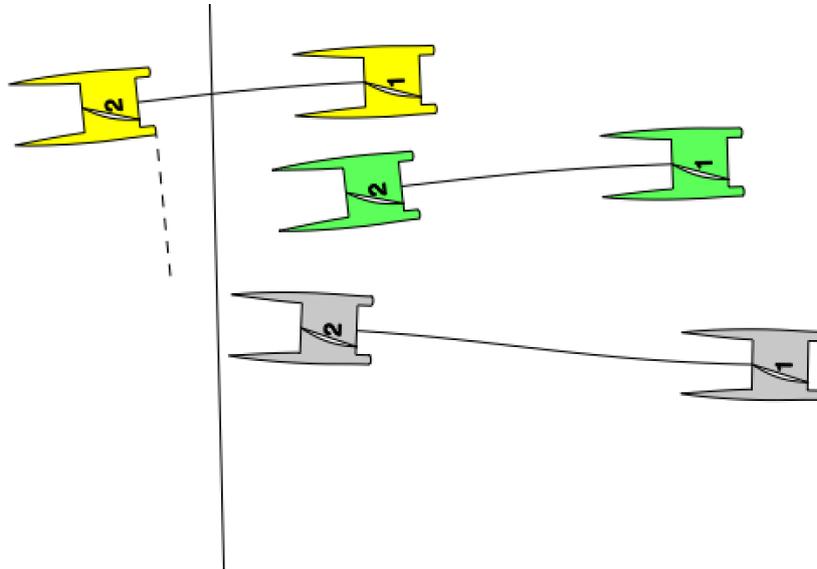


Umpire Question and Answer #5

Question:



In a fleet race:

Position 1: Yellow is approaching to start, slow speed, Green and Grey both clear astern, but travelling much faster than Yellow.

Position 2: Yellow has started, Grey and Green are still approaching the starting line to start but already foiling.

- (A) When does Yellow become an obstruction for Green and Grey?
- (B) From when is Grey not allowed to change her mind? (ie luffing to pass windward off Yellow)
- (C) Is the answer to (A) and (B) the same if Green becomes overlapped with Yellow before Grey?

Answer:

(A)

Yellow is an obstruction to Grey and Green when both of them have started (and while Grey and Green must keep clear of Yellow). For example, Yellow is not an obstruction if Grey has started but if Green has not.

(B)

Until Yellow becomes an obstruction to Grey and Green, rule 19 does not apply (rule 19.1). Any change of course by Grey is governed by the application of rule 16. When Yellow becomes an obstruction, if Grey remains the right-of-way yacht when rule 19 first applies, then it is still the application of rule 16 that limits any change of course by Grey.

The room Grey must give includes the space for Green to comply with her obligations to keep clear of Yellow in a seamanlike way.

(C)

If Green becomes overlapped with Yellow while Grey is overlapped with Green then the answer to (A) and (B) does not apply. Yellow must keep clear of Green who, in turn, must keep clear of Grey (rule 11). Grey is overlapped with Yellow at this time as Green overlaps them both. Yellow therefore is not an obstruction and any change of course by Grey needs to include room for both Green and Yellow to keep clear.