

Racing Rules Committee

Rule.19.2

A submission from US Sailing

Purpose or Objective

To make it clear that in rule 19.2 the word 'side' refers to a side of a boat, and not to a side of the obstruction. To change rule 19.2(b) so that it only applies when both boats pass the obstruction on the same side.

Proposal

Change rule 19.2 as shown.

19.2 Giving Room at an Obstruction

- (a) A right-of-way boat may choose to pass an *obstruction* on ~~either~~ **her port or her starboard** side.
- (b) When **the** boats are *overlapped* **and both boats choose to pass the obstruction on the same side**, the outside boat shall give the inside boat *room* between her and the *obstruction*, unless she has been unable to do so from the time the *overlap* began.
- (c) *[no change]*

Clean Copy if the Proposal is Approved

19.2 Giving Room at an Obstruction

- (a) A right-of-way boat may choose to pass an *obstruction* on her port or her starboard side.
- (b) When the boats are *overlapped* and both boats choose to pass the *obstruction* on the same side, the outside boat shall give the inside boat *room* between her and the *obstruction*, unless she has been unable to do so from the time the *overlap* began.
- (c) *[no change]*

Current Position

As above.

Reasons

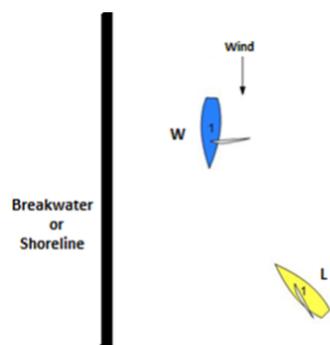
Reasons for the changes in rule 19.2(a) Obstructions have sides, even an obstruction that is round, such as a buoy marking the edge of a dredged channel. Such a buoy has a channel side and an inshore side. In the current wording of rule 19.2(a) it is not clear whether the word 'side' refers to a side of the right-of-way boat or to a side of the obstruction. The proposed change to rule 19.2(a) makes it clear that 'side' in rule 19.2 refers to a side of a boat and not a side of the obstruction. This clarification of 'side' enables the problems identified (and described below) in rule 19.2(b) to be fixed in a clear and simple way.

Reasons for the changes in rule 19.2(b) From 1961 through 2008, the rules only required an outside boat to give an inside boat room at an obstruction if each of the boats was leaving the obstruction to port or if each of them was leaving the obstruction to starboard. In the 2009-2012 RRS, room at an obstruction was, for the first time, covered by rule 19 and room at a mark was covered by rule 18. However, the language 'when passing the obstruction on the same side' was not included in new rule 19.

The unintended consequence of this omission is that there are a few situations in which one boat is passing an obstruction on her port side while another is passing it on her starboard side and their positions relative to the obstruction can create uncertainty as to which boat is inside and entitled to room. The proposed changes in rule 19.2(b) make it clear that rule 19.2(b) only applies when each of the boats is passing the obstruction on her port side or each is passing it on her starboard side. The proposed changes in rule 19.2(b) will help avoid what can be confusing and potentially dangerous situations. Situations 1 and 2 below are examples of such situations.

Situation 1

W is sailing a downwind course on starboard tack alongside a breakwater while L is beating upwind on starboard tack approaching it. L is the right-of-way boat and is choosing to pass the obstruction on her port side. W and L are overlapped, so under current rule 19.2(b) W is on the windward side of L, which makes her the outside boat. However, W is closer to the breakwater than L and may think she is the inside boat, which could lead to a collision. The proposed rule is clear that, when L is at the obstruction, rule 19.2(b) does not apply because W is passing the obstruction on her starboard side and L is passing it on her port side. Therefore, neither boat is required to give the other boat room, and it does not matter which boat is the inside boat. W is subject to rule 11 and must keep clear of L.



Situation 2

The incident occurs three minutes before the starting signal. The boats are clearly not approaching the line to start. S gybes onto starboard (position 2) and gives P room to keep clear under rule 15. P luffs and sails as close to the RC vessel as she can without risk of touching it.

Under current rule 19.2(b), P is the "inside" boat entitled to room because S has chosen to pass the obstruction to starboard and P is on her starboard side. Therefore, P is exonerated for her breach of

rule 10. However, the proposed rule 19.2(b) does not apply because the P is passing the obstruction on her port side and S is passing it on her starboard side. Therefore, S is not required to give P room to sail between S and the race committee vessel.

