

Super Yacht Racing Rules (Appendix SY)2025-2028-

Captain/Tactician Guide

Super Yacht racing is about safe competition, and we have rules to help this. Every **SY** rule has been designed around safety, and we must take them seriously to avoid any possible chance of collisions. Below is a summary of the changes from the regular rules of sailing. The definition of 'keep clear' basically puts a 40m bubble around the boat. If you are inside that 40m bubble and required to 'keep clear' you have failed. 40m is less than a boat length for some of the boats racing, so it's still close racing but we must keep this separation. To do this we use range finders and most importantly a safety channel. Recognising upcoming situations and communicating clearly on your rights, obligations and intended course of action is the best way to avoid surprises.

STARTING

The starting area is the most dangerous and where rule breaches are most likely to happen. The RRS apply to boats racing '*between boats that are sailing in or near the racing area and intend to race, are racing, or have been racing*'. There is no penalty for infringing these rules before your preparatory signal unless you have a collision or interfere with a boat that is racing. For Super Yachts the problem is you have many large yachts preparing for racing but not on a course to a mark and therefore it's harder to predict their course changes. The safety channel should be busy, but the safest way to avoid issues is to stay out of the starting area until just before your start time.

OVERTAKING

Overtaking is the next area of concern. 'A boat is *overtaking* when she is approaching a boat from *clear astern*. She remains the *overtaking* boat until she is *clear ahead*. The other boat is the boat being *overtaken*. If a boat is overtaking you, once she gets within 80 meters, you must sail your '*proper course*', the course you would sail if she wasn't there. If the overtaking boat overlaps to leeward, she cannot sail above her proper course while she is within 80 meters and overlapped. If the overtaking boat overlaps to windward she must stay at least 40 meters away from the leeward boat. Be aware that staying 40 meters to windward includes the spinnaker which may mean the hull of the boat would need to be 50 meters from the leeward boat. SYRA CASE STUDY 2 & 5

PASSING ASTERN

If you are passing astern of another boat either as a port boat keeping clear or as a starboard boat who has called the port boat across you must pass 40 meters behind them. SYRA CASE STUDY 1

ROUNDING MARKS

We have a 300-meter zone, and therefore you should establish communications well in advance of that indicating your rights and obligations. Boats tend to slow down when rounding marks so you must anticipate that and maintain the 40m separation. The only significant change in the new edition of the rules is that mark-room ends when you leave the mark astern. If there is a dispute about who has room and you are the outside never close the gap. Give the other boat room and protest.

CONTINUING OBSTRUCTIONS

In the Racing Rules of Sailing 2025-2028 a continuing obstruction is defined. 'An obstruction is a *continuing obstruction* when the boat with the shortest hull referred to in the rule using the term will pass alongside it for at least three of her hull lengths...' Some of the island marks we use may qualify as continuing obstructions, some won't and some maybe depending on what boats are approaching the mark. If it does qualify as a continuing obstruction then there is no zone because rule 18 doesn't apply. This uncertainty isn't helpful or good for safety. So communicate on VHF17 and If you disagree who has room, give it and protest.

ROOM TO TACK

Communicating on the safety channel. The words 'Room to Tack' and 'You Tack' is now mandatory wording. RRS 20.1 & 20.2(c)

PROPULSION

It's always okay to use your engine if it's a safety issue. Please explain it when you make your daily declaration. SY 3.1

2026 ST BARTHS BUCKET -RULE CHANGES

STARTING

If a boat starts more than 3 minutes before her start she will be scored DNS. If she starts within the 3 minutes before her start signal she is not allowed to restart but gets 5 minutes added to her race time. See SI 13.2.

A boats preparatory signal is 4 minutes before her individual scheduled start. She is *racing* from that moment. See SI 13.9

PROTESTS

This is a big change as no RED FLAG is required. Instead she will inform the boats she wants to protest on VHF 17. The protested boat shall acknowledge the hail. This is important because as this is the safety channel you would be in breach of SY2.9 if you fail to respond. See SI 1(j).

PENALTIES

There or no penalty turns instead a 20% penalty that you can accept by displaying a Yellow flag at the first reasonable opportunity; keep it flying until the finish and inform the race committee at the finishing line. SI 17.2

RULES CLARIFICATION MEETINGS

Safety is everything, and if you aren't sure about a rules situation please give room or keep clear and request a rules clarification meeting so we can resolve the issue going forward. SI 18.4

APPENDIX T

Arbitration will apply to all boat-to-boat protests or rule 31(mark touch) protests, unless there is damage or injury or the boat at fault gained a significant advantage RRS 44.1(b). This means that prior to a hearing an arbitrator will meet with one representative from each boat, discuss the incident and then tell them how he thinks the protest committee will view it based on what he has heard.

Before this arbitration hearing, after it, or anytime before the protest hearing takes place, either boat involved can accept a 30% post race penalty. If a penalty is accepted the protestor should withdraw his protest as the other boat can not get any additional penalty. SI 1i).

SYRA CASE STUDIES

There are six case studies dealing with common scenarios, you can find them in the SYRA Booklet available in physical copies and posted on the event website. If you need further explanation, please ask.

NB: The above is advice on the rules but doesn't replace them. Most references are in the Racing Rules, the SYRA Rules Booklet or in the event documentation. Please feel free to find us at anytime if you would like clarification.

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