

Brookville Lake Sailing Association

Some sailboat racing rules basics

Is uncertainty about the rules keeping you from racing?

Don't let it! Knowing just a few basic rules will take care of almost all the situations on the racecourse. The following slides will give you the basics plus a little more.

BLSA welcomes all sailors and their boats – come on out



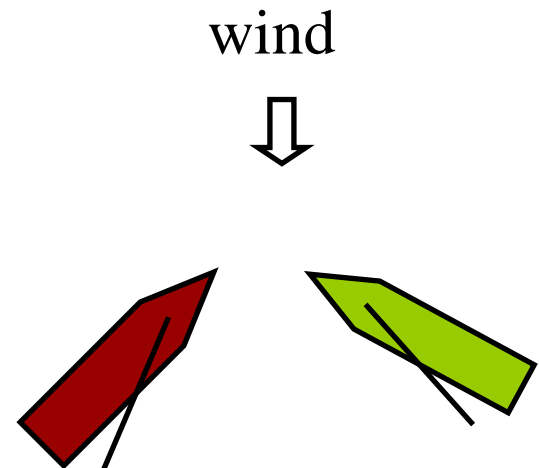
Overview

- Basic rules everyone should know
- Passing situations
- Meeting situations
- Mark roundings
- Starting and some common situations

In the following slides, the green boat has the right of way, and the red boat must not hinder or cause the green boat to alter course.

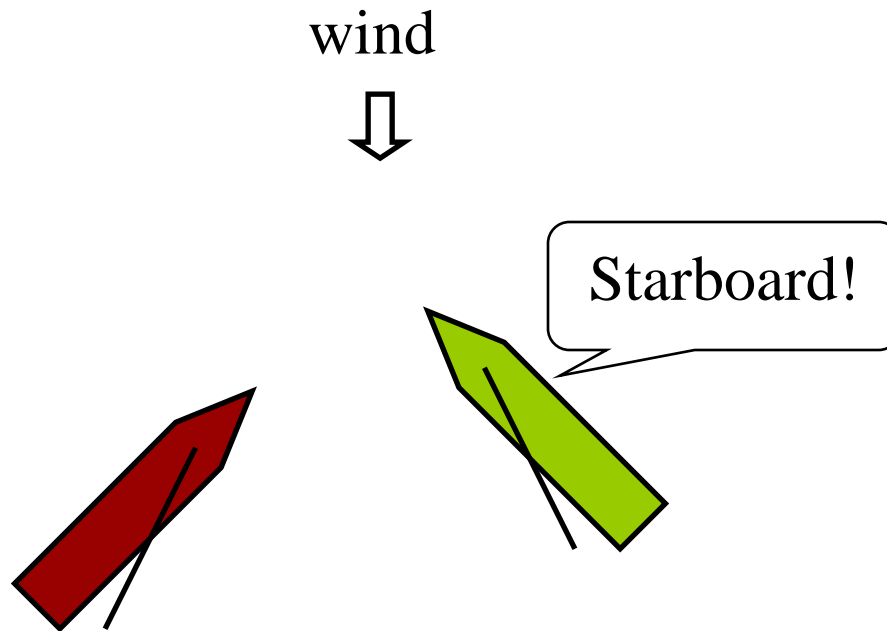
❖ **Starboard tack** – Wind coming over the starboard side, boom on the port side

❖ **Port tack** – Wind coming over the port side and boom on the starboard side



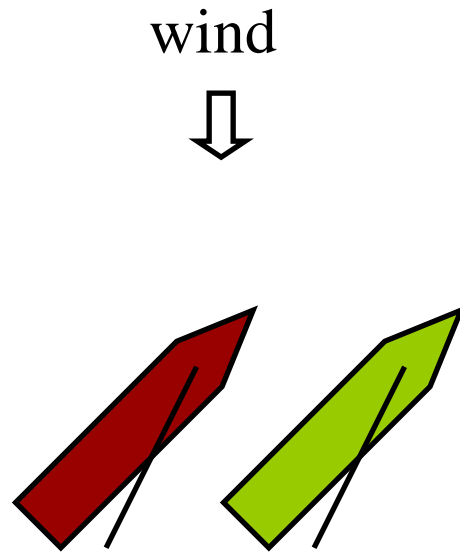
Basic Rule 1

- A boat on starboard tack has right of way over a port tack boat. The red boat must keep clear and not cause the green starboard tack boat to alter course. Starboard tack is the wind coming over the starboard (right) side with the boom on the port (left) side.



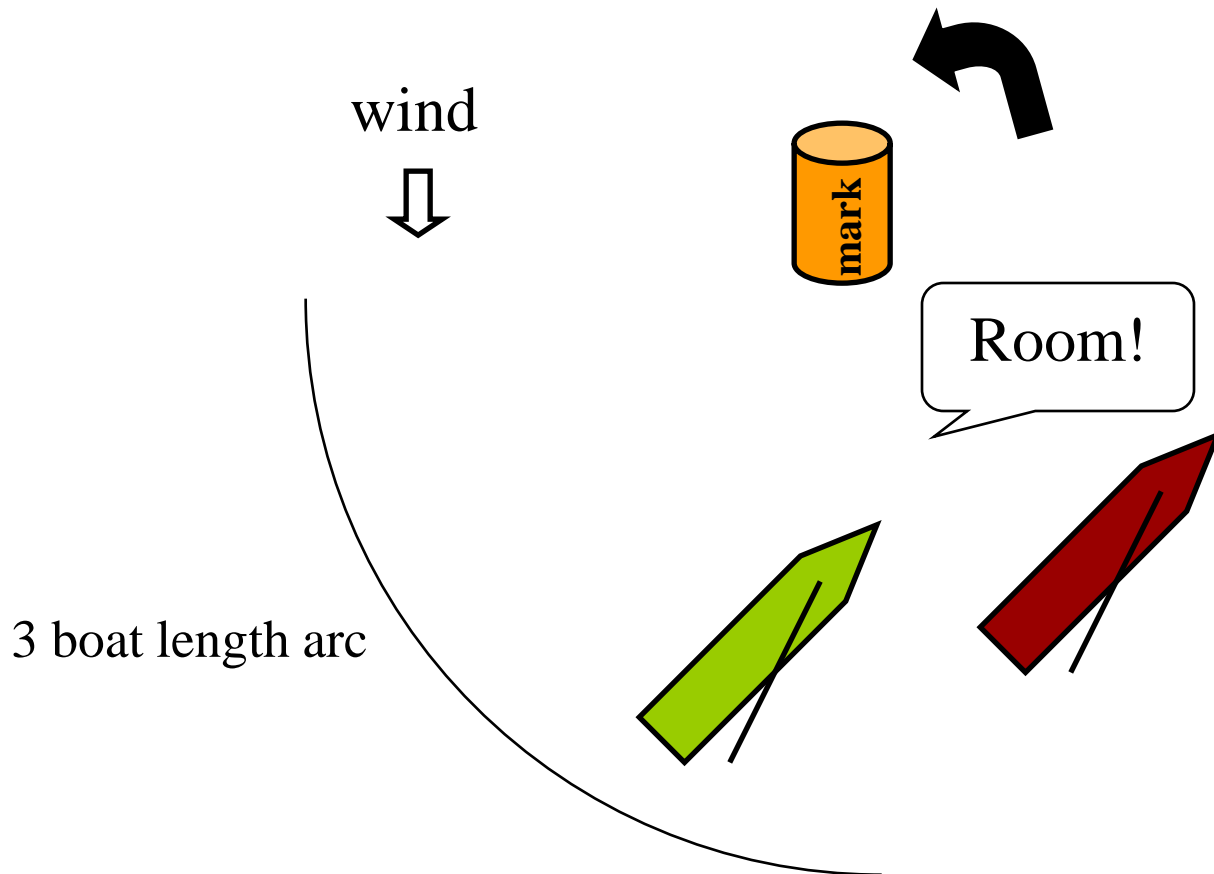
Basic Rule 2

- A boat to leeward (downwind) has right of way over a windward boat on the same tack



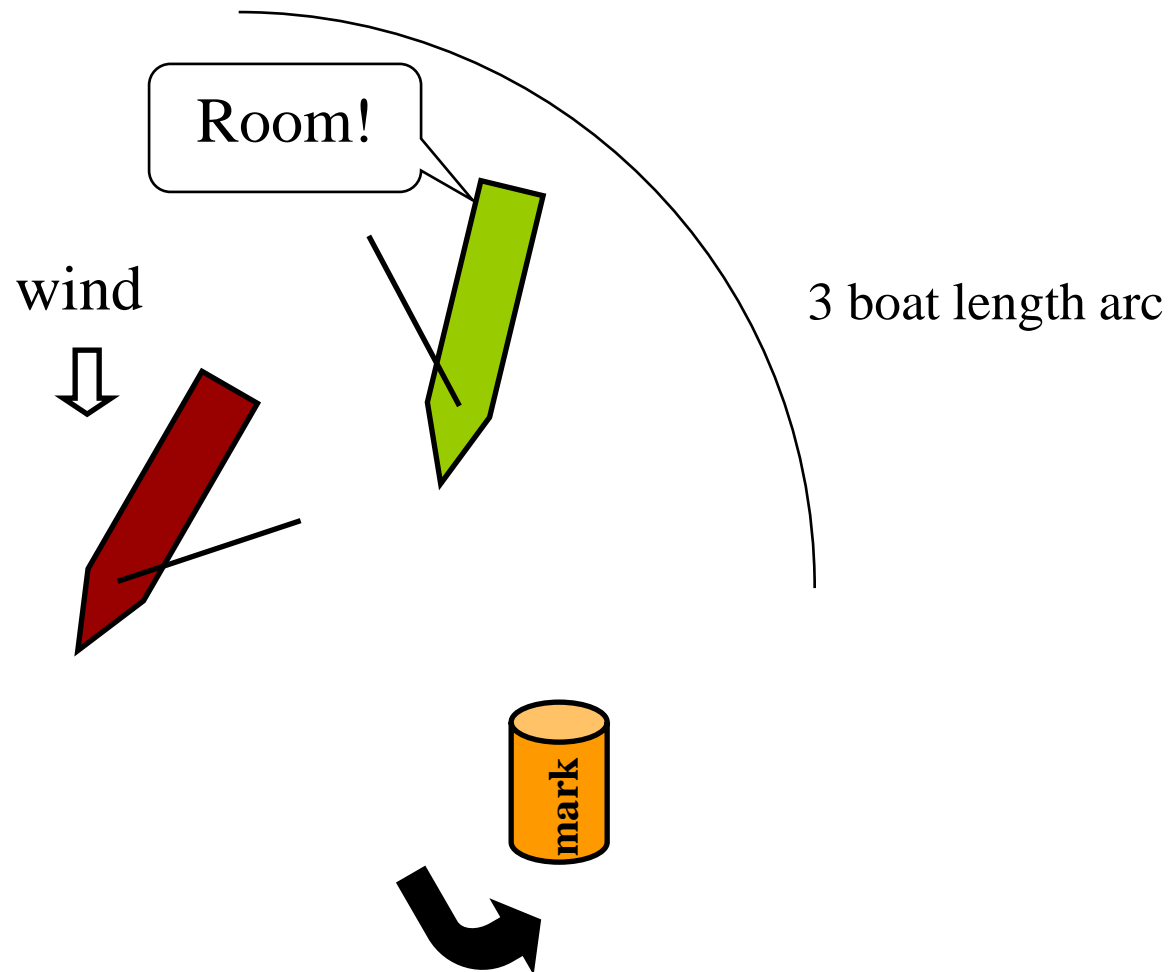
Basic Rule 3

- When rounding a windward mark, an inside boat on the same tack must be given room if overlapped within three boat lengths of the mark. Note at the windward mark a port tack boat cannot ask for room from a starboard tack boat.



Basic Rule 4

- When rounding a leeward mark, an inside boat (if overlapped within three boat lengths of the mark) must always be given room regardless of which tack they are on.



Basic Rule 5

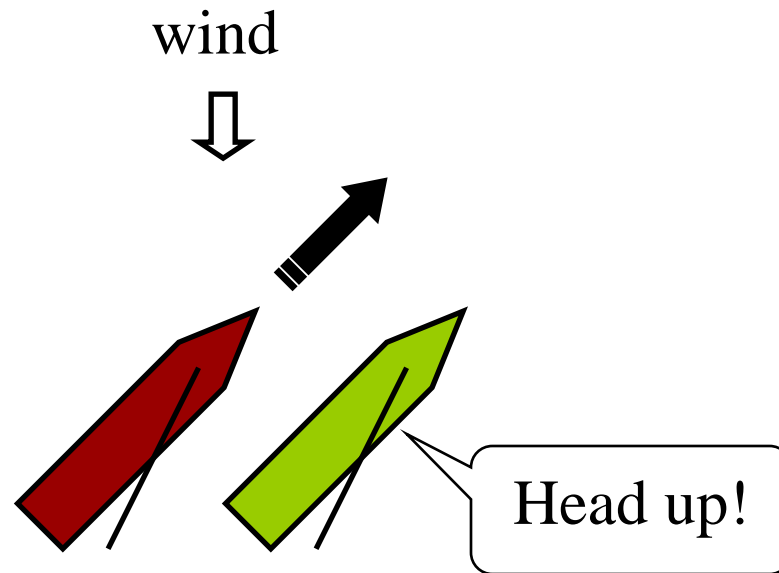
- A boat which is tacking must keep clear of one that is not. (don't tack or jibe too close to another boat)
- When a right-of-way boat changes course, she must give other boats room to keep clear
- When in doubt ask and always avoid a collision regardless of the rules.

Basic Rule 6

- What do I do if I break a rule?
 - If you break a right-of-way rule, you must do two 360 degree turns promptly after the incident. This will cost you a lot of time and you must keep clear of all other boats while exonerating yourself.
 - If you touch a mark, you must clear the mark, stay clear of other boats and perform a 360 degree turn which will exonerate you from hitting the mark.
 - If there was serious damage in a collision, you must retire
 - You must keep clear of other boats when doing your penalty turns

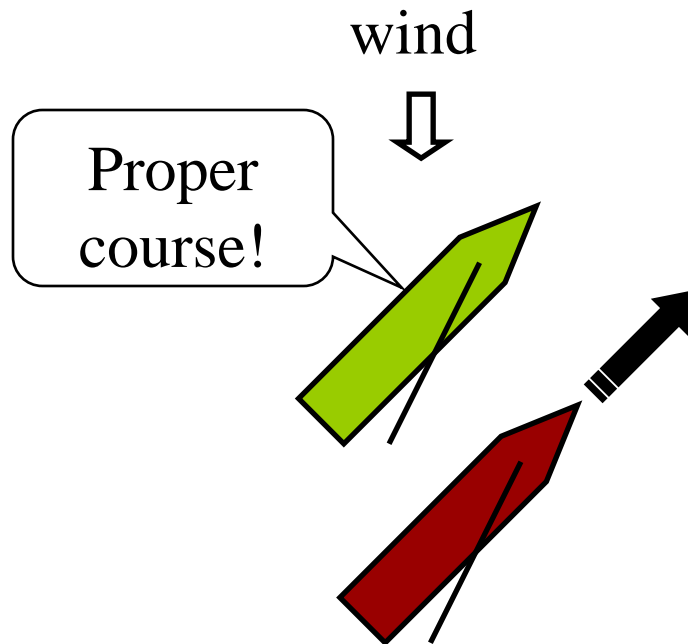
Passing Situations 1

- A boat passing to windward must keep clear of a leeward boat on the same tack. The leeward boat may luff to prevent the pass, i.e. head up more into the wind to try to keep the other boat from passing but should do so without causing a collision.



Passing Situations 2

- A boat passing to leeward (red boat) on the same tack must not sail above her 'proper course'

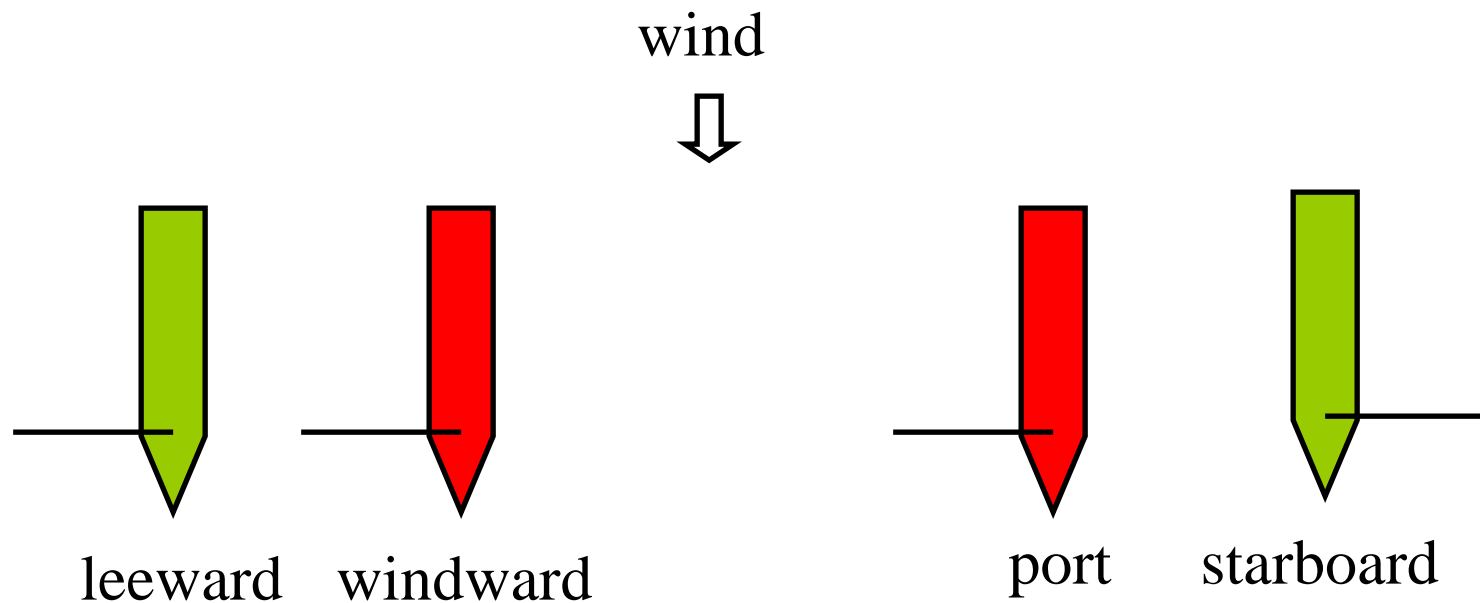


Passing Situations 3

- Before the start, there is no proper course, so a boat passing to leeward may luff a windward boat up to head-to-wind
- Once the start gun sounds, a boat passing to leeward may not sail above her proper course (close hauled)

Meeting Situations 1

- Tack (port /starboard) (and windward/leeward) is defined by which side the boom is on

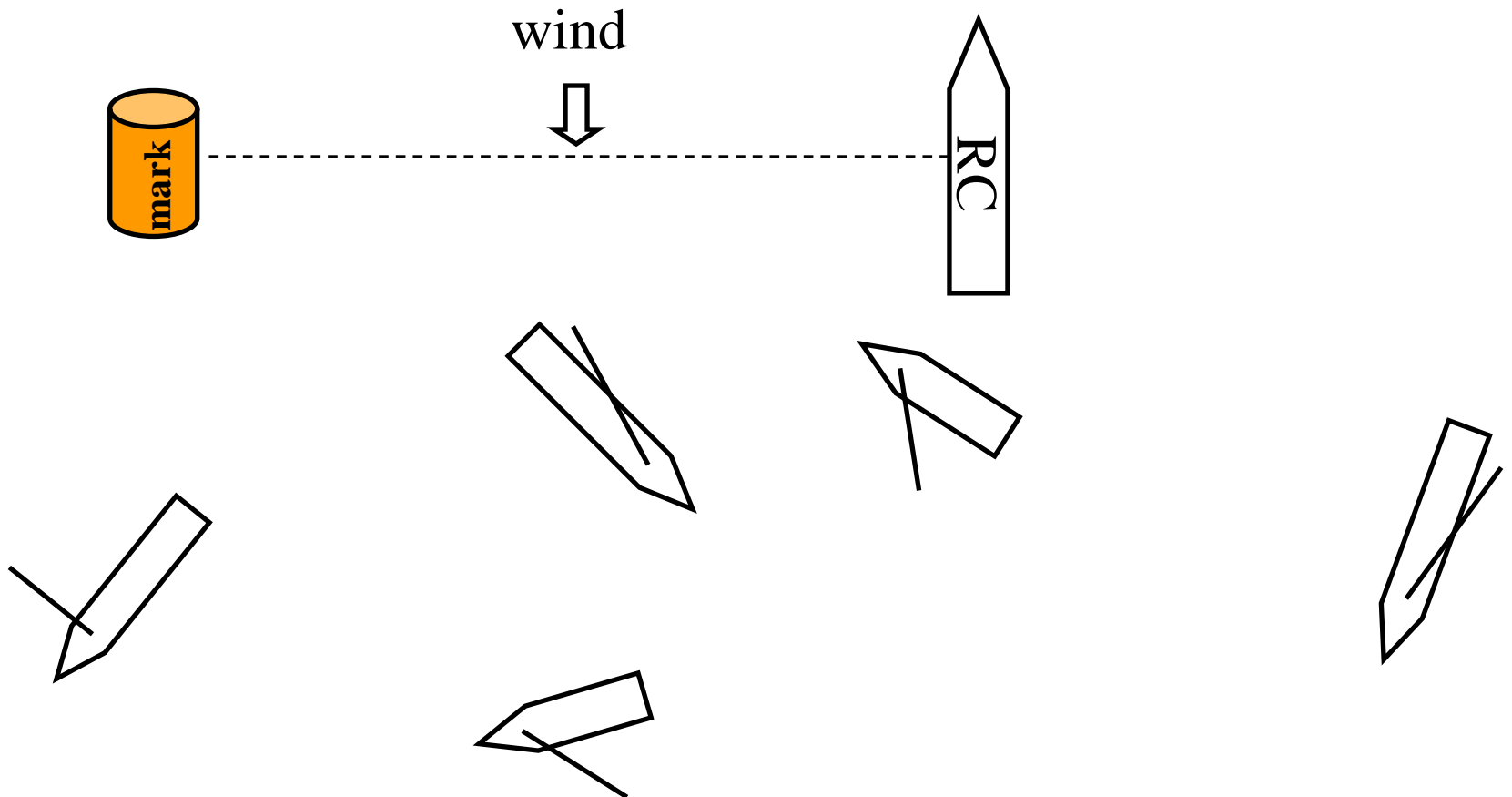


Meeting Situations 3

- A right-of-way boat must give a keep-clear boat room to keep clear
- A starboard tack boat must not change course if as a result the port tack boat must immediately change course to keep clear

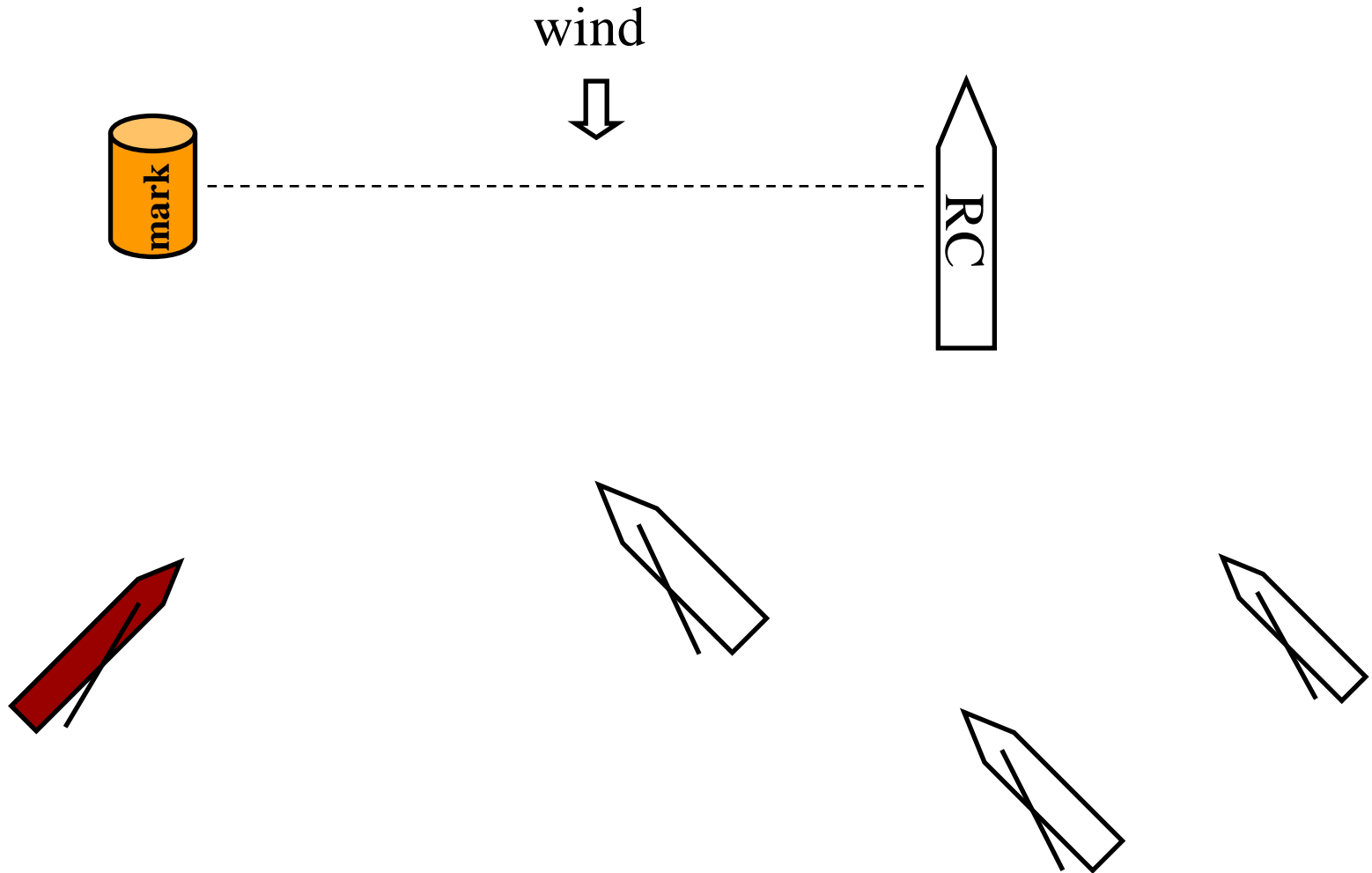
Starting the race

Prior to the initiation of the starting sequence boats will typically be sailing around the start line area, checking wind direction, practicing start timing or just enjoying the day prior to commencement of the start sequence.



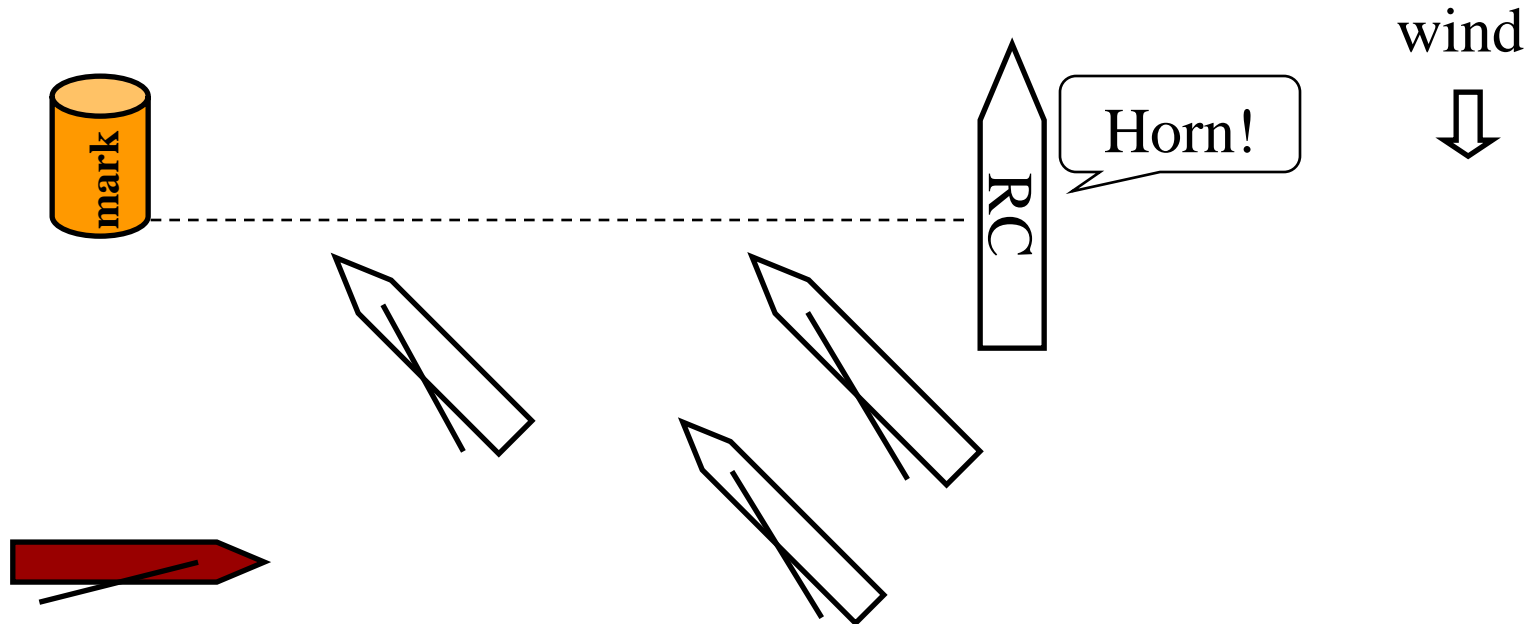
Starting the race

Example of boats approaching the line prior to the start signal. Note the boat on the left in red is on port tack and can start on port tack BUT must give way (avoid) all the boats on starboard tack.



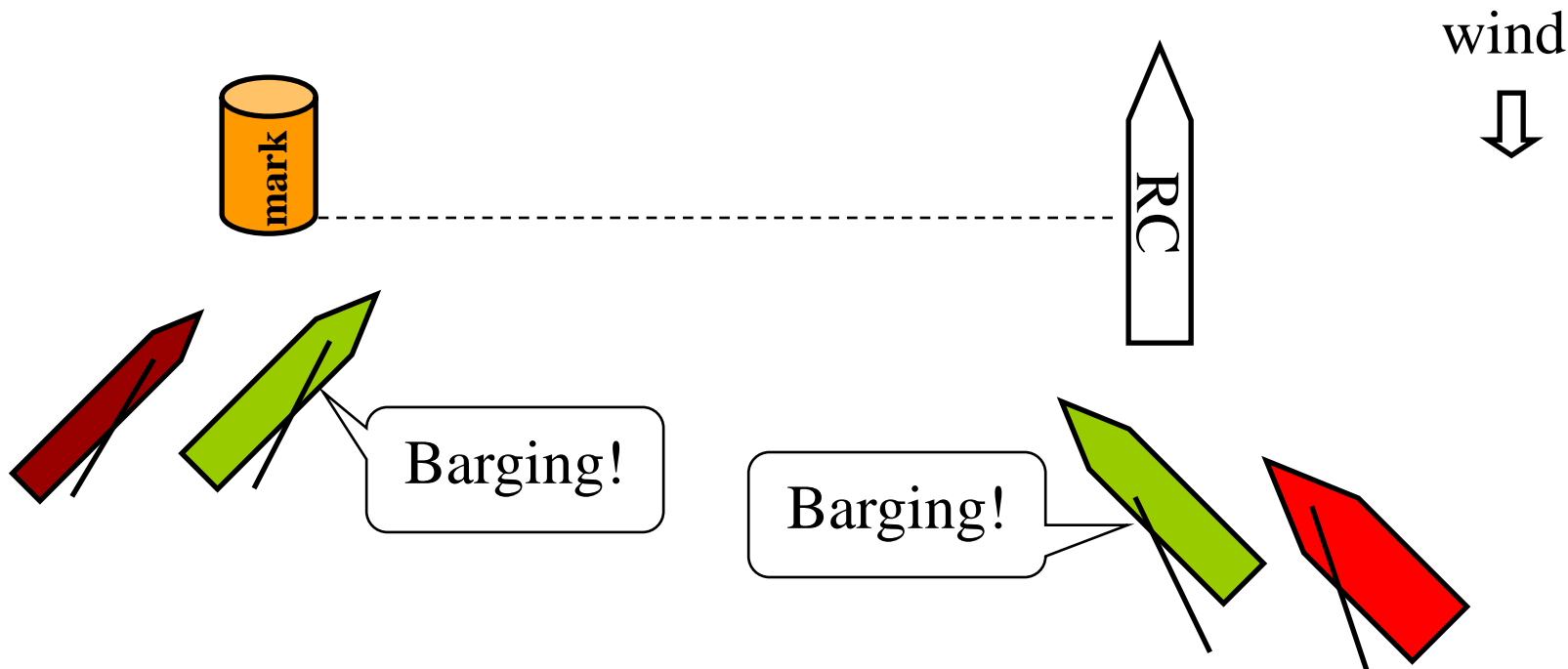
The Start!

- This would be the ideal start with all boats close to but not over the start line. Note the red port tack boat has appropriately turned to let the starboard boats maintain their course



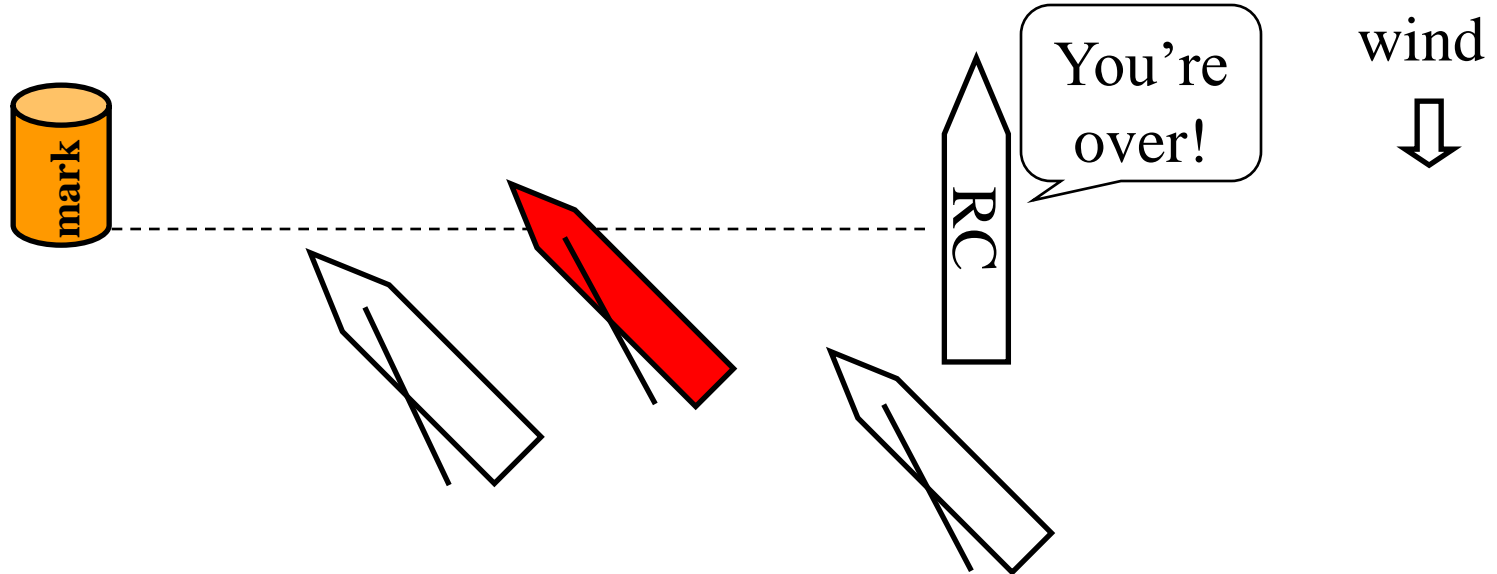
Starting

- Unlike at a mark rounding on the course an inside boat is not entitled to room at either start mark. The red boats are barging (trying to squeeze between the green boat and the starting mark) and must keep clear of the green boat. In this case turning rapidly away to avoid a collision with the race committee boat or the starting mark.



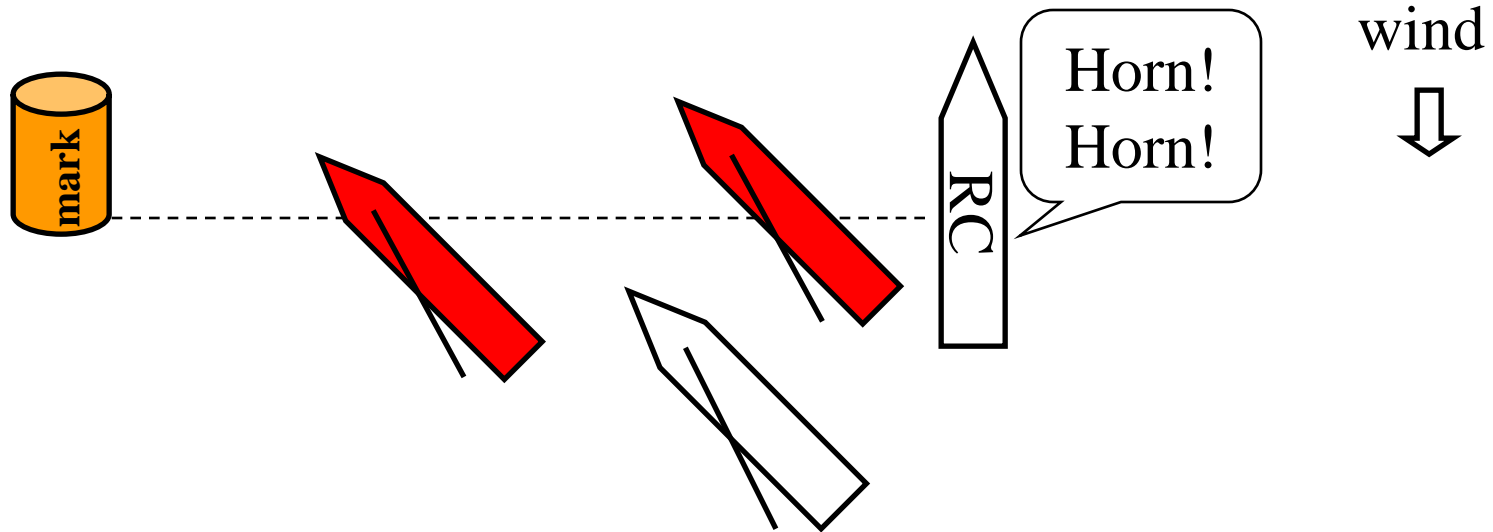
Over early boat

The red boat will have to re-round either end of the line to properly start the race and must keep clear of all other boats that have started properly.



Multiple boats over early

- The Race Committee may signal a general recall if many boats are over the line at the start. This can happen when the wind suddenly increases causing boats to reach the start line too soon. If no general recall is sounded, the over early red boats still have to re-round either end of the starting line.



Big Things to Remember

- Starboard has right of way over port—this rule takes care of 90% of problems
- When in doubt, keep clear of other boats (you are never in the right if there is a collision!)
- We all must do penalty turns now and again, so relax understand you made a mistake do your turns and sail on.
- Most importantly **HAVE FUN!!!**

Previous slides derived from the following

Introduction to the Sailboat Racing Rules

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