

**Part 2 – When Boats Meet continued:**

**SECTION C – At Marks and Obstructions**

*Section C rules 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.*

*Section C rules are 18: Mark-room, 19: Room to pass an Obstructions, and 20: Room to tack at an obstruction*

**18 MARK-ROOM**

*Rule 18 philosophy: If behind, let those ahead round first. If outside and overlapped, give room to inside boats.*

- 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.*

**18.1 When Rule 18 Applies**

Rule 18 applies between boats when they are required to **leave a mark on the same side** and at least **one of them is in the zone**.

*Zone: 3 hull lengths of the boat nearer the mark. Any part of her hull in the zone.*

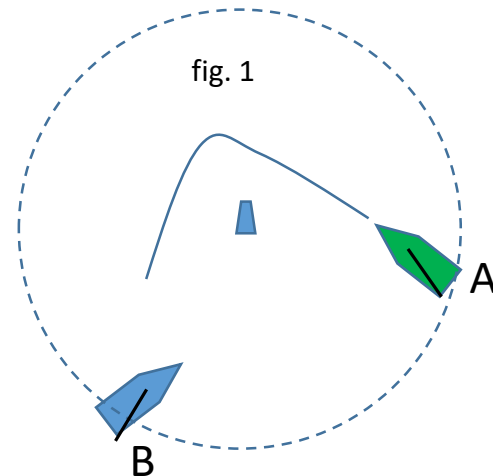
However, it **does not apply**:

- (a) between boats on **opposite tacks** on a **beat to windward**,
- (b) between boats on **opposite tacks** when the **proper course at the mark for one** but not both of them is **to tack** (fig. 1),
- (c) between a boat **approaching a mark** and one **leaving it**, or
- (d) if the **mark is a continuing obstruction**, in which case **rule 19 applies**.

- (a) – (c), Starboard tack has right-of-way.*
- (c) could also be windward/leeward right-of-way if on the same tack*

*Rule 19: Room to pass an Obstruction*

Rule 18 no longer applies between boats when *mark-room* has been given.



- A is fetching the mark and will bear away.*
- B must tack to round and then head downwind*
- A has right-of-way on starboard tack*
- B doesn't have mark-room since rule 18 doesn't apply.*

I did not use a lot of red font since the whole slide has key words and would be red!

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**18.2 Giving Mark-Room**

(a) When boats are *overlapped* the outside boat shall give the inside boat *mark-room*, unless rule 18.2(b) applies.

(b) If boats are *overlapped* when the first of them reaches the *zone*, the outside boat at that moment shall **thereafter** give the inside boat *mark-room* (fig. 2, A gives mark-room to B). If a boat is *clear ahead* when she reaches the *zone*, the boat *clear astern* at that moment shall thereafter give her *mark-room*. (fig. 2, C gives B mark-room. Fig. 3, B gives A mark-room)

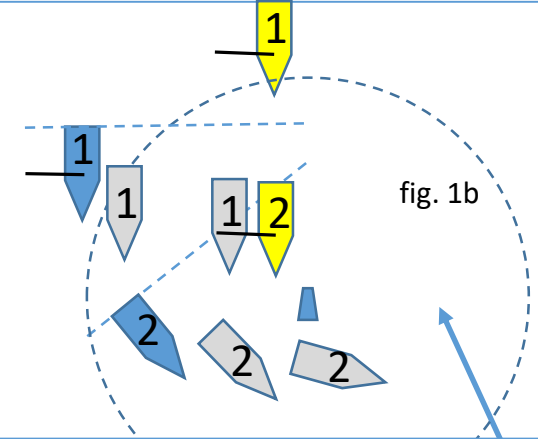
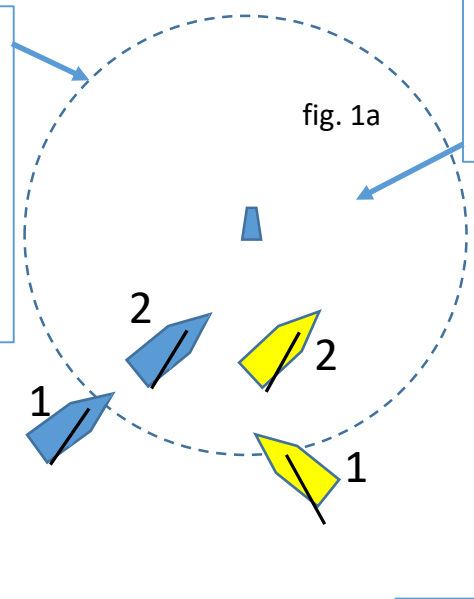
(c) When a boat is required to give *mark-room* by rule 18.2(b),  
(1) she shall continue to do so even if later an *overlap* is broken or a new *overlap* begins;  
(2) if she (B) becomes *overlapped* inside the boat (A) entitled to *mark-room*, she shall also give that boat (A) *room* to sail her *proper course* while they remain *overlapped* (fig. 3).

Generally rule 18.2(b) will govern mark room but I can think of one case and found another case when 18.2(a) would be germane. By tacking to an overlap (fig. 1a) or by overlapping after being clear ahead (fig. 1b), this is more likely with a lot of boats at a leeward mark

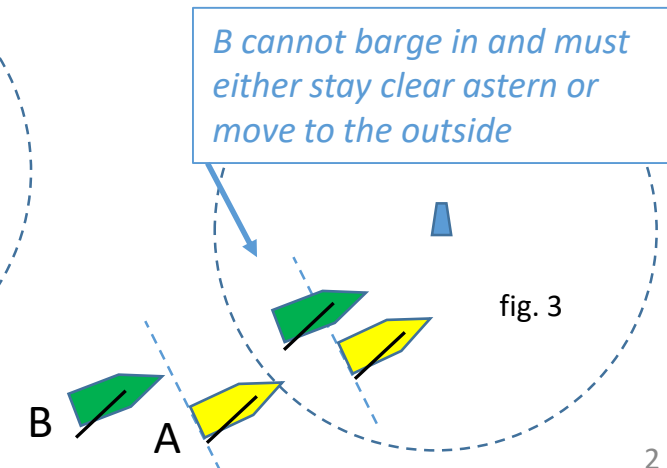
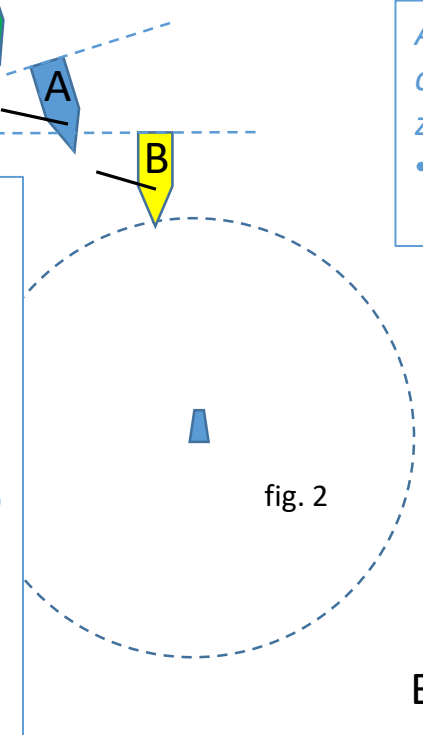
- Mark room is given to the inside boat if overlapped when the first boat reaches the zone. A give B mark-room.  
- Mark room is also given to a clear ahead boat. C gives mark-room to B. A and C are TBD once A reaches the zone.

This rule prevents a boat that was clear astern or overlapped outside from barging into an inside overlapped position of the boat entitled to mark-room. Per the definition of mark-room (b) room to round or pass the mark as necessary to sail the course without touching the mark. Allows A to sail her proper course, not just room to pass the mark as necessary, and block out B on the inside if B persists. To do this, B has to break rule 18.2(b), "shall thereafter give her mark-room". 18.2(b) seems sufficient but okay, copy rule 18.2(c).

Position 1 opposite tacks, beat to windward, R18 doesn't apply. Position 2, yellow overlaps & gives blue mark-room even though yellow is leeward right-of-way boat



At leeward mark, R18 doesn't apply if clear astern (Yellow, position 1) enters zone before clear ahead boat (Blue).  
• Once overlapped (position 2) 18.2(a) applies & blue gives yellow mark-room.



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18.2 continued:

(d) Rules 18.2(b) and (c) **cease to apply** if the boat entitled to *mark-room* passes head to wind **or** leaves the zone.

(e) If there is **reasonable doubt** that a boat obtained or broke an *overlap* in time, it shall be **presumed** that she **did not**. *If doubt; then no doubt!*

(f) If a boat obtained an inside *overlap from clear astern* **or** by *tacking to windward* of the other boat and, from the time the *overlap* began, the outside boat has been **unable to give mark-room**, she is **not required** to give it.

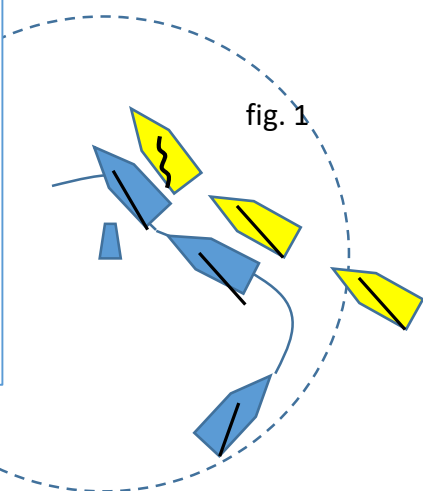
**18.3 Passing Head to Wind in the Zone**

If a boat in the *zone* of a *mark* to be left to port passes head to wind from *port* to *starboard tack* and is then *fetching* the *mark*, she shall not cause a boat that has been on *starboard tack* since entering the *zone* to sail above close-hauled to avoid contact (fig. 1) **and** she shall give *mark-room* if that boat (a boat on *starboard tack*) becomes *overlapped* inside her. (fig. 2) When this rule applies between boats, rule 18.2 does not apply between them.

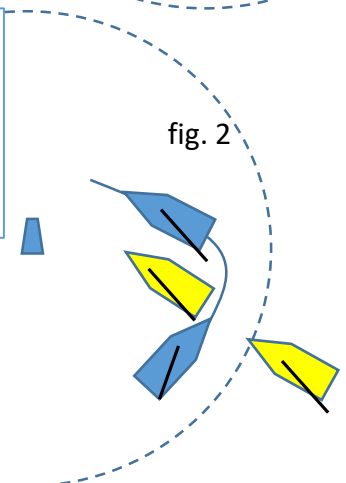
**18.4 Gybing**

When an inside *overlapped* right-of-way boat must gybe at a *mark* to sail her *proper course*, until she gybes she shall **sail no farther from the mark than needed** to sail that course. Rule 18.4 does not apply at a gate *mark*.

*This shouldn't happen if Blue is truly fetching the mark but can happen if Blue tacks inside of yellow and subsequently forces Yellow above closed-hauled (fig 1). In this case, Blue should consider ducking Yellow vice trying to squeeze in.*

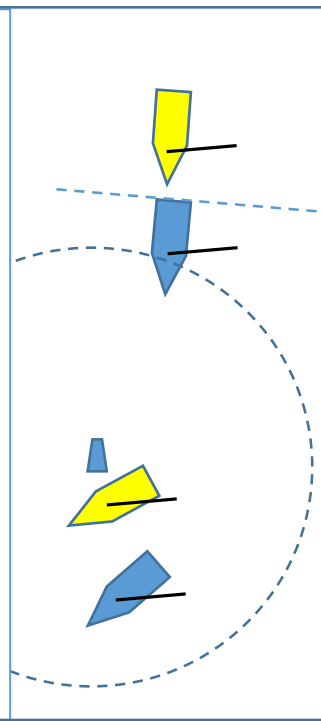


*Blue tacks in front of Yellow and must anticipate that she is required to give Yellow mark-room*



*Unable to give mark-room generally occurs when many boats have converged at the mark and there isn't time or room to maneuver to give mark-room due to congestion from multiple outside overlapped boats preventing space to give mark-room.*

**One more thought!**  
 Can a boat clear astern that's not entitled to mark-room sneak in? Yes, i.e. blue went long due to slow spinnaker takedown. **BUT**, Yellow must be careful not to impede Blue's rounding because Yellow has no mark-room rights. Just because Blue has a poor rounding doesn't mean Yellow has to follow her.



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Last comment is exoneration.

**EXONERATION** (another item that affects mark-room)

- 43.1 (a) When as a consequence of breaking a rule a boat has compelled another boat to break a rule, the other boat is exonerated for her breach.
- (b) When a boat is *sailing within the **room or mark-room*** to which she is entitled and, as a consequence of an *incident with a boat required to give her that room or mark-room*, she breaks a rule of Section A of Part 2, *rule 15, 16, or 31*, she is *exonerated* for her breach.
- (c) A right-of-way boat, or one sailing within the *room or mark-room* to which she is entitled, is *exonerated* for *breaking rule 14 if contact does not cause damage or injury*.

*Means that if a boat that is required to give you mark-room crowds you to the point that you can't keep clear, can't avoid contact, or are forced to touch the mark because you are avoiding contact, you are exonerated.*

**14 AVOIDING CONTACT**

A boat shall avoid contact with another boat if reasonably possible. However, a right-of-way boat, or one sailing within the *room or mark-room* to which she is entitled, need not act to avoid contact until it is clear that the other boat is not *keeping clear* or giving *room or mark-room*.

**15 ACQUIRING RIGHT OF WAY**

When a boat acquires right of way, she shall initially give the other boat *room to keep clear*, unless she acquires right of way because of the other boat's actions.

**16 CHANGING COURSE**

**16.1** When a right-of-way boat changes course, she shall give the other boat *room to keep clear*.

**31 TOUCHING A MARK**

While *racing*, a boat shall not touch a starting *mark* before *starting*, a *mark* that begins, bounds or ends the leg of the course on which she is sailing, or a finishing *mark* after *finishing*.