RULE 20 — ROOM TO TACK AT AN OBSTRUCTION

RULE 21 — HAILING

A boat may hail for room to tack and avoid a boat on the same tack by hailing 'Room to tack'. However, she shall not hail when:

(a) she is approaching an obstruction and will soon need to make a substantial course change to avoid a collision;

(b) she is sailing close-hauled or above.

In addition, she shall not hail if the circumstances are such that it is *fetching* it would be required to change course as a result of the hail.

RULE 21 — RESPONDING

(a) After a hail, the hailed boat shall give a hailed boat time to respond.

(b) A hailed boat shall respond even if the hail breaks rule 21(a).

(c) A hailed boat shall consider that the hailing was made in good faith, or by immediately replying 'You tack' and then giving the hailing boat room to tack and avoid her.

(d) When a hailed boat responds, the hailing boat shall tack as soon as practicable.

(e) From the time a boat hails until she has *tacked and avoided* a hailed boat, rule 18 *does* not apply between these two boats.

RULE 22 — PASSING ON A HAIL TO AN ADDITIONAL BOAT

When a boat has hailed for room to tack and the hailed boat has begun tacking, she may hail another boat on the same tack for room to tack and avoid her. She may hail even if the hail does not meet the conditions of rule 21.1. Rule 21(c) applies between her and a boat she hails.

RULE 24 — ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR HAILS

(a) When conditions are such that a hail may not be made, a boat that should also make a signal clearly indicates her need for room to tack or her objection.

(b) The notice of race may specify an alternative communication for a boat to indicate her need for room to tack or her response, and require boats to use it.

This is the rule that is used when calling for room to tack at a shore, boat-to-boat, or in a race. It is a communication between two boats on different tacks, and is an calling-for-help or a yes-or-no question, corresponding to a hailed-boat's answer. It is a "tactic". Tele. The purpose of the rule is to permit a close-hauled boat caught between another boat on the same tack and an obstruction to tack and avoid obstruction without loss of distance when a substantial change of course is required to do so.

Notice that rule 21 does not apply to boats on opposite tacks. Case 43 describes a situation where a port-tack boat (P) is approaching an obstruction to close to shore as possible. A port-tack boat is favoured (5) tacks to starboard tack onto a collision course, and is "hailed" and "responded" (6) by a starboard (S). To Case 43, the Appeals Committee said, "P is subject to rule 10 and must keep clear. A collision right up to the shore is not in the spirit of the rules, and that most observes rules 13 and 15. S meets rule 13's requirement by not tacking so close that P has to make a tacking action before S has cleared her closest course. After S acquires right of way over P under rule 10, S complies with rule 13's initially giving P room to keep clear. S complies with rule 21 by not hailing P but room to tack once rule 21's applies to two boats on the "same" tack, so, in this situation P must keep clear or beat some other port-tack boat.

When all the conditions in rule 21 are met, a forward boat or one clear ahead will be able to call for "room to tack" from a nearby boat that is either wrong preventing her from tacking.

Here is how rule 21 works:

1. For a hail to be a legal hail under rule 21, the two boats must be on the same tack and approaching an obstruction, the forward boat (F) or the boat clear ahead (A) must be sailing close-hauled or above, and F, or A, must need to make a substantial course change to avoid the obstruction to tow safely (rules 21.(a) and 21.(b)).

2. "Is there a hailed boat nearby that can tack and give F room to tack?"

Well, rule 20's says, "A *boat may hail for room to tack and avoid a boat* on the same tack.' Room to tack" is a "tactic" and "a boat may hail" means boats use that hail when calling for room to tack.

3. Rule 21's is intended for use in a tactical situation. Rule a's about to hit, or but by, an obstruction, e.g., a sandbar, a dock, a fishing boat, or a stationary forward boat that is a "danger. Where there is no danger, there is no rule 21 or A actually is in imminent danger of colliding with an obstruction, I would not expect the person responsible for the safety of F or A to be tactical at the doubt, and I would encourage sailors on the water to do the same.

4. Rule 21's only provides a boat enough time to respond. It does not give anybody least. Let's say the boats are on *starboard tack*. 1. F is hailed for room to tack and the windward boat (W) hear, and immediately responds, "You tack." If the course of F or A is sufficiently to leeward of W's so W's course tack after tacking must pass ahead of F, W's response is immediately bear away and pass astern of W or F, she is required to do so, since she has the room she needs to tack and avoid the hailed boat (See Case 35.)

5. Rule 21's 21.(c)(iii)(iv) 1. 2. 3 from hailing the other boat for room to tack unless safety requires 1. or A to make a "substantial change of course" to avoid the obstruction. Here, the course change is small and the needed not to hit the obstruction. In this case, as my general guideline, a course change of less than 45 degrees is not a "substantial change." Only 1 bar, 4 inches, or a 20 foot boat. Therefore, in a 20 foot boat, if 1. or A turns 45 degrees, the boat behind the boat ahead should be hailed. 2 bar from its dimensional edge, it is questionable whether she is entitled to hail under rule 21. If the 2 bar of the tack is to avoid a "danger" bar of a spread edge, then that's even "substantial." (See Case 11 and Appeal 11.)

What happens if you hail for room to tack and the hailed boat tacks, but you don't think the hailing boat is approaching an obstruction or needs to make a substantial course change to avoid a collision?

First of all, the boat that was hailed **must respond** to the hail by tacking or replying "Tacks." Not the obstruction, the hailing boat's tack. If the hailed boat does not see any obstruction in front of the hailing boat. This is safety. Perhaps the hailed boat can see the tack or hear the hailing boat, or perhaps the other boat was mistaken that there was a tack. Having responded, the hailed boat is not required to tack and give the hailing boat room to tack (rule 21.(c)). If the protest committee finds that the hailing boat was not approaching an obstruction or in danger, or that a substantial course change is required to steer her safety, or if "safety" was not an issue, the hailing boat will be disqualified. Note the word "should" in rule 21.(c). "Should" is not "shall" or "must." (See Cases 10 and 33.)

Note, if a sailor tried to take advantage of this situation by intentionally calling for room to tack when there was no obstruction, that would be a clear breach of rule 21's hailing.

Is there anything else I should know about the hail itself other than I should use the words "Room to tack"?

Well, first of all the hail must be **adequate**, which implies that it must be loud enough for the other boat to hear it, and it must be clear to the other boat, and it must be absolutely clear as to what the hail means. I personally try to turn my head toward the other boat, use their boatmen's name if I know it, and say to the effect, "Hailed a *boat on a starboard tack for coming up* I need room to tack." (Case 34.)

Secondly, the hailing boat must give the hailed boat **time to respond**, i.e., the current hail cycle is incomplete. Appeal 43 said, "The hailing boat's duty ...hailing and tacking simultaneously, contrary to rule 20.2(a)." The purpose of this is to prevent bias for the protest committee. Suppose a boat hails and tacks at rule's reply "You tack." This requires boats to keep a good lookout so they are not "surprised" by the obstruction. Furthermore, protest committees have to be aware of the hailed boat's ability to respond as well. Obviously it will require more time for the hailed boat to tack and avoid than it will bear to boats windward of them, as permitted in rule 21's last Case 11.(c). Thirdly, the hailing boat must give the hailed boat time to respond. Appeal 43 said, "The hailing boat's duty ...hailing and tacking simultaneously, contrary to rule 20.2(a)." The purpose of this is to prevent bias for the protest committee. Suppose a boat hails and tacks at rule's reply "You tack." Rule 21's 21.(d) 2. Boats "should" not be allowed to tack and avoid the hailed boat. Fourthly, the hailing boat must be ready to tack and give the hailed boat room to tack and avoid. Rule 21's 21.(d) 3. Boats "should" not be allowed to tack and avoid the hailed boat. Fifthly, the hailing boat must be ready to tack and give the hailed boat room to tack and avoid. Rule 21's 21.(d) 4. Boats "should" not be allowed to tack and avoid the hailed boat. Sixthly, the hailing boat must be ready to tack and give the hailed boat room to tack and avoid. Rule 21's 21.(d) 5. Boats "should" not be allowed to tack and avoid the hailed boat. Seventh, the hailing boat must be ready to tack and give the hailed boat room to tack and avoid. Rule 21's 21.(d) 6. Boats "should" not be allowed to tack and avoid the hailed boat. Eighth, the hailing boat must be ready to tack and give the hailed boat room to tack and avoid. Rule 21's 21.(d) 7. 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