

ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service



M 004 Q&A 2013-018

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Situation

Questions about 'significant advantage'.

Question 1

When a boat takes a Two-Turns Penalty, is the question as to whether she should have retired for having gained a significant advantage in the race decided with reference only to the other boat in the incident, or with reference to the other competitors generally -or is there some other test?

Answer 1

Both the other boat in the incident and the other competitors generally should be considered.

Question 2

Is the advantage gained despite taking a turn(s) penalty measured simply by comparing places or positions before and after the incident? Or can what might have happened be taken into account? (For instance, not giving mark-room to a boat entitled to mark-room, and then take a Two-Turns Penalty for the breach, when the breach most likely caused the other boat to not gain all the places she could have gained had she been given mark-room.)

Answer 2

What might have happened is generally not considered when measuring whether a boat has gained a significant advantage. However, considering where the boat that broke a rule would have ended up had she not broken that rule should be considered. Generally, places lost by the other boat in the incident will not be considered unless it is clear that the boat breaking a rule acts deliberately and thereby also breaks rule 2, Fair Sailing.

Question 3

When a boat takes a One-Turn or a Two-Turns Penalty, when is the question about whether she has gained a significant advantage to be judged? Immediately after taking the penalty? At some later point in the race, including the finish?

Under what circumstances will a significant advantage gained through a breach of a rule be neutralized if the advantage is lost later in the race?

Answer 3

Whether a boat has gained a significant advantage in the race should be judged from the time of the incident to immediately after taking a penalty. Generally, an advantage, once obtained, should not be considered as neutralized if the situation changes later in the race. However, it may not be clear until later that a significant advantage in the series has been gained.