

Racing Rules of Sailing

Rules 30.2, 30.3 and 30.4

A submission from the Chairman of the Racing Rules Committee

Purpose or Objective

To change rules 30.2, 30.3 and 30.4 so that the triangle formed by the starting marks and the first mark is no longer an obstruction when one of those three rules applies.

Proposal 1

Change rule 30.2 as indicated below:

If flag Z has been displayed, ~~and any~~ **and any** no part of a boat's hull ~~is shall be~~ in the triangle formed by the ends of the starting line and the first *mark* during the last minute before her starting signal, ~~and she~~ **and she** ~~If a boat breaks this rule and~~ is identified, she shall receive ... *[no further changes]*

Change rule 30.3 as indicated below:

If flag U has been displayed, ~~and any~~ **and any** no part of a boat's hull ~~is shall be~~ in the triangle formed by the ends of the starting line and the first *mark* during the last minute before her starting signal, ~~and she~~ **and she** ~~If a boat breaks this rule and~~ is identified, she shall be ... *[no further changes]*

Change rule 30.4 as indicated below:

If a black flag has been displayed, ~~and any~~ **and any** no part of a boat's hull ~~is shall be~~ in the triangle formed by the ends of the starting line and the first *mark* during the last minute before her starting signal, ~~and she~~ **and she** ~~If a boat breaks this rule and~~ is identified, she shall be ... *[no further changes]*

Proposal 2

Proposal 1 is an urgent matter of pressing importance that she should be approved in November 2024 and take effect on Jan. 1, 2025.

Current Position

As above.

Reasons

The definition Obstruction, part (d), in the 2025-2028 RRS states that 'an area...in a *rule* that boats are prohibited from entering' is an Obstruction. Rule 30.4 states 'no part of a boat's

hull shall be in the triangle formed by the ends of the starting line and the first *mark* during the last minute before her starting signal.' These two statements imply that when the black flag is displayed, the triangle defined in rule 30.4 is an obstruction. This means that, in the last minute before the starting signal, a boat sailing just below the starting line and overlapped to windward by another boat is entitled by rule 19.2(b) to room to pass the starting line without crossing it. If the windward boat is not given that room and she is forced over the starting line before the starting signal, the boat to leeward of her breaks rule 19.2(b) and the boat in the triangle will be exonerated under rule 43.1(a) for her breach of rule 30.4. If Proposal 1 is not approved, this would be a major undesirable game change that would make rule 30.4 a far less effective rule in controlling a large fleet of boats.

An almost identical set of reasons would show that, if Proposal 1 is not approved, the same undesirable game change would make rules 30.3 and 30.2 far less effecting in controlling a large fleet of boats.

If Proposal 1 is approved, rules 30.2, 30.3 and 30.4 will no longer prohibit a boat from entering the triangle formed by the ends of the starting line and the first mark and, therefore, that triangle will no longer be an obstruction.

This is an urgent matter because the problem described above has been widely publicized in the online forum at <https://racingrulesofsailing.org>, which is read by thousands of competitors and race officials.
