

2017 Racing Rules

Category: [Racing News](#)

The [2017 Racing rules of sailing have been published here](#). These will apply to club racing from January 2017. There isn't much in the way of game changing.

For youth sailors the biggest change may well be the concept of "Support Person" and that they are now bound by the rules. What this means is that if your Dad misbehaves at a sailing event you can get penalised. To be honest I don't think any of you need worry about this, but in the past I have seen some things at Optimist events especially...

For all of us there are detail changes around rule 18 (mark roundings), as indeed there usually are. Its a ferociously difficult area to write rules for. We should all make an effort to study rule 18 and make sure we understand how it currently works, as opposed to how it worked when we were 18...

18.2 has a new clause, which I think is mainly about when you stop being entitled to mark room, and is clarification. 18.3, tacking in the zone, has been changed so it only applies at port hand rounding marks. This is a smaller change than you might think.

19 (Room for Obstruction) has a bit of clarification about overlaps and marks.

20 (Room to tack) has been rewritten for clarity, but with much the same meaning.

21 (Exoneration) has had some housekeeping. If you're not familiar with this you should be. Its a relatively new concept in the rules, covering, roughly speaking, what happens when someone forces you to break a rule.

22.3 (Backing a sail) now applies to a boat moving sideways (on the startline probably) by backing a sail. This will affect some of the more arcane start line tactics, but is I think an improvement.

24.2 interfering with another boat rewritten. Now "if reasonably possible".

30.3 New "U flag" rule. This is a variation on the black flag which doesn't carry over to successive starts. I think we should consider this rather than black flag for Open events, because it means less work for the RC. Flag "U" is red and white squares.

32.1. and 32.2 (Shortening and abandoning) have some changes that are mainly housekeeping.

The other changes are of less immediate interest I think.

Remember, none of this starts until 2017.

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