

# **Racing Rules of Sailing: How the Rules May Apply to a Boat that Missed a Mark**

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7-12-2010

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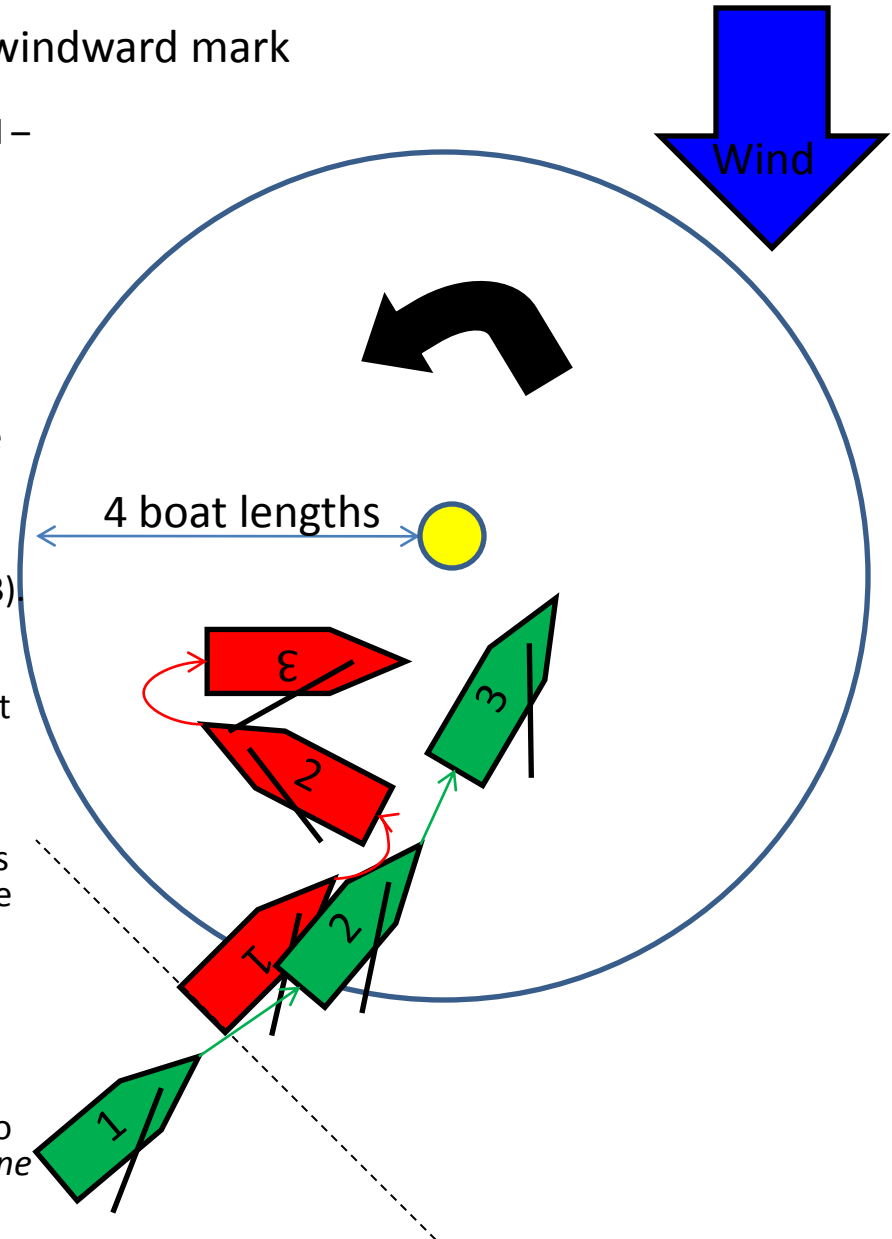
# Mark-Room Definition

- MarkRoom = Room for a boat to sail to the mark, and then room to sail her proper course while at the mark. However, mark-room does not include room to tack unless the boat is overlapped to windward and on the inside of the boat required to give mark-room. (Official Definition)

# Missed Mark Case I

## Tacking windward mark

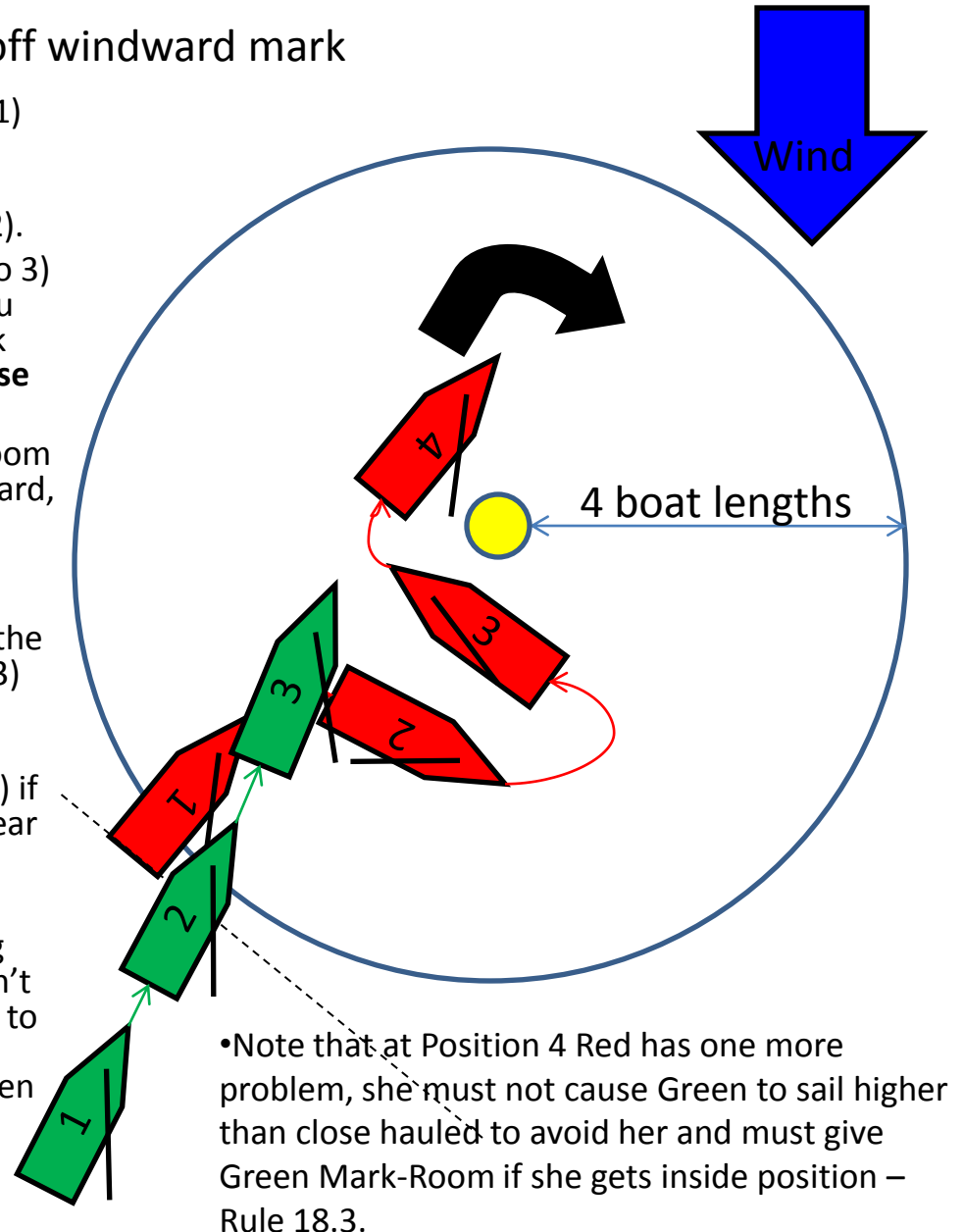
- Red is “Clear Ahead” when she reaches the zone at Position (1) and Green must give “Mark-Room” to Red – Rule 18.2(b)
- Red tacks inside the zone thinking she has cleared the mark (1 to 2). When you tack inside the zone (other than to round the mark when you are the inside overlapped boat) **you lose Mark-Room rights** – Rule 18.2(c). In fact, if either boats pass head to wind, Mark-Room ceases to apply.
- So after the tack neither boat has Mark-Room and the other rules take over (Rule 10 Port-Starboard, Rule 11 Windward-Leeward, Rule 12 Clear Ahead, Rule 13 While Tacking, etc).
- Red now tacks or gybes back to go for the mark (2 to 3). She must be clear of Green when doing so.
- Since Green is leeward of Red at (3), **Green** has the right-of-way (Rule 11). Since Red has no Mark-Room it is like she is barging at the start (same situation when you have no mark room and try to squeeze in as the keep-clear windward boat).
- Red must keep clear of Green at Position 3. Red needs to go behind Green here or go to the wrong side of the Mark.
- Red might be smart to gybe from 2 to 3 and swing in behind Green.
- What if a long line of boats were packing in behind Green? Big trouble for Red!! Red needs to keep clear of all these leeward boats until she finds an opening to squeeze into. *I think she can also choose to exit the zone and reenter with fresh rights.*



# Missed Mark Case II

## Bearing off windward mark

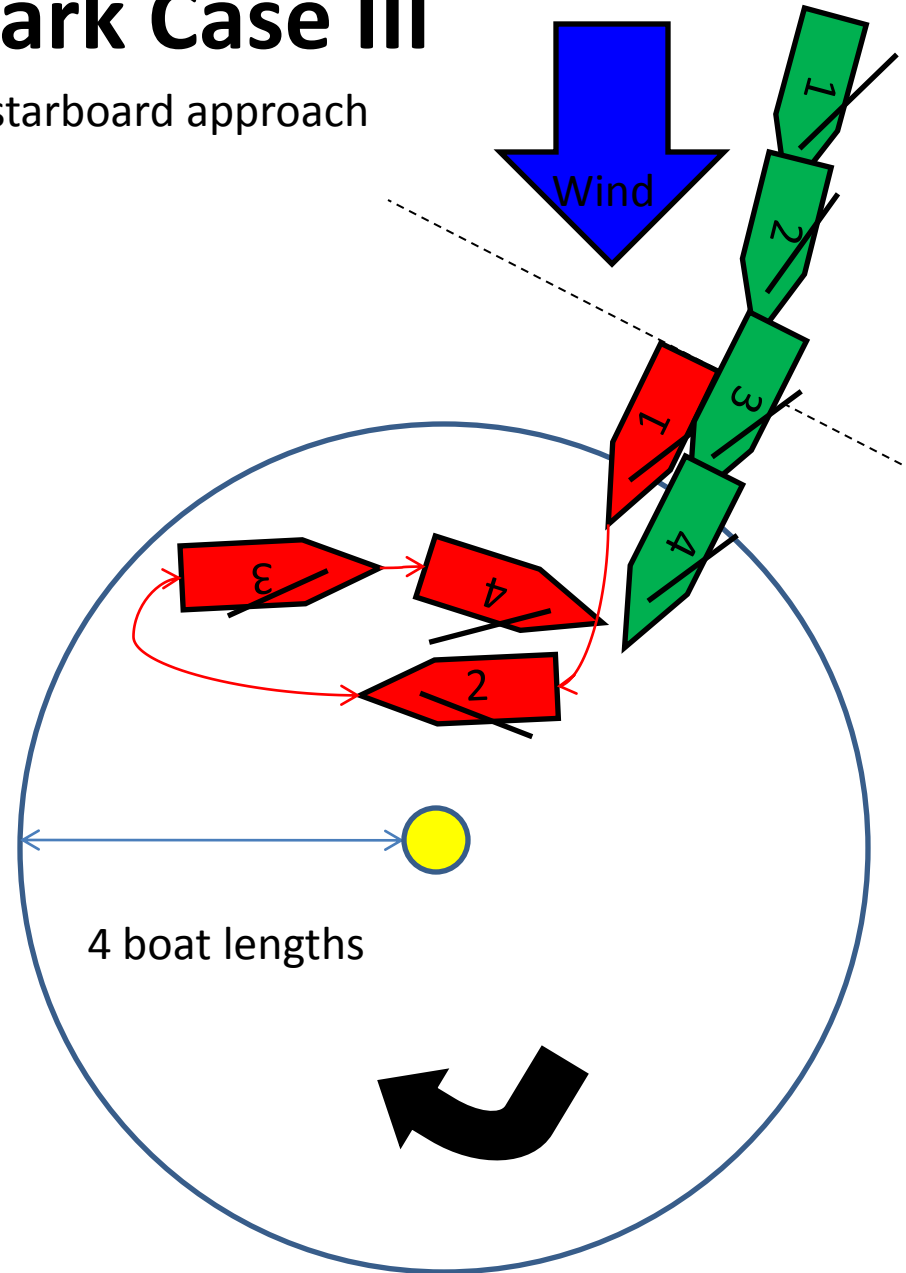
- Red is “Clear Ahead” when she reaches the zone (1) and Green must give “Mark-Room” to Red – Rule 18.2(b)
- Red bears off thinking she cleared the mark (1 to 2).
- Now Red tacks (or gybes) back onto starboard (2 to 3) when she realized she missed the mark. When you tack inside the zone (other than to round the mark when you are the inside overlapped boat) **you lose Mark-Room rights.**
- So after the tack (2 to 3) neither boat has Mark-Room and the other rules take over (Rule 10 Port-Starboard, Rule 11 Windward-Leeward, Rule 12 Clear Ahead, Rule 13 While Tacking, etc).
- If Red tacks sufficiently ahead of Green (2 to 3) to give Green the time and space to keep clear after the tack, then Red becomes the right-of-way boat at (3) (Rules 10 and 15).
- However, Red has no rights WHILE tacking (2 to 3) (Rule 13) and may not tack on top of Green (2 to 3) if Green does not have time to find a way to keep clear (Rule 15).
- At (3) Red is now the starboard right-of-way boat.
- However, Red is the keep clear boat WHILE tacking back to Port to round the mark (3 to 4). If she can't pull that off because Green is too close, she needs to keep sailing (3) and then tack clear of Green. She could slow, staying on starboard (3), and force Green to tack first, and then she can go.



# Missed Mark Case III

## Leeward mark, starboard approach

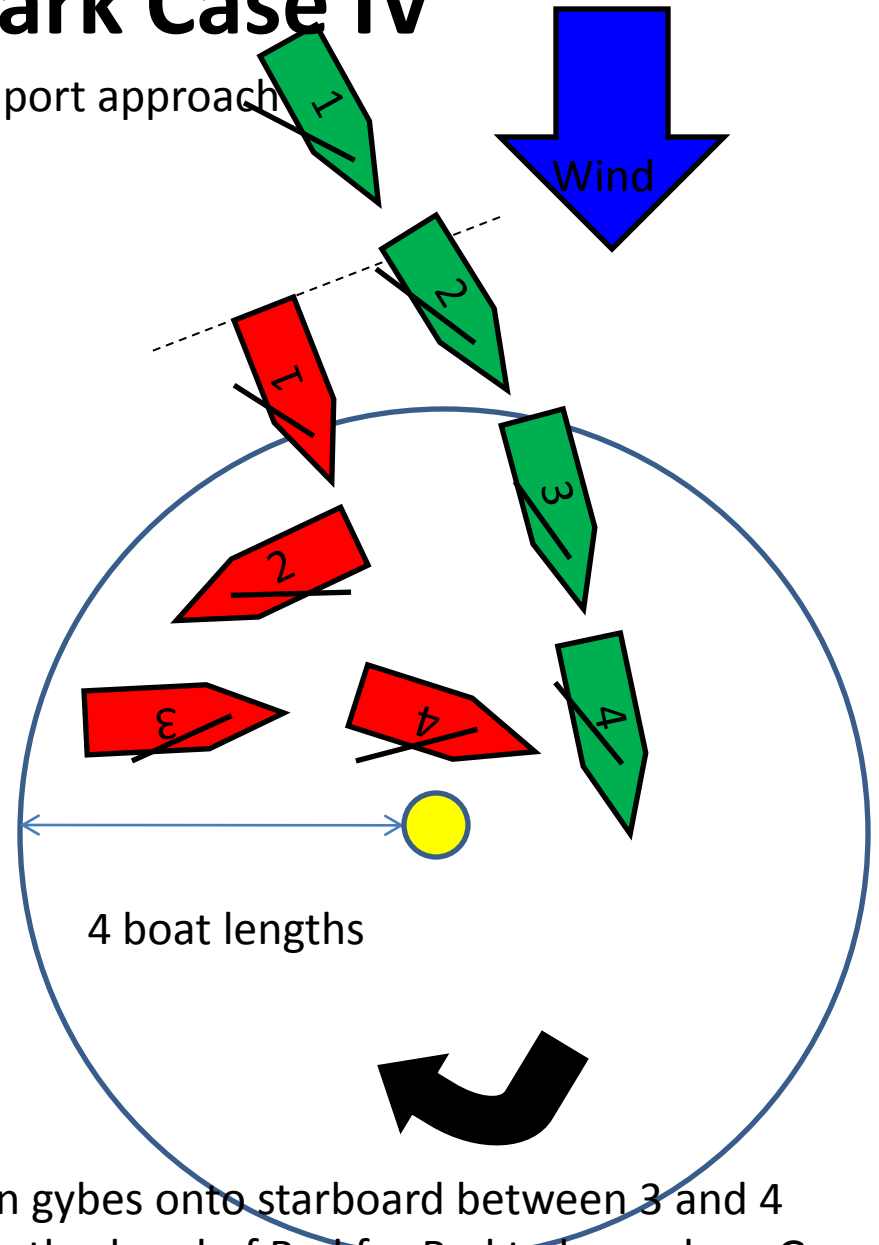
- Red is “Clear Ahead” when she reaches the zone at (1) and Green must give “Mark-Room” to Red – Rule 18.2(b)
- Red heads up thinking she has cleared the mark (2).
- Now Red tacks onto Port (2 to 3) when she realized she missed the mark. When you tack inside the zone (other than to round the mark when you are the inside overlapped boat) **you lose Mark-Room rights.**
- So after the tack (2 to 3) neither boat has Mark-Room and the other rules take over (Rule 10 Port-Starboard, Rule 11 Windward-Leeward, Rule 12 Clear Ahead, Rule 13 While Tacking, etc).
- Red at (3) and (4) is on a port tack and Green remains on starboard. Thus, Green is the right of way boat and Red needs to keep clear (Rule 10).
- Even if Red gybes after (4) to get on Starboard, if she is still windward of Green, and Green (leeward) can push Red to the wrong side of the mark.
- Red needs to simply go behind Green at this point.
- If there is a long line of boats behind Green, Red is in trouble! In this case, I think Red needs to find a hole in the line to gybe into, or cross and pass through the line (move left to right in the picture). She may then gybe to become the Leeward, Starboard tack boat. However by 18.3(b), I think Red still needs to give Green Room, so Red must sail around the outside.
- *I believe Red can also choose to exit the zone and then reenter with fresh rights. At this point Red would basically reset the potential for Mark Room for subsequent boats entering at that time.*



# Missed Mark Case IV

Leeward mark, port approach

- Red is “Clear Ahead” when she reaches the zone (1) and Green must give “Mark-Room” to Red – Rule 18.2(b)
- Red gybes thinking she has cleared the mark (1 to 2).
- Now Red Gybes or tacks back onto Port (2 to 3) after she realized she missed the mark. *I believe Red has lost Mark Room rights (as she was not entitled to these extra maneuvers as part of the Mark Room definition, certainly tacking causes you to lose mark room).*
- However, Red is still the leeward overlapped boat at (4) and is the right of way boat. So Green needs to keep clear.
- Red must sail a proper course (no farther from the mark than necessary) until she gybes rounding the mark after (4). (This is not true for a gate mark) – Rule 18.4.



If Green gybes onto starboard between 3 and 4 sufficiently ahead of Red for Red to keep clear, Green would successfully acquire right of way at 4.