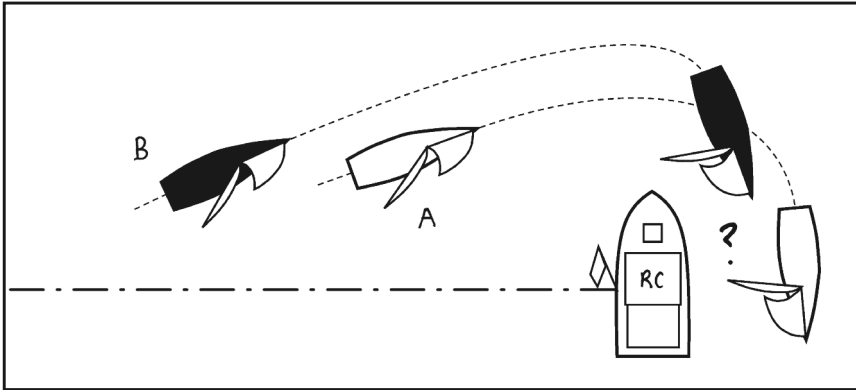


later. Boats are expected to know their obligations under the rules, which includes outside boats at *obstructions*. Case 41 reads, “QUESTION 2: Does BW have to hail for room to pass to leeward of A? If not, would BL risk disqualification by not giving room? ANSWER 2: BW is not required to hail for room, although that is a prudent thing to do to avoid misunderstandings. Rule 19.2(b) requires BL to give room to BW if they both pass to leeward of the obstruction, whether or not BW hails for room.”



“How does it work when I want to establish an overlap between two boats on the starting line?”

Let’s say you were on *starboard tack* approaching two other *starboard-tack* boats (L and W) sitting side-by-side near the starting line. You need to *keep clear* of L under rule 12 (On the Same Tack, Not Overlapped), and W needs to *keep clear* of L under rule 11 (On the Same Tack, Overlapped). Because



*If A and B are only passing the obstruction (race committee boat) for a very short time, it is not a “continuing obstruction.” B is permitted to establish an inside overlap and become entitled to room only if A can initially keep clear under rule 11 when B becomes overlapped to leeward of her (see rule 15), and is able to give B room from the time the overlap is established (see rule 19.2(b)).*

*If A and B are sailing alongside the obstruction for more than a few seconds, the obstruction is a “continuing obstruction” and B is not permitted to establish an inside overlap and become entitled to room because there is not room for her to pass between A and the race committee boat (see rule 19.2(c)).*

you **both** need to *keep clear* of L, she is an *obstruction*; but as a vessel under way, she is not a “continuing” *obstruction* (see the definition *Obstruction*). Therefore, rule 19.2(b) applies, meaning that you can establish an *overlap* between L and W even if there is not *room* at that moment to sail all the way between them in safety.

If you become *overlapped* to leeward of W, she needs to *keep clear* of you under rule 11; and you need to initially give her *room* to *keep clear* of you under rule 15 (Acquiring Right of Way). W also needs to give you *room* to pass the *obstruction* (L) if she is able to do so from the moment you became *overlapped* with her (rule 19.2(b)). If she is able to *keep clear* of you and give you *room* to pass L, then she must. However, if despite her best effort she is unable to do so, then you break rule 15 if you hit W, or rule 11 if you hit L or force L to avoid you.

*“So if the inside boat gets her overlap so close to the obstruction that I physically can’t give her room, I don’t have to?”*



That’s right. Rule 19.2(b) says that if an outside boat is “unable” to give *room* from the time the *overlap* begins, she doesn’t have to do so. This is a safety

feature intended to discourage boats from creating last-minute inside *overlaps* near *obstructions*. Note also that if the boat astern is acquiring the right-of-way when it establishes an inside *overlap*, it also has to comply with rule 15 (Acquiring Right of Way). So again, if the outside keep-clear boat is unable to respond promptly and *keep clear* (which would likely result in them also giving *room*), the inside boat breaks rule 15 and the outside boat does not break rule 19.2(b).



“OK, but what do I do if I’m entitled to room but the outside boat doesn’t give me room; can I get exonerated if I am forced to break a rule?”

Yes. Let’s say you (PW) and a *leeward* boat (PL) are on *port tack* approaching a *starboard-tack* boat (S). It looks clear to you that PL is going to duck S, i.e., pass astern of her, and you begin to duck S as well. At the point in time that it becomes clear to you that PL is not going to give you *room*, it is not possible for you to tack without hitting S. You continue ducking S and your boom touches PL. You both protest. First, at the point in time that it becomes clear to you that PL is not going to give you *room*, it is not possible for you to avoid contact with either S or PL; therefore you did not break rule 14 (Avoiding Contact). Second, PL failed to give you *room* to pass the *obstruction* (S) and therefore broke rule 19.2(b). Third, though you failed to *keep clear* of the *lee-ward* boat (PL) and broke rule 11 (On the Same Tack, Overlapped), you are exonerated (freed from penalty) by rule 43.1(b) (Exoneration) because you were sailing within the *room* you were entitled to.



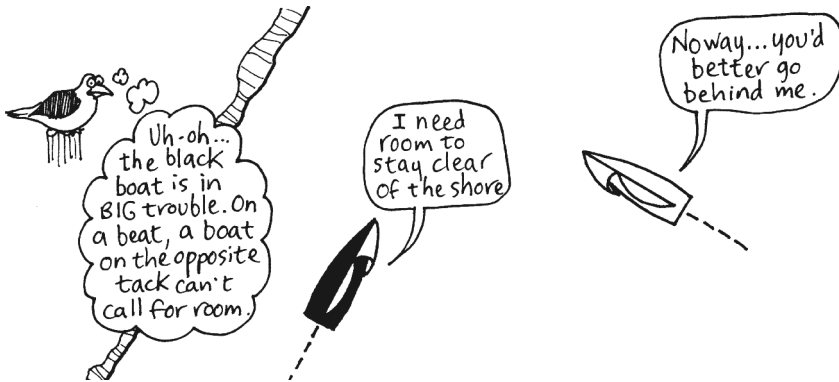
“When does rule 19 cease to apply such that I no longer have to give the inside boat room?”

Once the inside boat no longer needs *room* to sail between the outside boat and the *obstruction*, the boats are no longer “at” the *obstruction* and rule 19 ceases to apply. For instance, take the upwind situation where PL and PW are passing astern of S. Once PW has passed S such that she no longer needs space from PL to avoid S, PL may assert her rights under rule 11 (On the Same Tack, Overlapped) and can luff subject to rule 16.1 (Changing Course) and rule 17 (On the Same Tack; Proper Course).



“If I’m on port tack sailing as close to a shoreline or dock as I can, can I call for ‘sea-room’ from a starboard-tacker?”

Absolutely not! First, there’s no such thing as “sea-room” in the rules. “Sea-



room” is just a term for “room.” Rule 19.2(b) applies only to boats that are “overlapped.” Boats sailing upwind on opposite *tacks* are not *overlapped* (see the definition *Clear Astern* and *Clear Ahead; Overlap*). Therefore, if you are sailing close-hauled on *port tack* as close to the shore or a dock as you can get, you cannot call for *room* from a converging close-hauled *starboard-tack* boat. Rule 10 (On Opposite Tacks) applies and you must slow down or bear off and take their stern. (See Cases 9 and 43.)