

World Sailing Racing Rules Question and Answer Service

A 001

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Situation:

A boat breaks a rule, which may be a class rule or a rule of the RRS, but is not aware that she has broken the rule during the race or at any time up to the time limit for submitting protests or the time limit for submitting retirement declarations. Sometime after these time limits have expired she becomes aware that she has broken a rule.

Examples may be:

- a. While rounding an offset windward mark, the boat's spinnaker touches the mark, but the crew does not see, hear or feel the contact. Sometime after racing that day, and after any time limits have expired, they see a video of the mark rounding. The video clearly shows the contact.
- b. A boat is being repaired by a professional boat builder. The builder, in making the repair, uses techniques or materials such that the boat no longer complies with the class rules. The defect is not obvious to the owner or measurers that check the boat at various events. After completing several events, the owner discovers that the boat has not been class compliant for several events.
- c. A competitor is aware of an incident (either on or off the water) but his knowledge or interpretation of the applicable rule is incorrect, and therefore he believes that he has not broken a rule. Later on, he becomes aware of the correct interpretation and realises that he has broken a rule in a number of events.

In each of these situations, no penalty is taken at the time of the incident and no valid protest is lodged.

Question 1

Is the boat still obliged to retire and if so how?

Answer 1

Yes. There is no time limit under the Racing Rules of Sailing for retiring. Basic Principles – Sportsmanship and the Rules provides that when competitors break a rule they will promptly take a penalty, which may be to retire. Any procedure regarding retirement after finishing stated in the sailing instructions shall be followed as soon as the boat becomes aware of the breach.

Question 2

If a boat retires after a race or an event, should the results of the race/event be amended?

Answer 2

Yes. Rule A6.1 applies.

Question 3

Would the answer be different depending on the level of the event (Olympics or a Wednesday evening beer race)?

Answer 3

No.

Question 4

Would the answer be different if the breach did, or did not, give the boat an advantage, or was a 'gross' breach of a *rule*?

Answer 4

No.

Question 5

Would the answer be different if the boat realised that she had broken a rule after the time limits for the day's race but before the end of the event or series?

Answer 5

No.

Question 6

If the answer is that a boat is obliged to retire after a race or event as soon as she becomes aware that she broke a rule, but does not do so, would this amount to misconduct in terms of rule 69?

Answer 6

An action by the protest committee under rule 69 would only apply if the protest committee believes that the competitor may have committed misconduct.