

ORAKEI YACHT CLUB

This is not intended to be a definitive document of the Sailing Rules, but, a plain English explanation, of the rules, and how they refer to Electron sailing. *A sensible summary of the RULES.*

SUBJECT: The Rules Simplified . . .

- Approaching the Start Line . . . The most difficult judgement . . .
 - If you approach the line from above, the course side, you are **barging**. If there are boats below, you have **no rights**. **Keep Clear**.
 - If you approach fast under another boat, you do not have the right to force them up, until you have created your position below, and then have to give the windward boat reasonable time to avoid.
 - If you approach the start line above another boat, you have to **stay clear** above, EVEN if you **have to** sail across the start line or outside the start mark before the gun/start.
 - If you are **penalised** on the start line, you have to sail clear, as soon as you can, until you can do your penalty without affecting any other yacht.
- Across the line before the GUN.
 - Your obligation is to **stay clear** of EVERY boat. To sail on is not correct. You have to return and re-cross the start line, WITHOUT affecting any other competitor.
 - The best suggestion is to throw your sails . . . and keep steering straight . . . until all boats have sailed past . . .
- Port tack boat within 4 boat lengths of the top mark.
 - If you can tack clear ahead you are **OK**, BUT, * **the risk is high** *, you have no rights if you don't **Nail** the Tack.
 - What are your alternatives . . . **decide early** . . . You have to dip all the boats approaching on starboard.
 - What are your alternatives . . . **decide early** . . . There is a boat to leeward . . . will he give you room to dip.
 - What are your alternatives . . . **decide early** . . . IF he doesn't you have too . . . tack away . . . do a 360 turn and try to approach the top mark again.
- You cannot shoot the mark (go head to wind to get around the mark) if this interferes with the windward Starboard boats rounding.
 - If the Starboard boat gets his bow inside you before the mark, irrespective of you initially being clear when you tacked from Port to Starboard, the Starboard boat has rights from that point until to when you both completely clear the other side of the mark.
- You are close to making the Top Mark, but don't quite make it . . . and miss the Mark . . . What do you do . . .
 - Do you sail past the mark on the wrong side, and collide with the all the boats that did get around the mark?
 - Do you realise your situation . . . **decide early** . . . and bail out doing a leeward 360/270, and approach the Mark again, now on PORT tack?
 - You may lose many places, BUT, you will NOT ruin the race for those you will collide with, while trying to shoot the mark, when you actually can't, or even try to tack onto Starboard, right on the mark, creating a huge collision that will affect many who thought they had judged the line to the Top Mark absolutely correctly.
 - Bail early . . . **decide early** . . . give yourself a better chance to approach again on port, *so still no rights*.
 - Still you haven't created a huge collision and ruined the races of a number of Starboard tack boats.
- 4 boat lengths, on approaching the bottom mark
 - The inside overlap has to be established **before** the 4 boat length zone.
 - Best advice is to call at 4 boat lengths . . . advise other boats.

- If you have **any doubt**, you should steer your boat outside the stern of the inside boat.
 - What are your alternatives? . . . **decide early** . . .
 - If the LAST surge of a wave does get you inside, but you are also **inside** 4 boat lengths, what do you do?
 - You must keep clear of boats to leeward of you by luffing away from them . . . **decide early**.
 - If your decision is too late . . . you have to abort . . . to reduce the effect on the other competitors.
- Rounding the Bottom Mark . . . Giving Room
 - Determine Early . . . **decide early** . . . if you have AN overlap* . . . AT 4 BOAT Lengths
 - If you have doubt then head for the outside of the stern of the boat in front.
 - Any boat outside you has to give both you and the boat in front . . . room to round the mark.
 - If you are behind, at 4 boat lengths, you cannot force your way in if the boat ahead swings wide.
 - . . . **decide early**. . . Make sure your decision is known to the other competitors.
 - Overlap. Drawing a line square across the stern of a boat, any boat inside this line has an overlap on you.
 - So be aware If you have taken a very wide turn and you get into the 4 length zone first any boat not in the circle BUT is inside this line has overlap rights on you.
 - Rounding the Bottom Mark . . . Tacking around the Mark
 - Tacking immediately on the Mark . . . Doesn't leave any room . . . you will slow down.
 - If a boat ahead of you, that is entitled to mark room, takes the mark wide, you may round the mark inside her **as long as**, you are able to keep clear of her while you remain as the windward boat. BUT you must anticipate any action from the boat in front. *SHE HAS ALL THE RIGHTS until you have sailed out of the zone.*
 - Still, IF you have swung wide and then tack **immediately** . . . you are giving the following boat **no time** to avoid . . . no reason for the following boat to suspect the tack . . . no time to allow them to avoid a collision.
 - Port / Starboard and other Penalties
 - If you incur a Port/Starboard or any penalty, you are obliged to do the penalty . . . **at the FIRST possible opportunity** . . . WITHOUT effecting any other boat
 - The first possible opportunity means . . . **NOT** at your convenience . . . It means as soon as you can "avoid any interference/problems with other competitors, BUT, may mean . . . you have to sail away from the fleet . . . and possibly result on going to the back of the fleet . . . *That is the penalty.*
 - The best decision . . . is to avoid all Port / Starboard factors, when you are on PORT tack. (Particularly when approaching the TOP mark).
 - **Decide early**. . . and DIP the Starboard tack boat.
 - Port and Starboard sailing down wind . . .
 - Port and Starboard is not hard for anyone to determine while sailing downhill with a remote controlled yacht. You need to look carefully at your sails.
 - I would like to suggest that anyone sailing downhill, should try to avoid any clashes with the UP Wind yachts. The downhill sailing person being able to steer clear of the On the Wind (Up Wind) boat, much more easily, and by steering towards that other boats stern, and so usually avoid a collision. The earlier the indication of your intention to avoid the collision, by steering your boat in the appropriate safe direction, is recommended . . . so the boat, on the wind, and having less maneuverability, can establish the best / safest direction to steer. Decide early, and indicate that to the on the wind boat by steering you boat early.
 - **OFTEN**, having the Starboard tack **rights**, should be relented, to avoid any collision.
 - Port and Starboard should not be a factor between uphill and downhill sailing. DOWNHILL sailing can determine their course, so much easier.

- Obstructions
 - On the wind.
 - If you are sailing close-hauled or above, towards an obstruction and have to make a substantial alteration of course to avoid it, a boat may hail for room to tack and avoid a boat on the same tack.
 - After a boat hails, she shall give a hailed boat time to respond.
- A hailed boat shall respond either by tacking as soon as possible, or by immediately replying 'You tack' and then giving the hailing boat room to tack and avoid her.
- When a boat has been hailed for room to tack and she intends to respond by tacking, she may hail another boat on the same tack for room to tack and avoid her.

Obviously, at an Open Regatta, the full rules need to be observed.

- DEFINITIONS

Clear Astern and Clear Ahead; Overlap One boat is *clear astern* of another when her hull and equipment in normal position are behind a line abeam from the aftermost point of the other boat's hull and equipment in normal position. The other boat is *clear ahead*. They *overlap* when neither is *clear astern*. However, they also *overlap* when a boat between them *overlaps* both. These terms always apply to boats on the same *tack*. They do not apply to boats on opposite *tacks* unless rule 18 applies or both boats are sailing more than ninety degrees from the true wind.

Keep Clear A boat *keeps clear* of a right-of-way boat

- if the right-of-way boat can sail her course with no need to take avoiding action and,
- when the boats are *overlapped*, if the right-of-way boat can also change course in both directions without immediately making contact.

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

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

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

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

Obstruction An object that a boat could not pass without changing course substantially, if she were sailing directly towards it and one of her hull lengths from it. An object that can be safely passed on only one side and an area so designated by the sailing instructions are also *obstructions*. However, a boat *racing* is not an *obstruction* to other boats unless they are required to *keep clear* of her or, if rule 23 applies, avoid her. A vessel under way, including a boat *racing*, is never a continuing *obstruction*.

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

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

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

YOU WILL SAIL AROUND THE COURSE QUICKER IF YOU ABIDE BY THE RULES AND ARE NOT INVOLVED IN ANY COLLISIONS. WE ARE NOT A CONTACT SPORT.