



“What if the boat ahead wants to tack around the mark?”

She must be very careful! A boat that is *clear ahead* when she reaches the *zone* that tacks around a *mark* gets no protection from rule 18.2(a) what-so-ever. In fact, rule 18.2(b) says, “Rule 18.2(a) no longer applies if the boat entitled to *mark-room* passes head to wind...”. In other words, the moment the boat ahead passes head to wind, rule 18.2(a) instantly shuts off, and the boat is subject to the rules in Sections A and B thereafter, beginning with rule 13 (While Tacking). This can happen at a windward *mark* when the boats need to tack to round the *mark*; or at or just after a leeward *mark* when the boats are beginning the beat.

Notice also that at the windward *mark* the boat *clear astern* can sail above close-hauled to make it more difficult for the boat *clear ahead* to tack. Let’s say you (A) and another boat (B) are sailing close-hauled on *port tack* into the windward *mark* to be left to port, not *overlapped*. You thought you were allowed to just tack around the *mark*. After you had passed head to wind but before you were close-hauled, B had to bear away to miss your transom. You have fouled B by breaking rule 13 (While Tacking). Notice, though, that you can luff up to head to wind just prior to tacking around the *mark*, which will make it difficult for a boat close astern to prevent you from tacking. Tactically speaking for a moment, in this situation your best move is to luff to head to wind, glide up to the *mark*, then tack around the *mark* making it difficult for a boat close astern to prevent you from tacking.