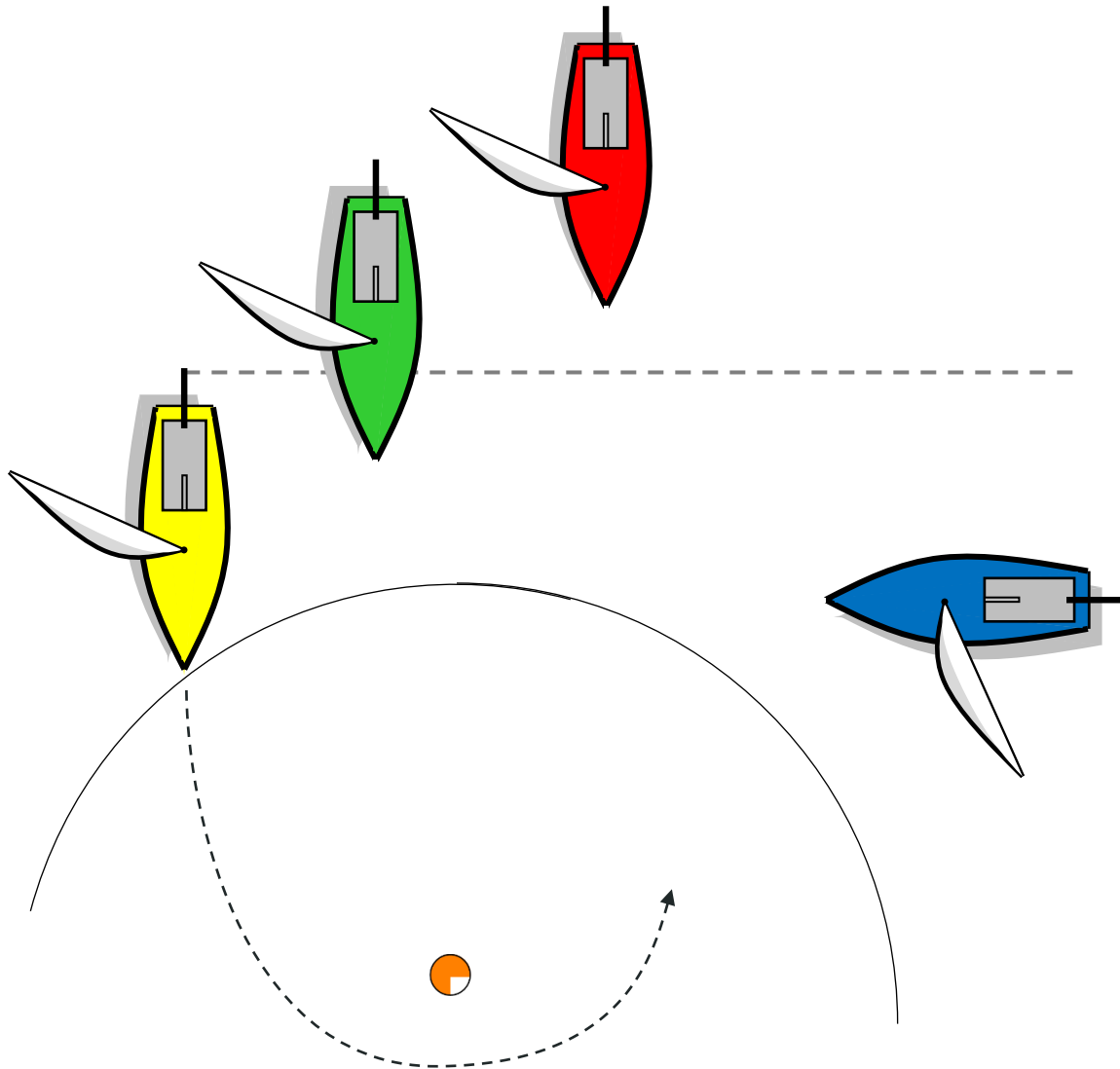
Probably the trickiest rule as there are no lines on the "court" to judge the three boat lengths

One of the few rules where it is highly recommended to call "room" if you think you are entitled to room, or "no room" if you think other boats are not entitled.

Do not take risks on mark roundings. If someone calls "room" on you, give them room and discuss in the bar later, or protest



Leeward Mark Rounding – intervening boat



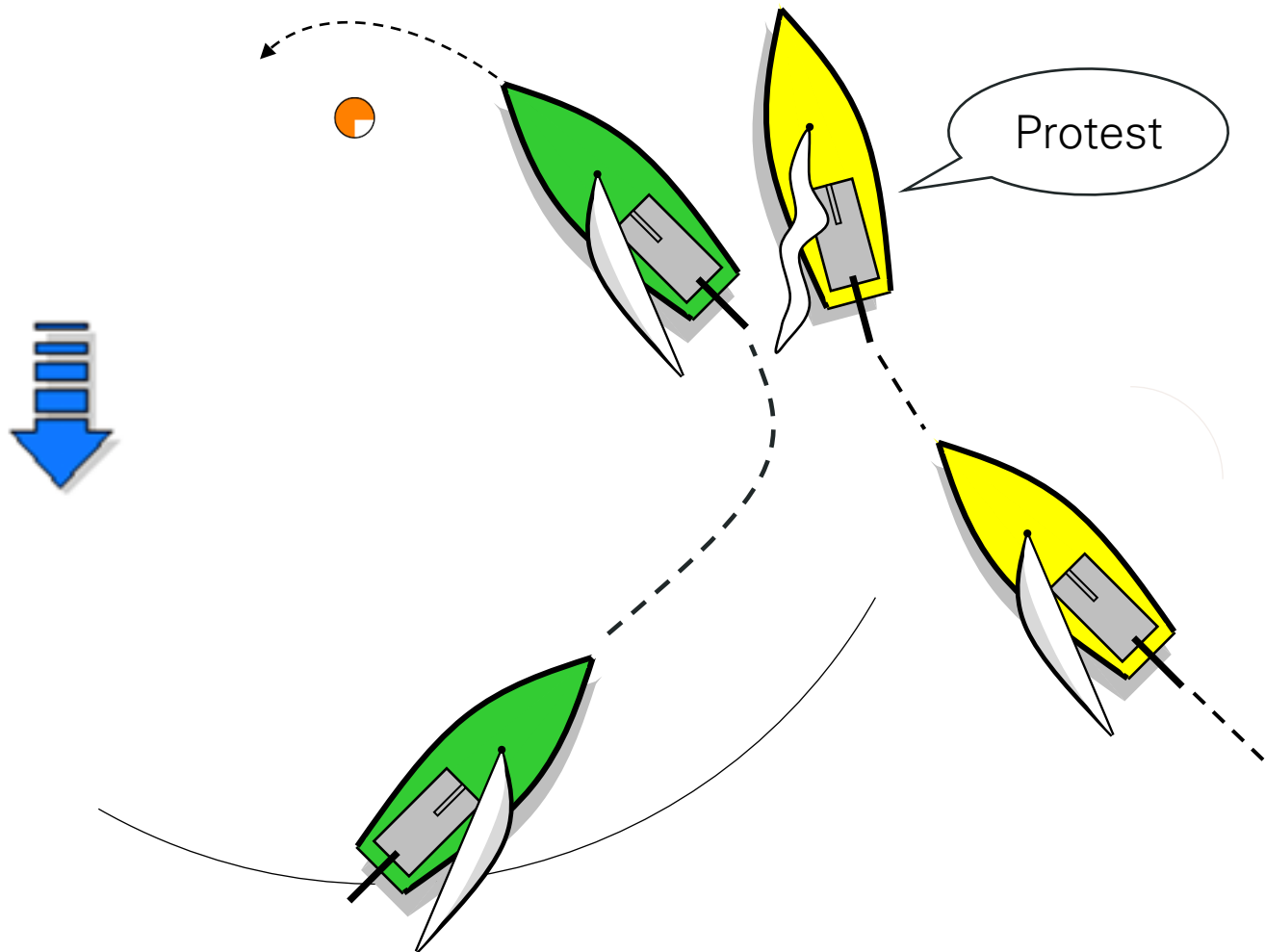
Definition: Clear Astern, Clear Ahead,
Overlap: “ they also overlap when
a boat between them overlaps both ”

In this situation, yellow is overlapped
on green and red and must give room
to both as well as blue



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Windward Mark Rounding

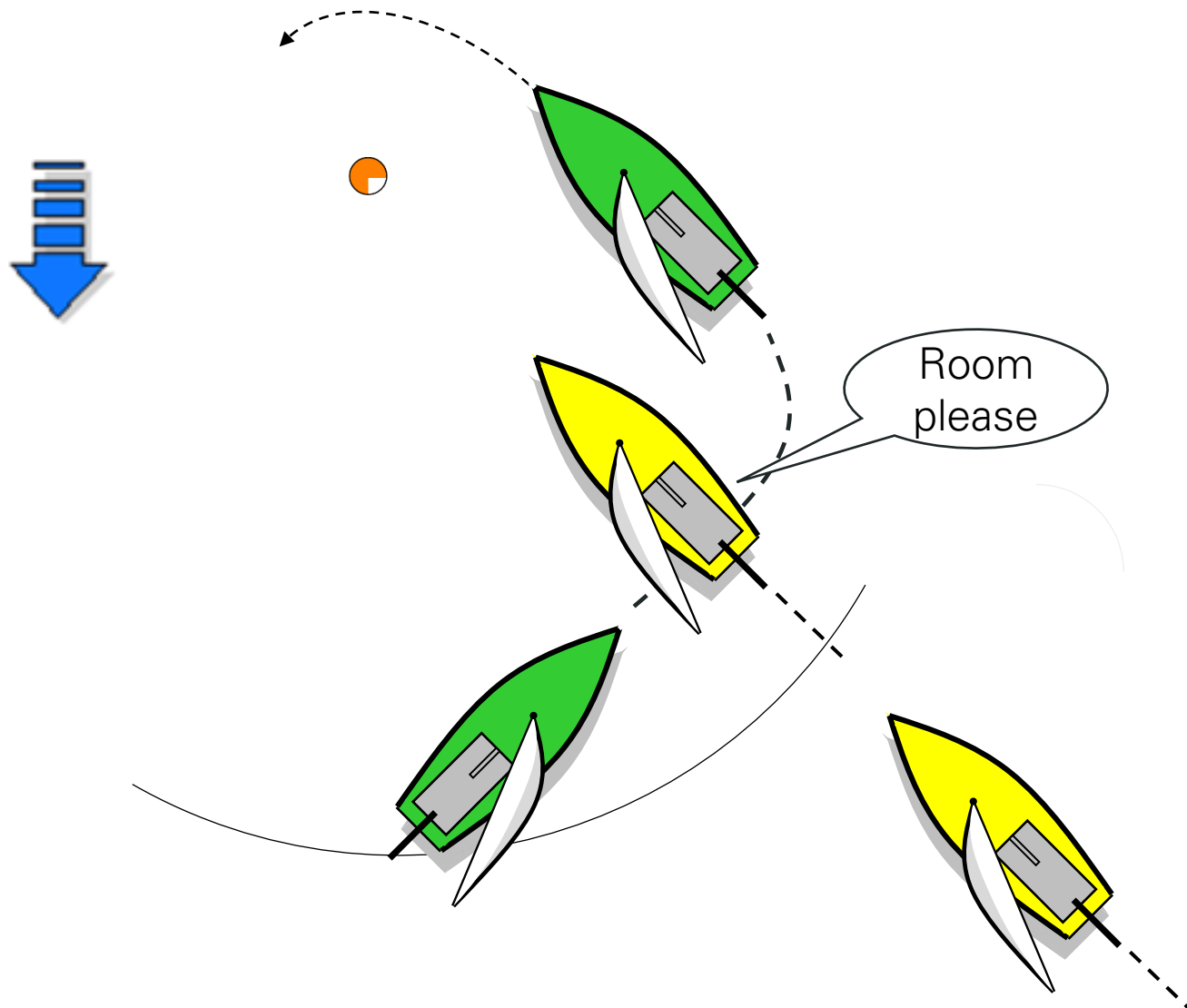


Rule 18.3 "If a boat in the *zone* of a *mark* to be left to port passes head to wind from *port* to *starboard tack* it shall not cause a boat that has been on *starboard tack* to sail above close-hauled"



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Windward Mark Rounding

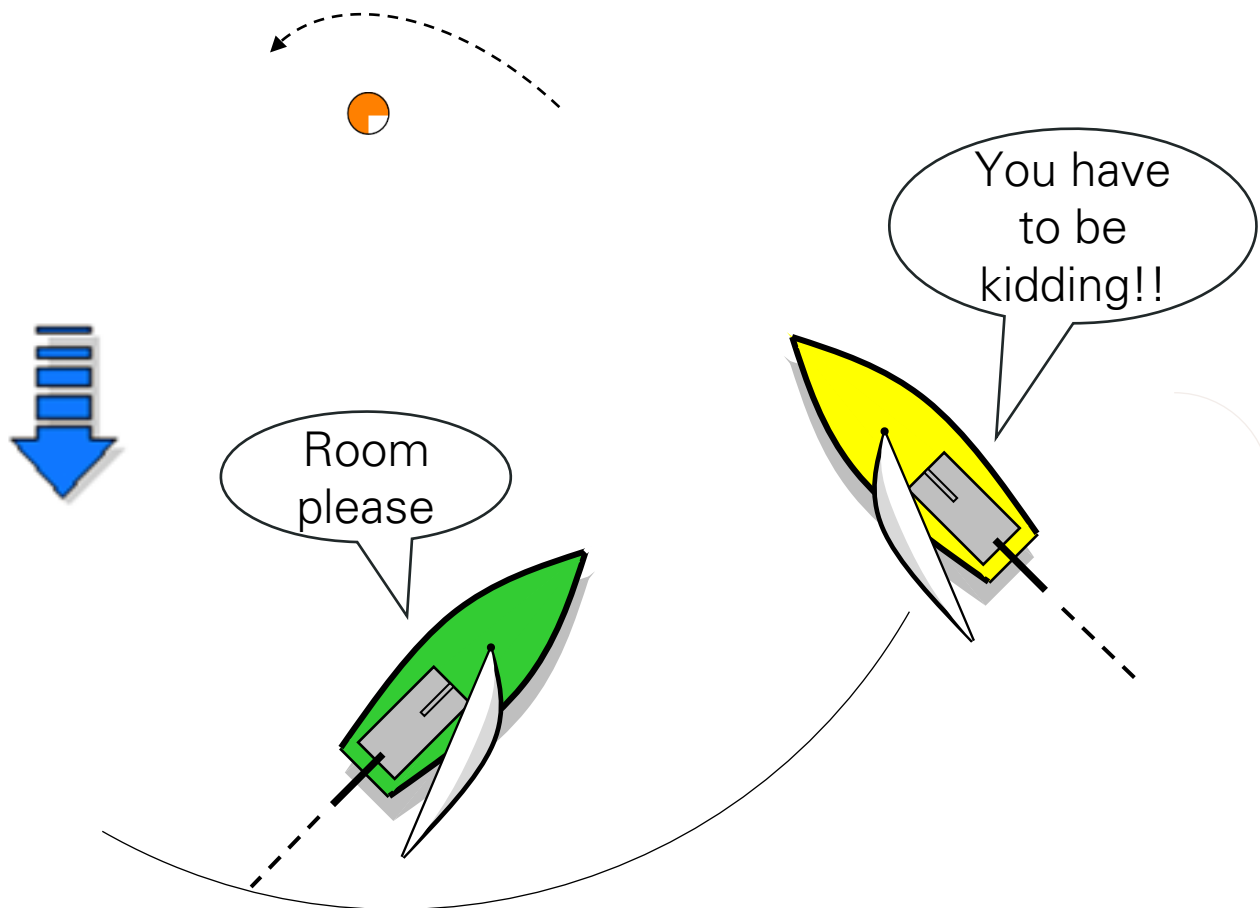


- Rule 18.3 "If a boat in the *zone* of a *mark* to be left to port passes head to wind from *port* to *starboard tack* it shall give *mark-room* if that boat becomes *overlapped* inside it."



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Windward Mark Rounding

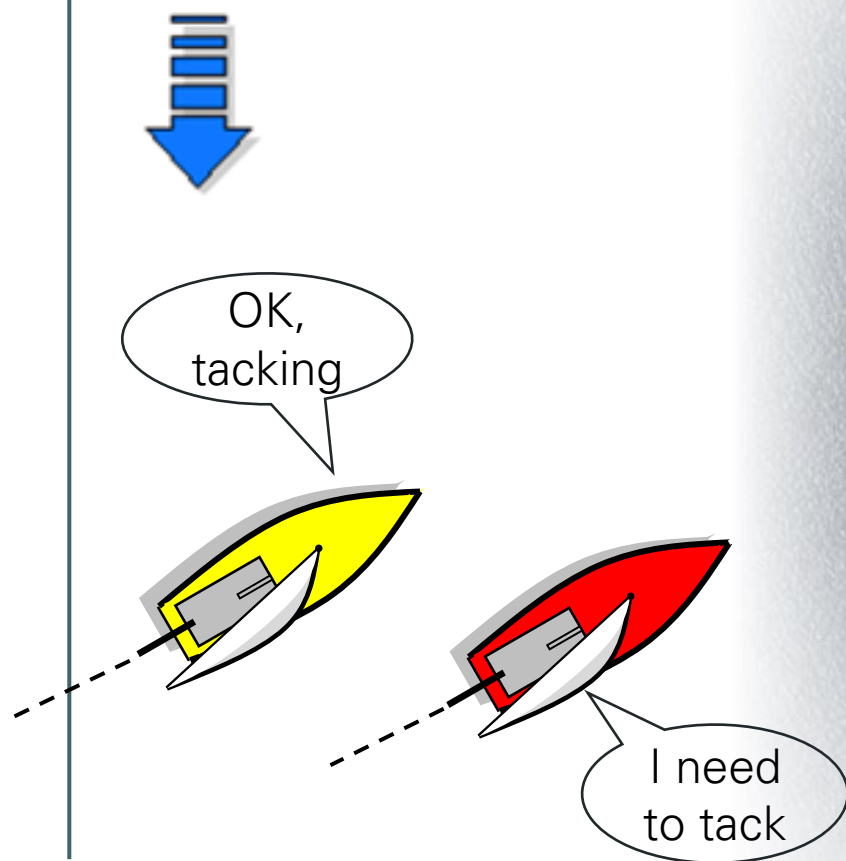


- Rule 18: Mark room "... does not apply between boats on opposite *tacks* on a beat to windward"



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Room to Tack at an Obstruction

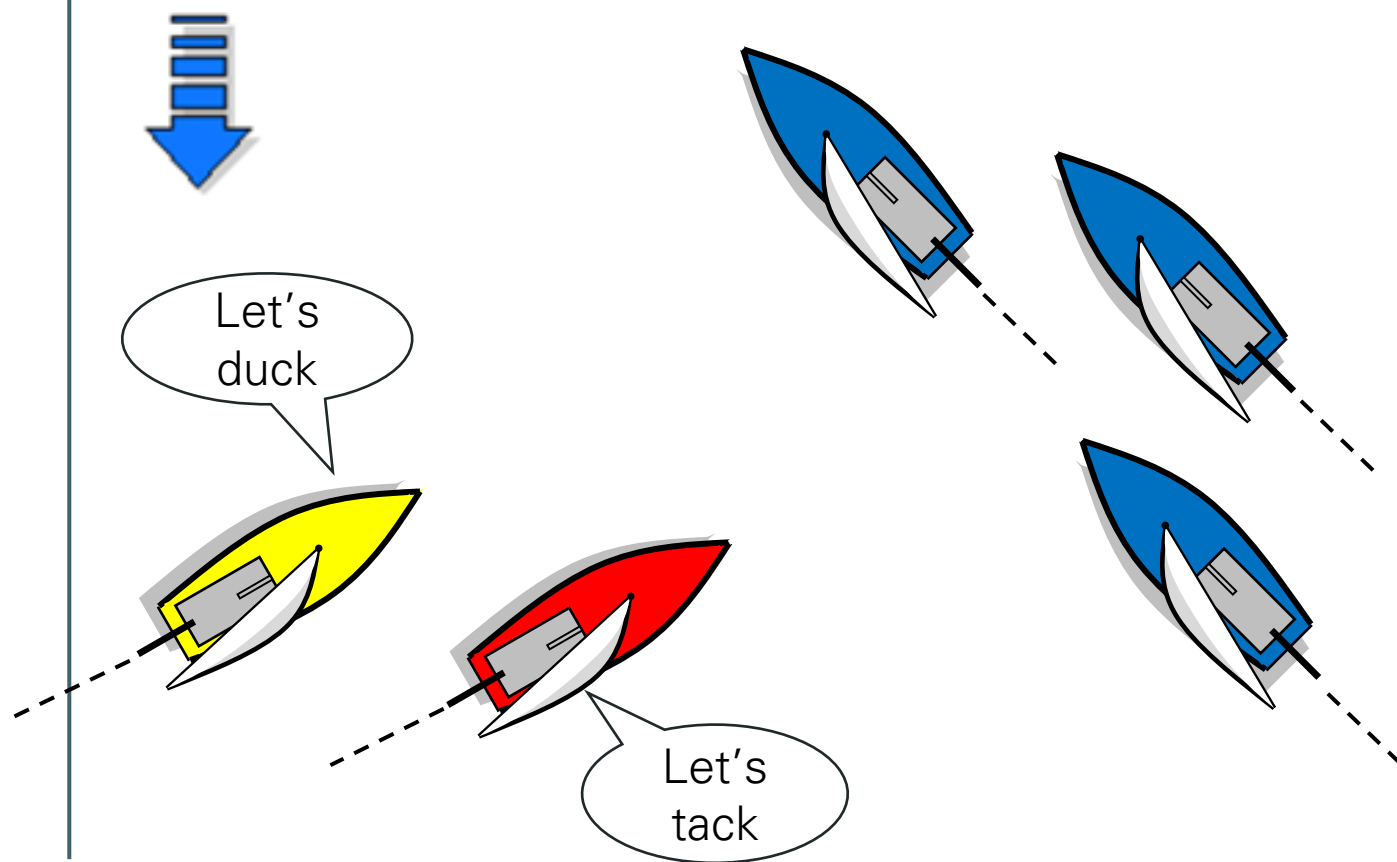


Middle Brighton Pier
Scenic pier with skyline views

- Rule 20.1 Hailing: "A boat may hail for room to tack "
- Rule 20.2 Responding: "... shall respond by either tacking ... or replying "you tack" and then giving room"
- Rule 20.2(b) "A hailed boat shall respond even if the hail breaks rule 20.1" (ie not a valid hail).
- The yellow boat's only recourse is to protest



Room to Tack at a line of give way boats

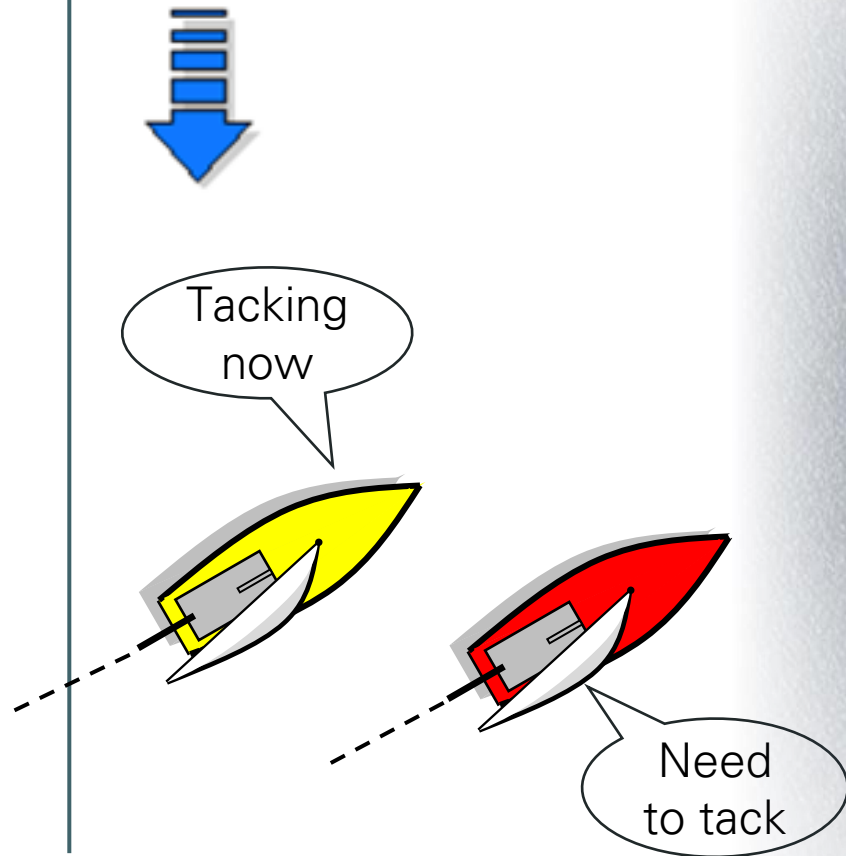


- Who gets to choose?
- Definition: Obstruction - An object that a boat could not pass without changing course substantially a boat *racing* is not an *obstruction* to other boats unless they are required to *keep clear* of it
- Rule 19.2(a) "A right-of-way boat may choose to pass an *obstruction* on either side."
- The red boat is the right of way boat as yellow is required to keep clear as the windward boat, and therefore gets to choose



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Room to Tack at a line of give way boats

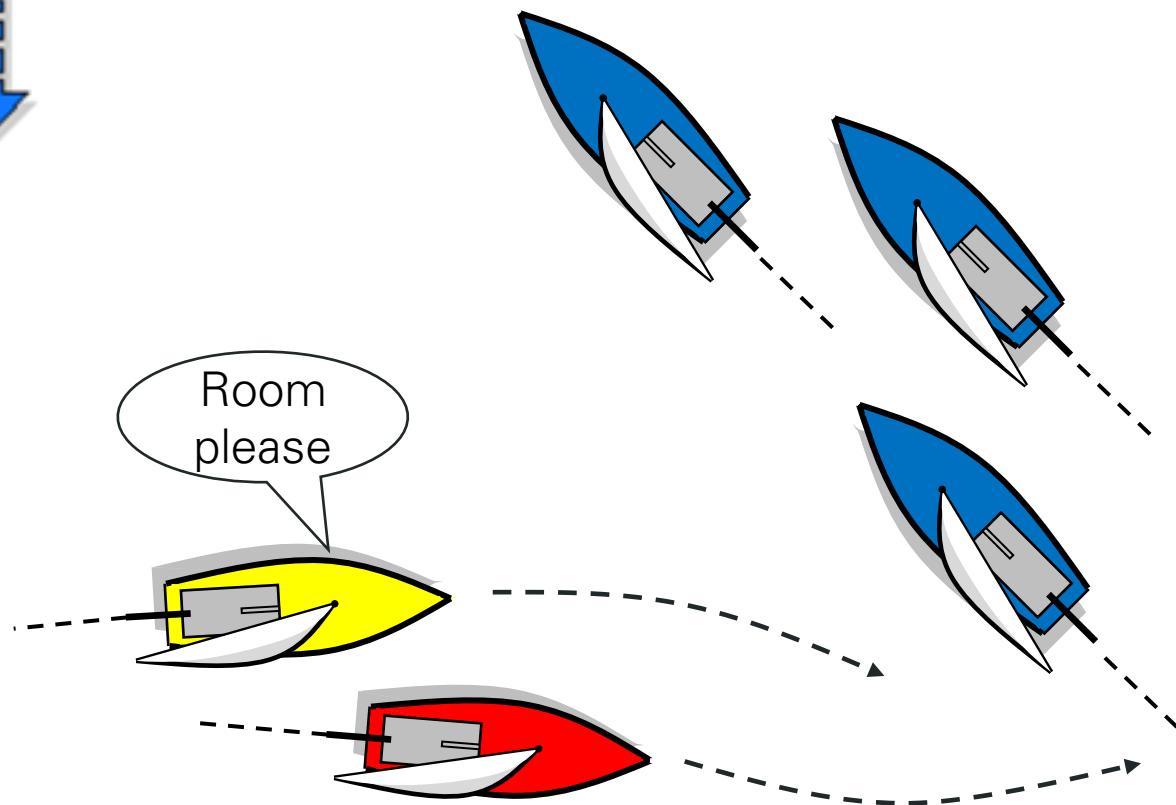


- Having decided to tack, the rules are exactly the same as the previous example of avoiding an obstruction



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Room to Tack at a line of give way boats



If red decides to duck, then she must give yellow room to clear the obstruction

Rule 19.2(b) "When boats are *overlapped*, the outside boat shall give the inside boat *room* between it and the *obstruction*"



A few other rules

Rule 21.1 "A boat sailing towards the pre-start side of the line to comply with rule 30.1 (OCS) shall keep clear until her hull is completely on the pre-start side of the line".

Rule 21.2: "A boat taking a penalty shall keep clear of one that is not."

Rule 23.2 "If reasonably possible, a boat shall not interfere with a boat that is taking a penalty this rule does not apply when the boat is sailing its *proper course*."

Rule 21.3: "A boat moving astern, or sideways to windward, through the water by backing a sail shall *keep clear* of one that is not."



What next?

- Download a copy of the rules from the Australian Sailing website, sailing.org.au
 - If you are sailing in a regatta in January, make sure before then that you are aware of any significant changes
- Print off:
 - Definitions
 - Race Signals (the flags)
 - Part 2
- Avoid contact at all costs
- Avoid protests as much as possible. Judges often come up with rules that you may not have hear of, or may not have realised were applicable
- If you have some disagreement on the water, discuss it in the bar with the other boat or an RBYC race official



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Thank you & Good luck

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