

# Mark-Room

## RRS 18





# **Mark-Room Rule 18**

The most complicated  
rule in the rule book!

# The Goals of RRS 18

To provide a system to allow safe and fair mark roundings.

To provide a system that respects the Right of Way and General Limitation rules (#10-17).

Right of Way rules do not turn off!

## **How to meet the Goals of RRS 18?**

By establishing 'acquired rights' so mark roundings are not a free for all

By imposing an obligation on the boat required to provide mark-room

# Definitions

Mark-room

Mark

Room

Proper course

Zone

Overlap

Fetching

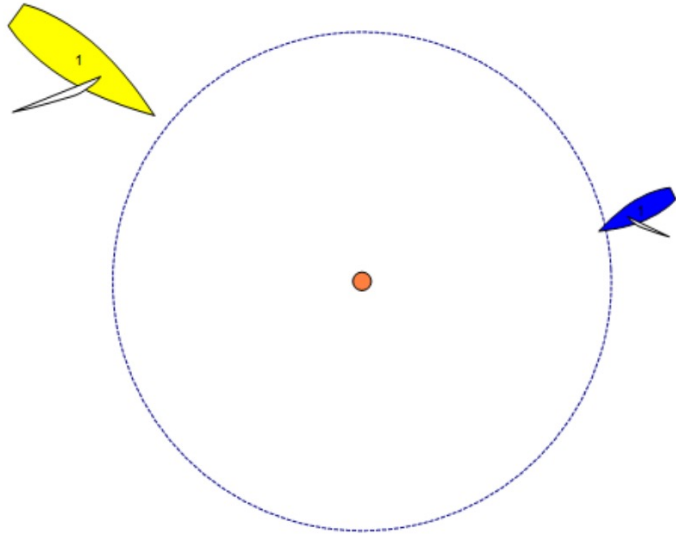
# Definitions

- **Mark-room:** *Room* for a boat to leave a *mark* on the required side. Also,
  - (a) *room* to sail to the mark when her *proper course* is to sail close to it, and
  - (b) *room* to round or pass the *mark* as necessary to *sail the course* without touching the *mark*.

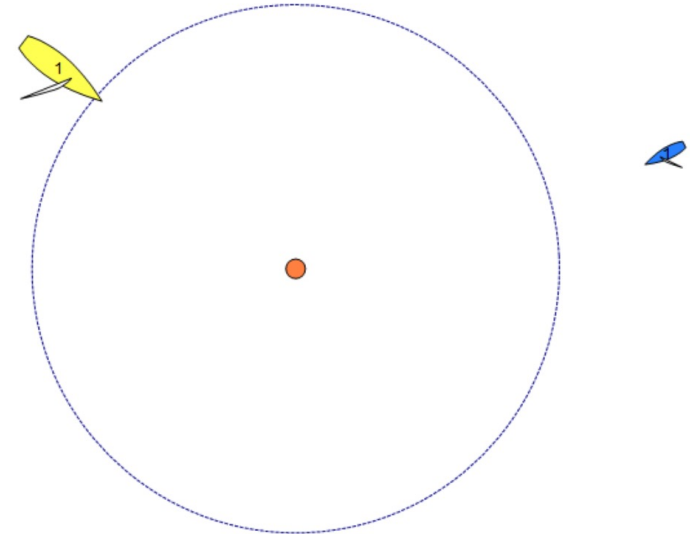
However, *mark-room* for a boat does not include *room* to tack unless she is overlapped *inside* and to *windward* of the boat required to give *mark-room* and she would be *fetching* the *mark* after her tack.

# Mark-Room and the Zone

- Mark-room rights are acquired when the first boat reaches the *zone*.
- The *zone* is the area around the mark within a distance of three hull lengths of the boat **nearer** to it.



Blue defines the zone



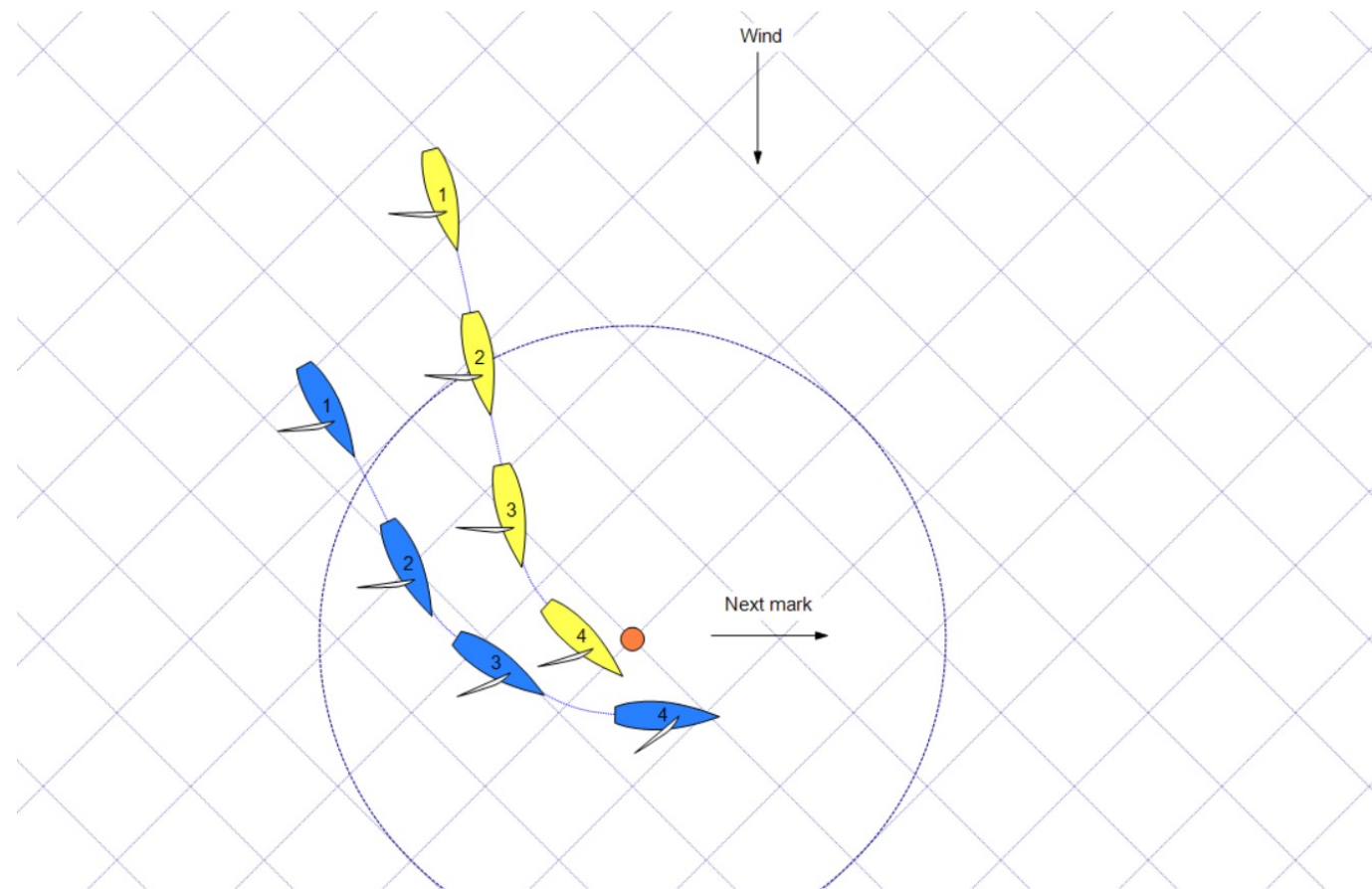
Yellow defines the zone

# RRS 18 does not apply

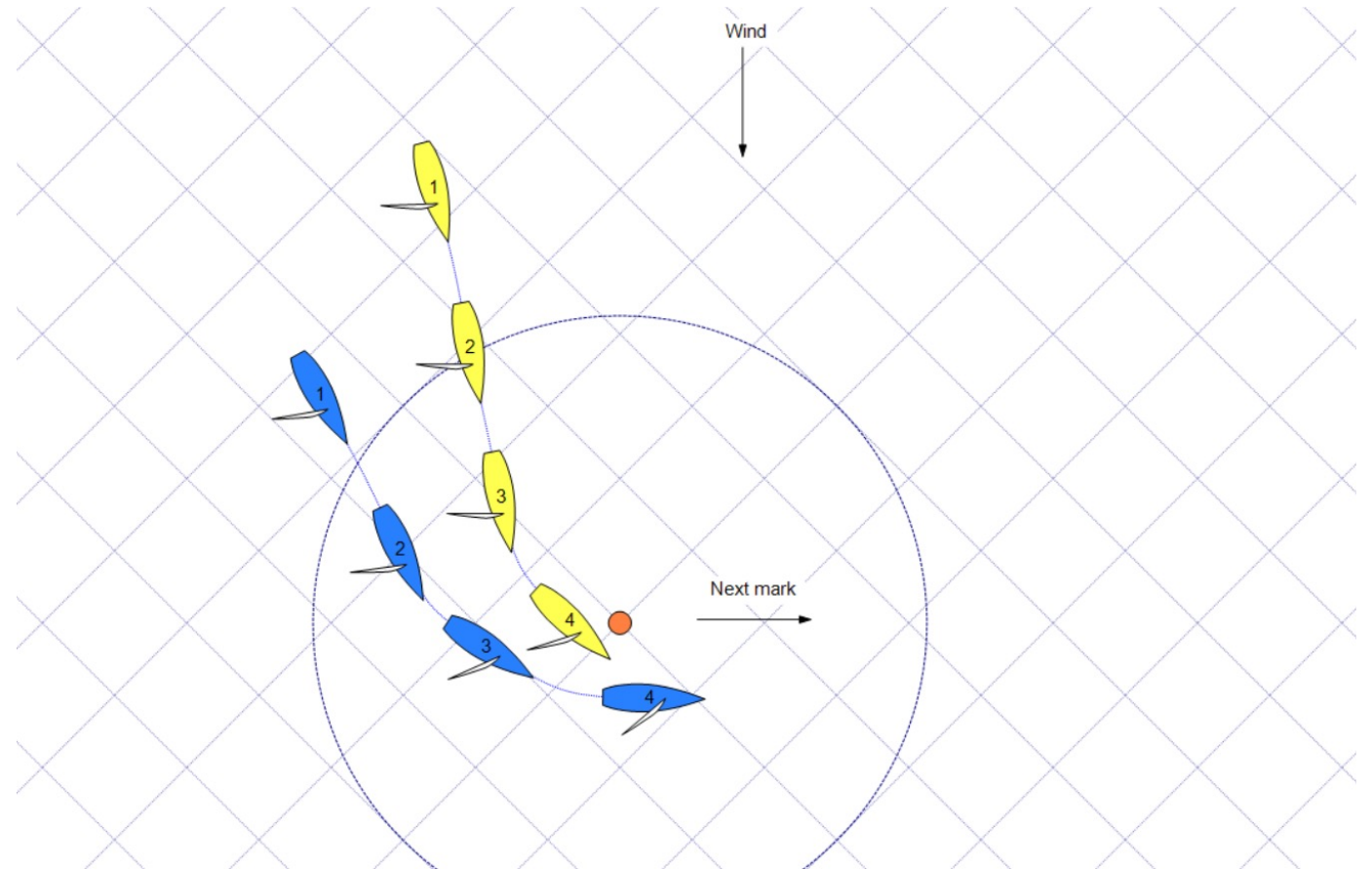
- At a starting mark surrounded by navigable water
- Between boats on opposite tacks on a beat to windward
- Between boats on opposite tacks when the proper course at the mark for one but not both of them is to tack
- Between a boat approaching a mark and one leaving it
- If the mark is a continuing obstruction
- Between boats when mark-room has been given



Does Rule 18  
still apply at  
#4?



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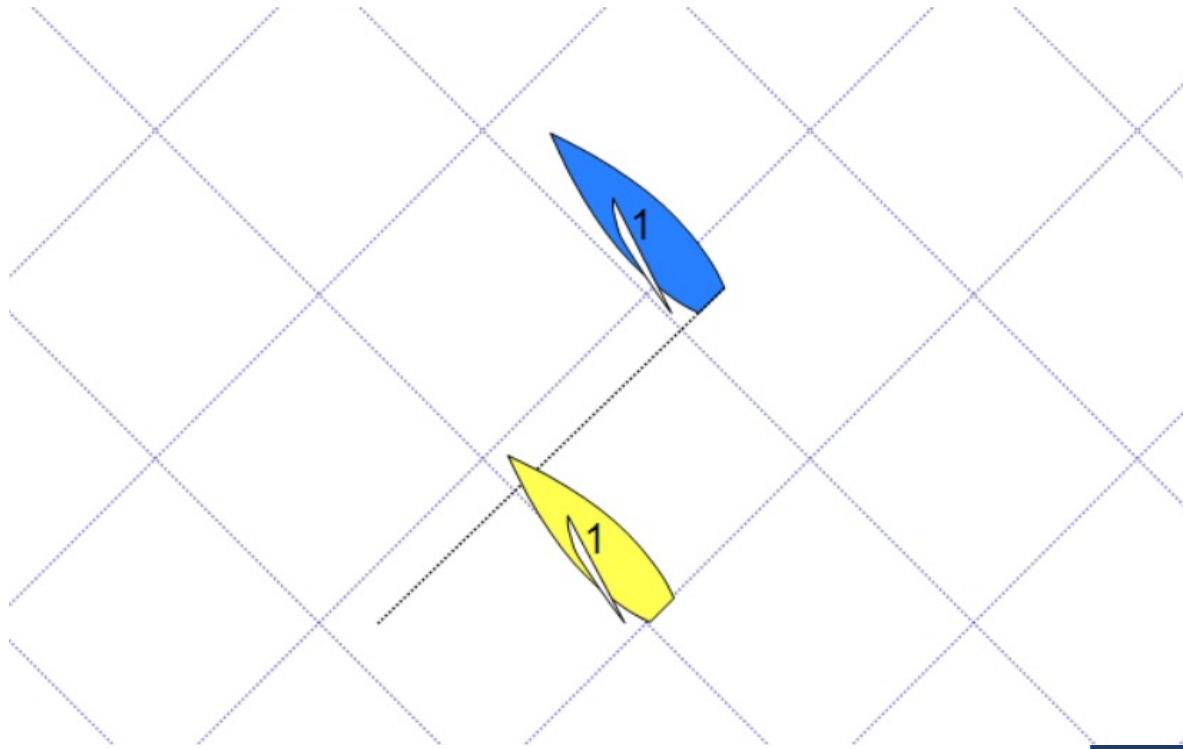
No! BLUE has been given room.

# RRS 18 Does Apply

- At windward marks
- At gybe marks
- At leeward marks
- At leeward gates
- At the finish
- At starting marks not surrounded by navigable waters (sometimes)

# Mark- Room: the default rule

- RRS 18.2(b):
  - If boats are overlapped when the first of them reaches the zone, the outside boat at that moment shall thereafter give the inside boat mark-room. If a boat is clear ahead when she reaches the zone, the boat clear astern shall thereafter give her mark-room.

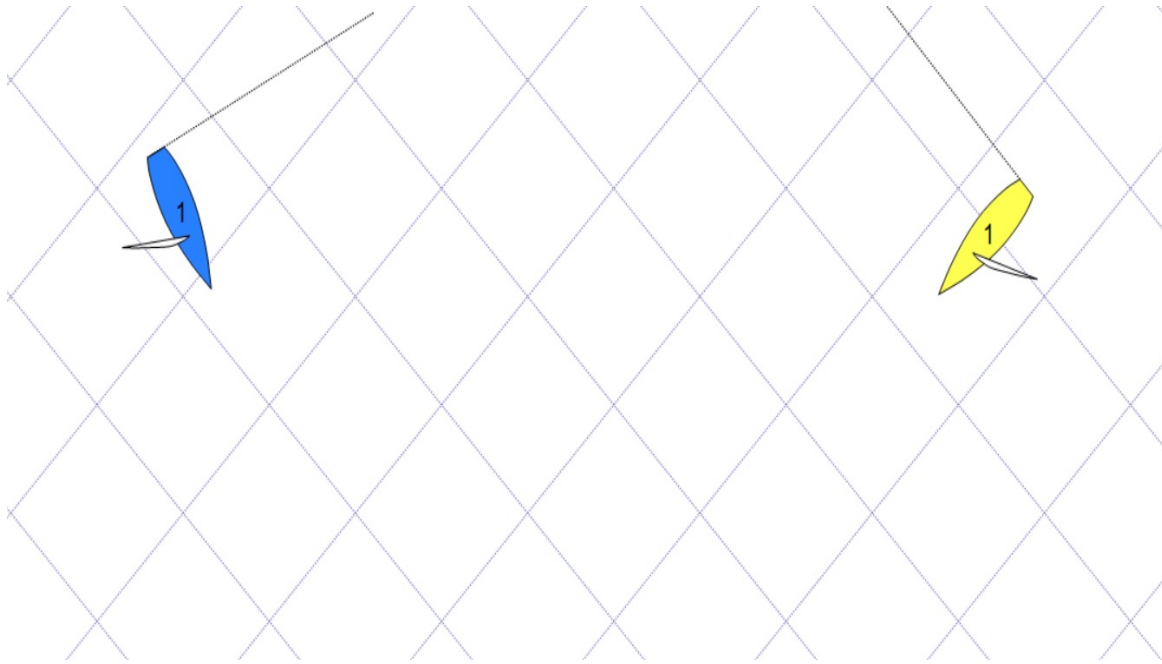


Yellow and Blue are overlapped.

## What is an *overlap*?

Boats are overlapped when  
neither is clear astern.

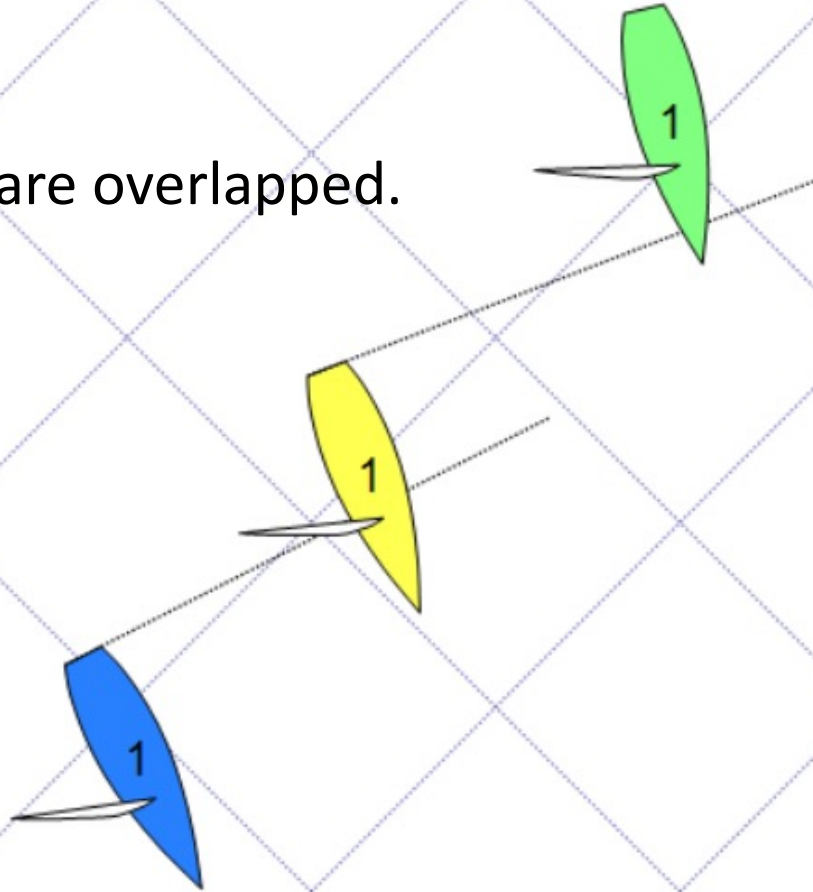
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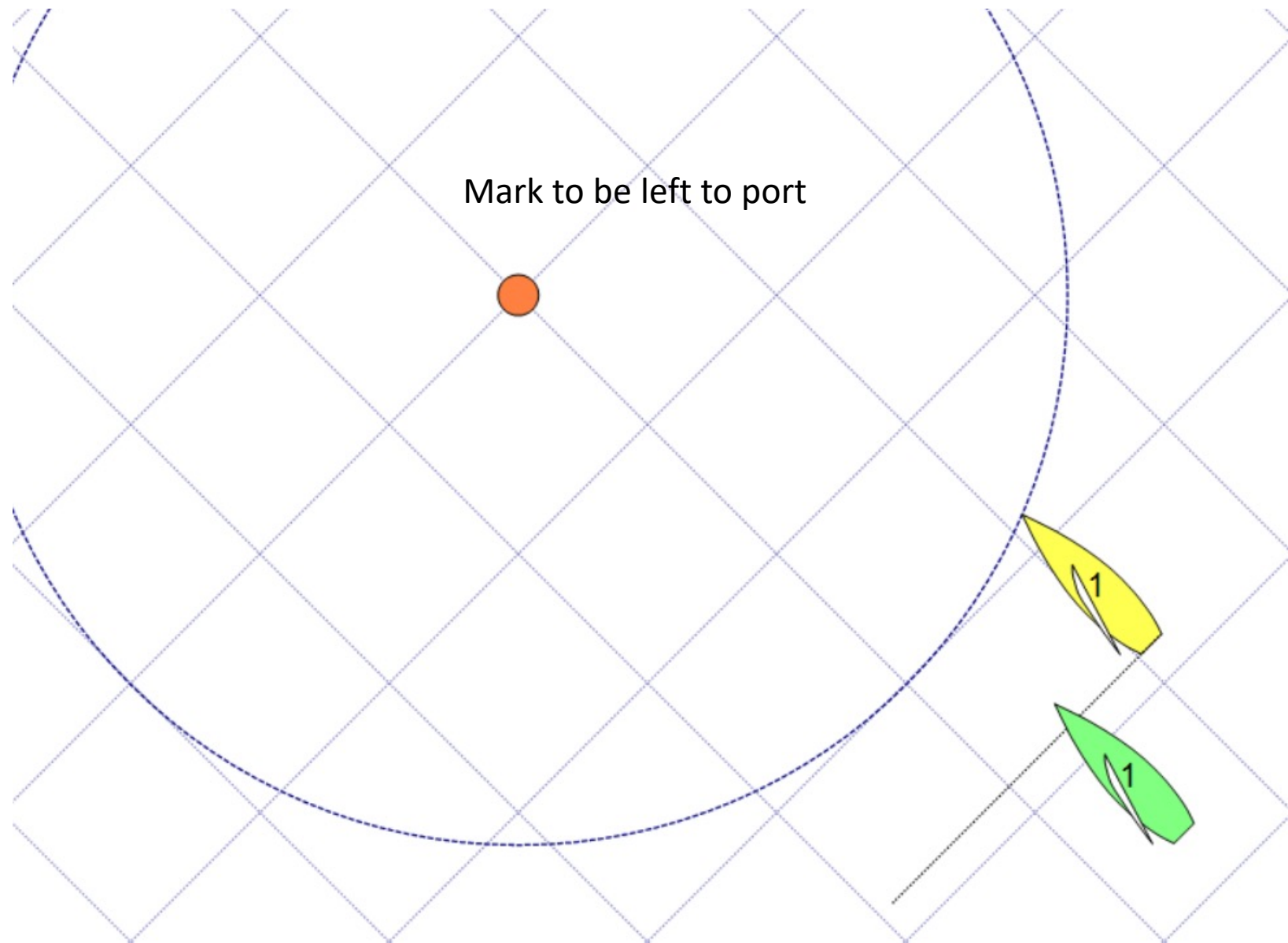
Blue and Green are overlapped.



## What is an *overlap*?

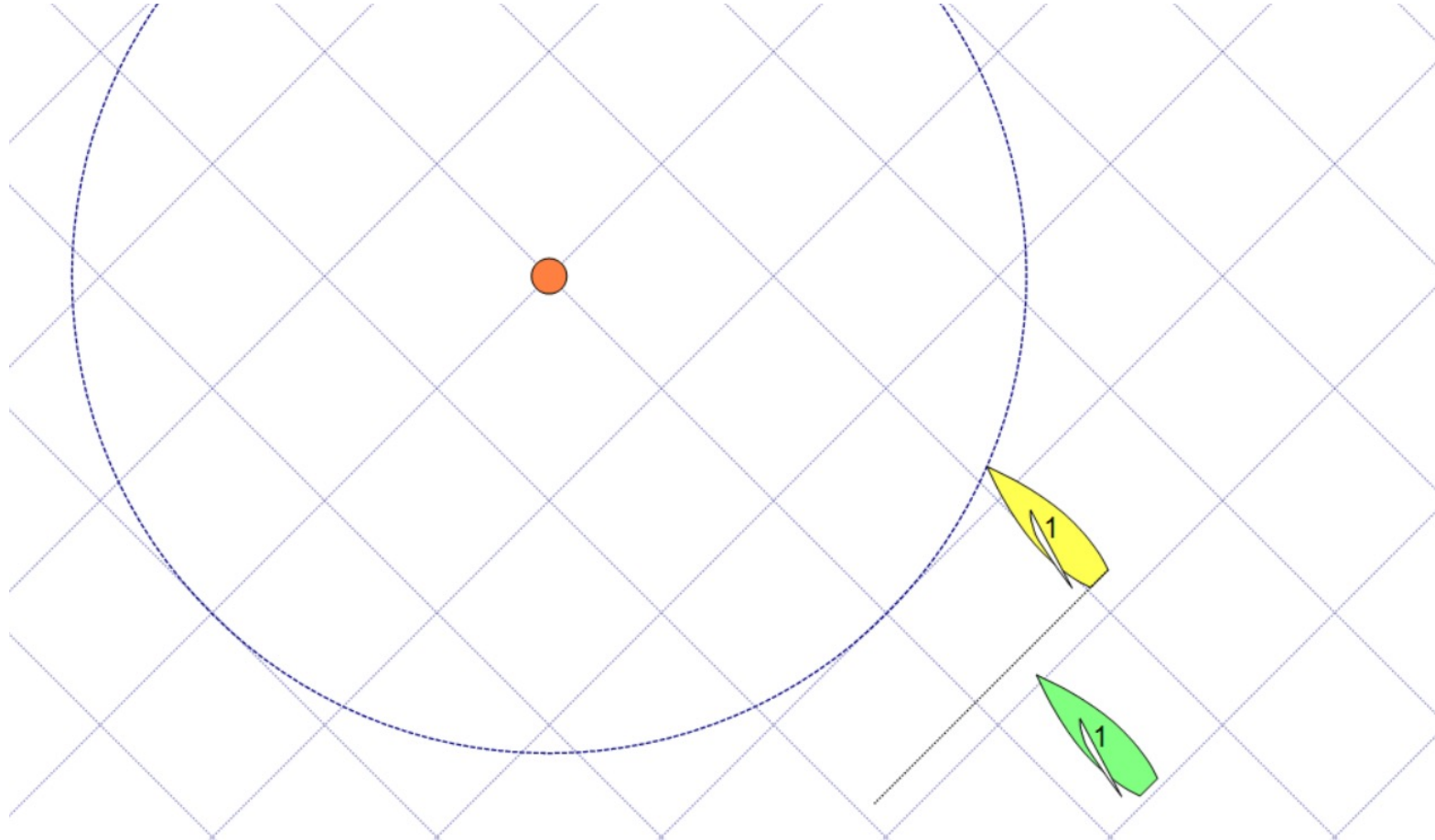
- Boats are overlapped when neither is clear astern.
- Boats overlap when a boat between them overlaps both.

**Green is  
entitled to  
mark-room**

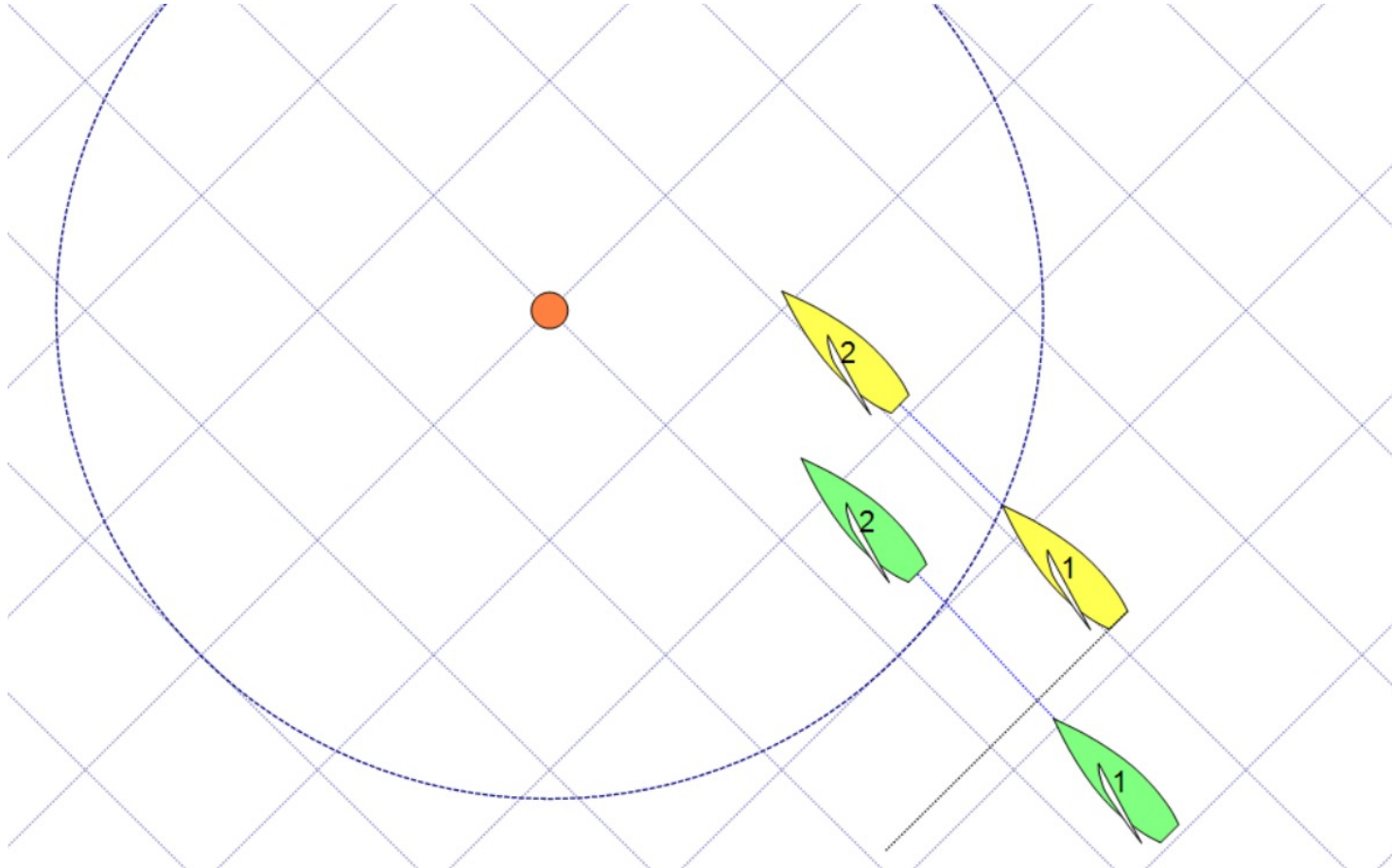




**Green is **not** entitled to mark-room**



# If the situation changes...



Green is still not entitled to mark-room and must give mark-room to yellow

# When does it end?

- When the boat entitled to mark-room has been given that mark-room

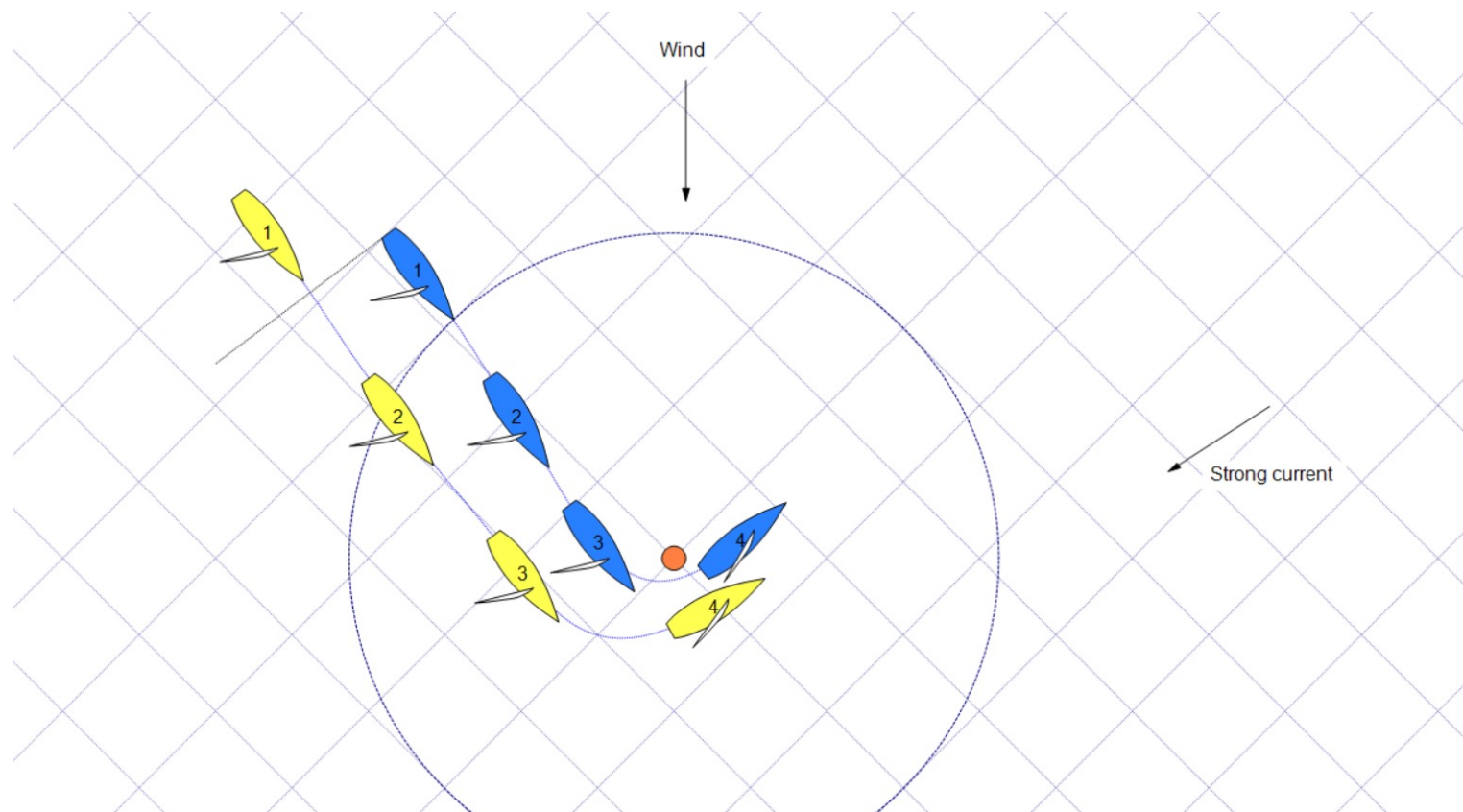
Or

- If she passes head to wind

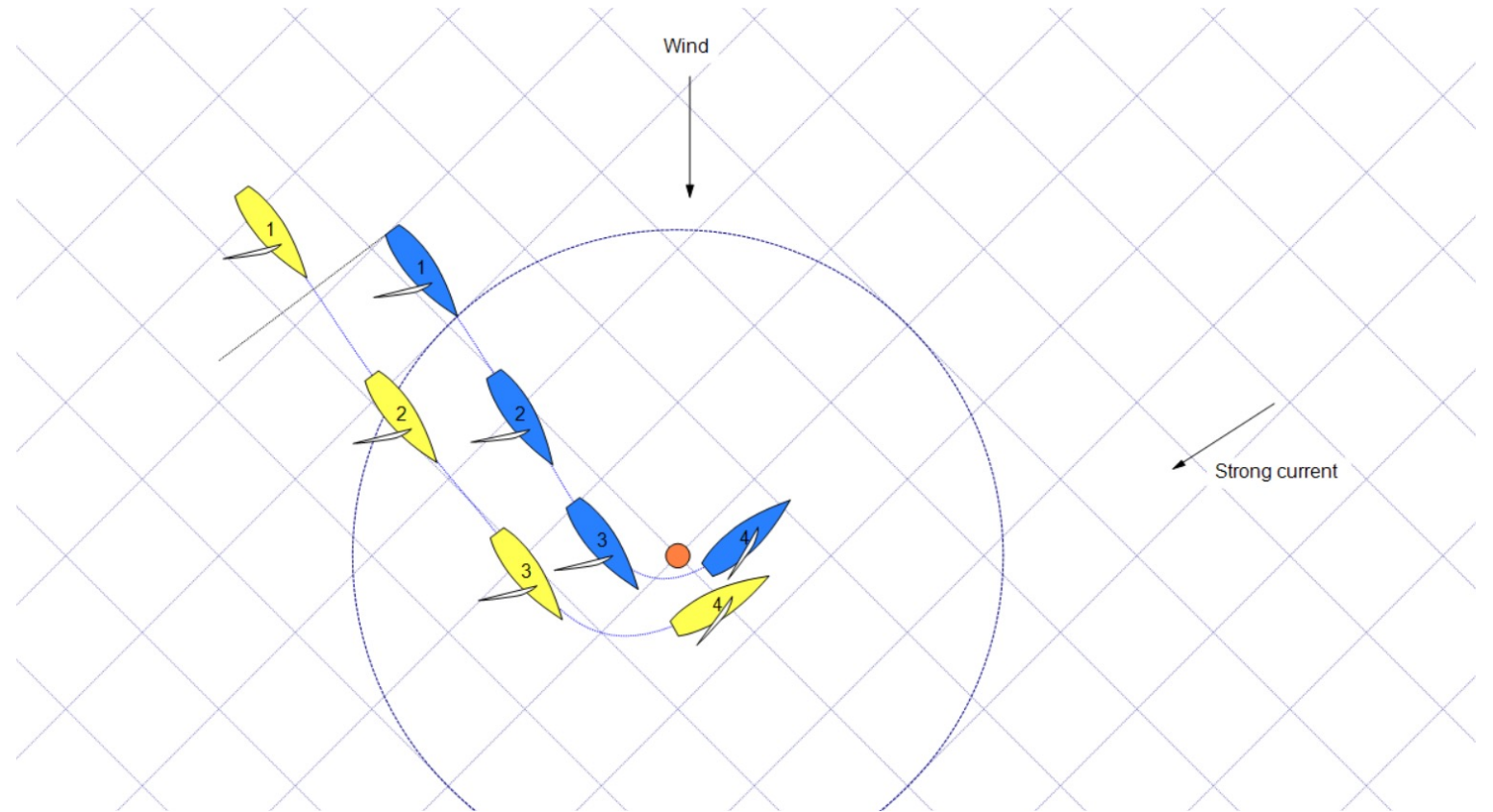
Or

- If she leaves the zone

Does Rule 18  
still apply at  
#4?



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#4?



Yes! BLUE has to factor in the current.

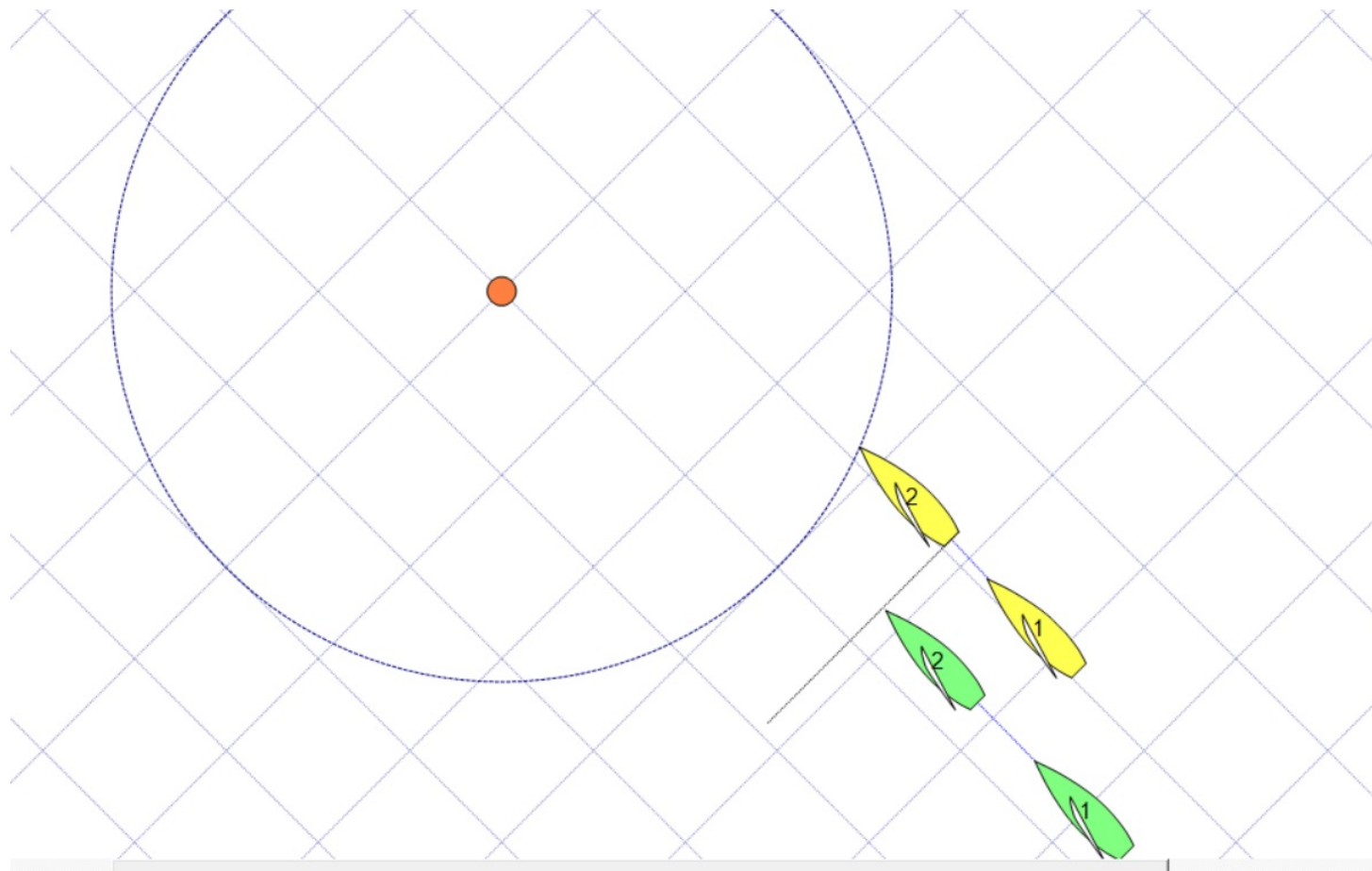
# Mark-room questions?

Where exactly  
is the zone?

When did the  
lead boat reach  
the zone?

Was there an  
overlap?

# Does green have mark-room rights?



# Mark-room rights?

- If there is reasonable doubt that a boat obtained or broke an overlap in time, it shall be presumed that she did not.

RRS 18.2(e)

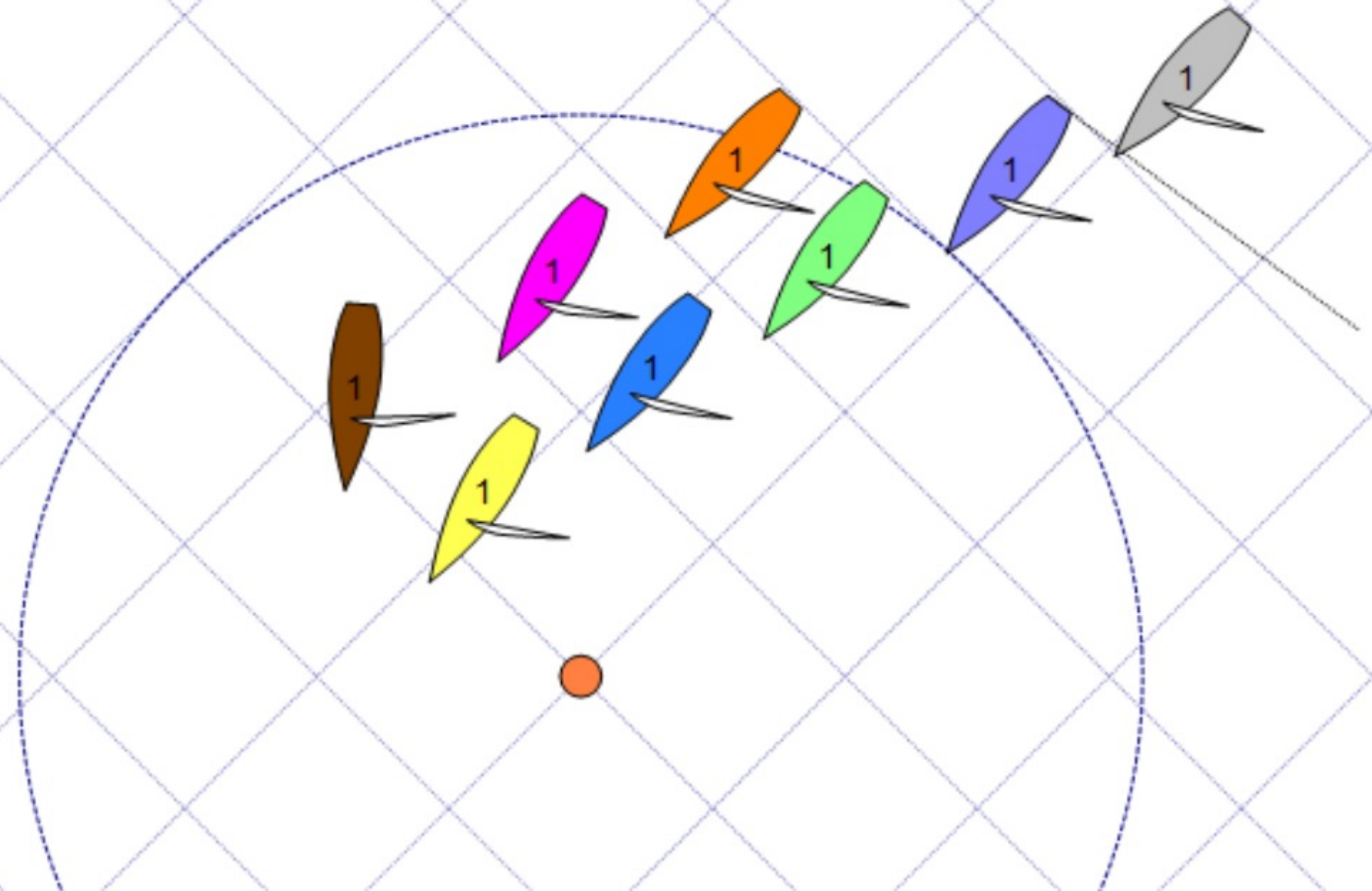


## **Another constraint...**

- If a boat obtained an inside overlap from clear astern or by tacking to windward of the other boat, and from the time the overlap began, the outside boat has been unable to give mark-room, she is not required to give it.
- RRS 18.2(f)

Wind = 20 knots

Gray establishes an overlap just before Blue reaches the zone

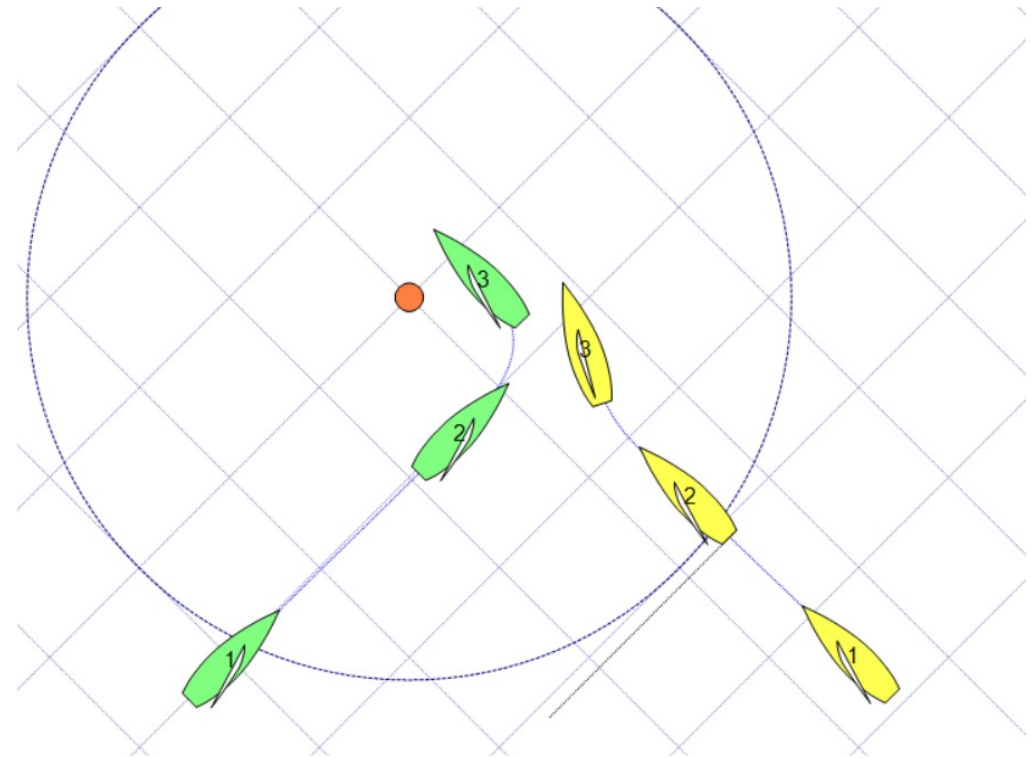


# Passing Head to Wind in the Zone RRS 18.3

- If a boat in the zone of a mark to be left to port passes head to wind from port to starboard and is then fetching the mark, she shall not cause a boat that has been on starboard tack since entering the zone to sail above close-hauled to avoid contact and she shall give mark-room if that boat becomes overlapped inside her. When this rule applies, rule 18.2 does not apply between them.

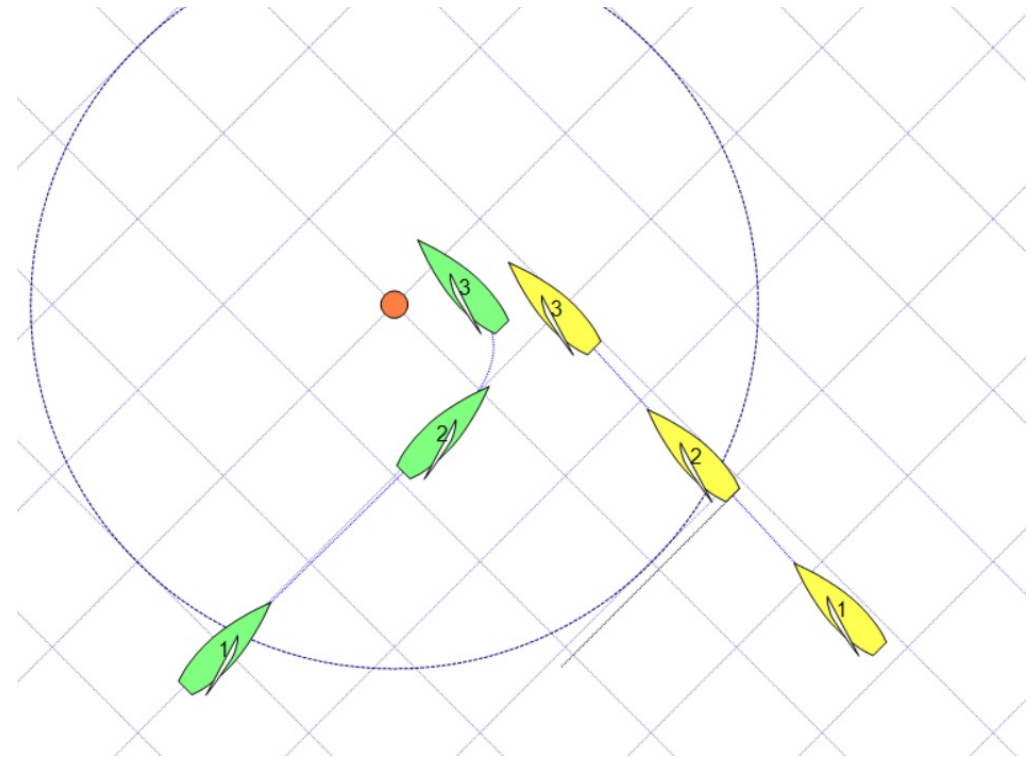
# Passing Head to Wind in the Zone

- Green breaks RRS 18.3
- How?



# Passing Head to Wind in the Zone

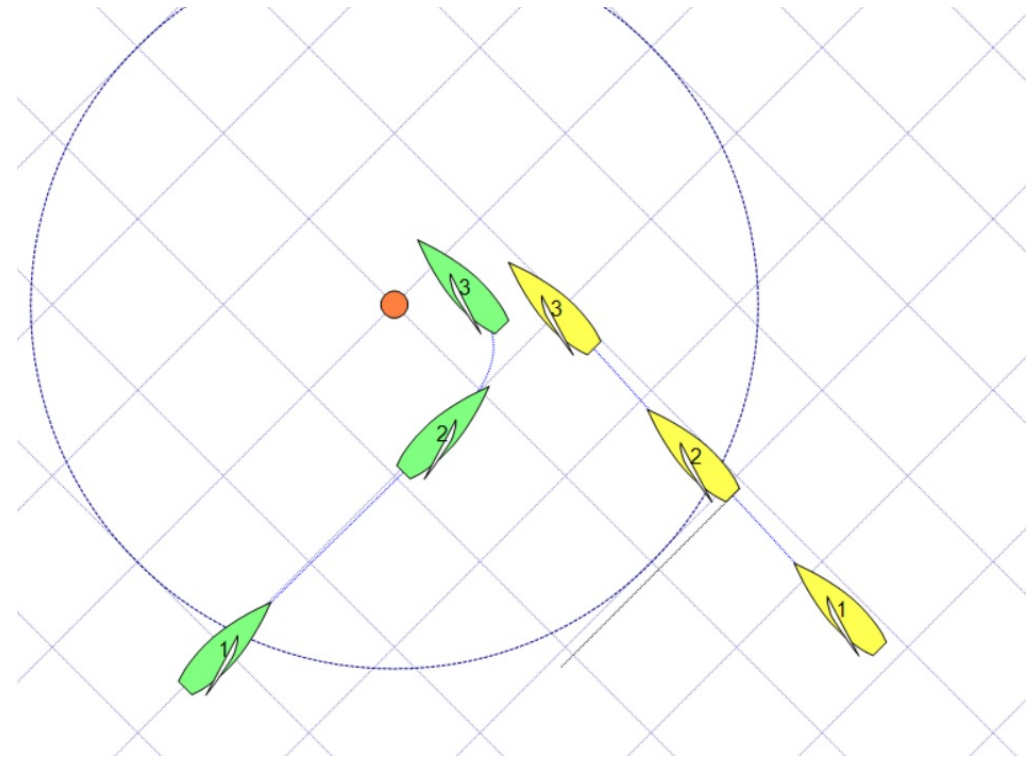
- Green does not break RRS 18.3. Green has fulfilled her obligations and is now entitled to mark-room



# Passing Head to Wind in the Zone

- Green is now entitled to mark-room

because **18.2(a)** applies



# RRS 18.2(a)

- When boats are overlapped the outside boat shall give the inside boat mark-room, unless 18.2(b) applies.

# Gybing

## RRS 18.4

- When an inside overlapped right-of-way boat must gybe at a mark to sail her proper course, until she gybes she shall sail no farther from the mark than needed to sail that course. Rule 18.4 does not apply at a gate mark.



# Mark-Room advice

Determine if mark-room will be an issue as you approach the zone

Know your rights

Know your obligations

Have a strategy

If you need to provide mark-room, slow down!

Tacking in the zone is risky

Respect the Right of Way rules



Questions?

Joe Jospe

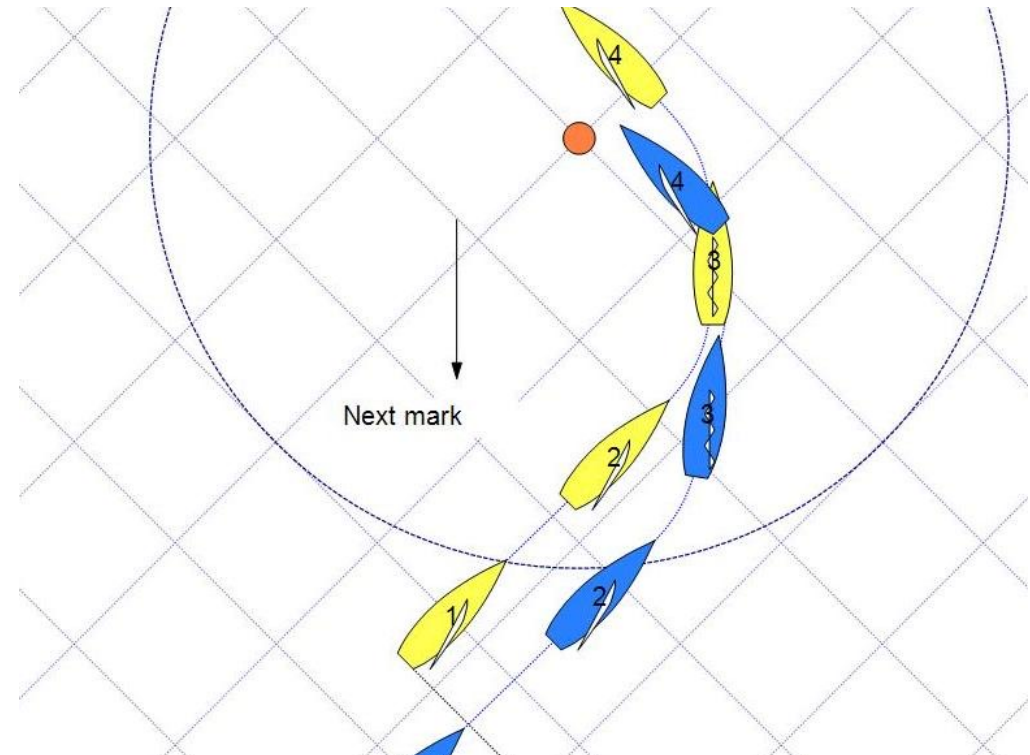
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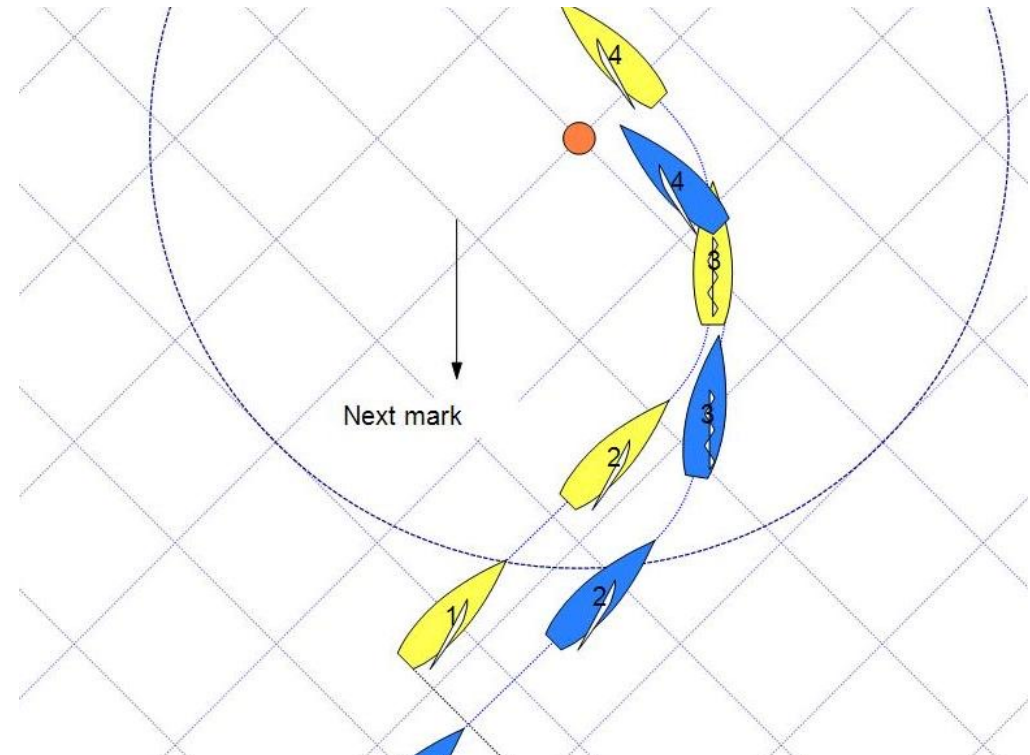
# Mark-Room challenge #1

- Yellow entered the zone clear ahead of Blue, both on port. After both boats tacked on to starboard, Blue gained an inside overlap from astern.
- Yellow was prevented from turning immediately around the mark because of Blue's presence. Yellow protested.



# Mark-Room challenge #1

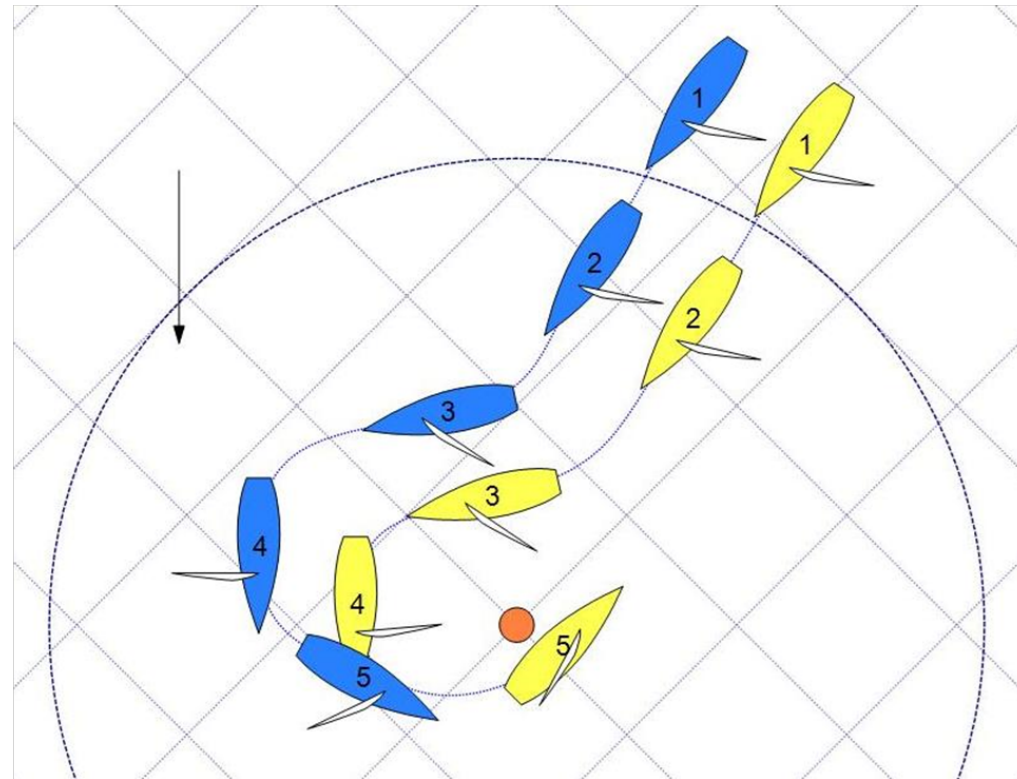
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Rules: 10; 11; 12; 13; 14; 18.2(b); 18.2(d); 18.2(a); 18.2(f); Definition Proper Course

## Mark-Room challenge #2

Blue and Yellow were overlapped when the leading boat entered the zone of the leeward mark. Yellow did not gybe immediately but rounded in a 'tactical' way as if Blue was not there. Blue shouted "You are supposed to gybe immediately and you are forcing me to give you more room than you are entitled."

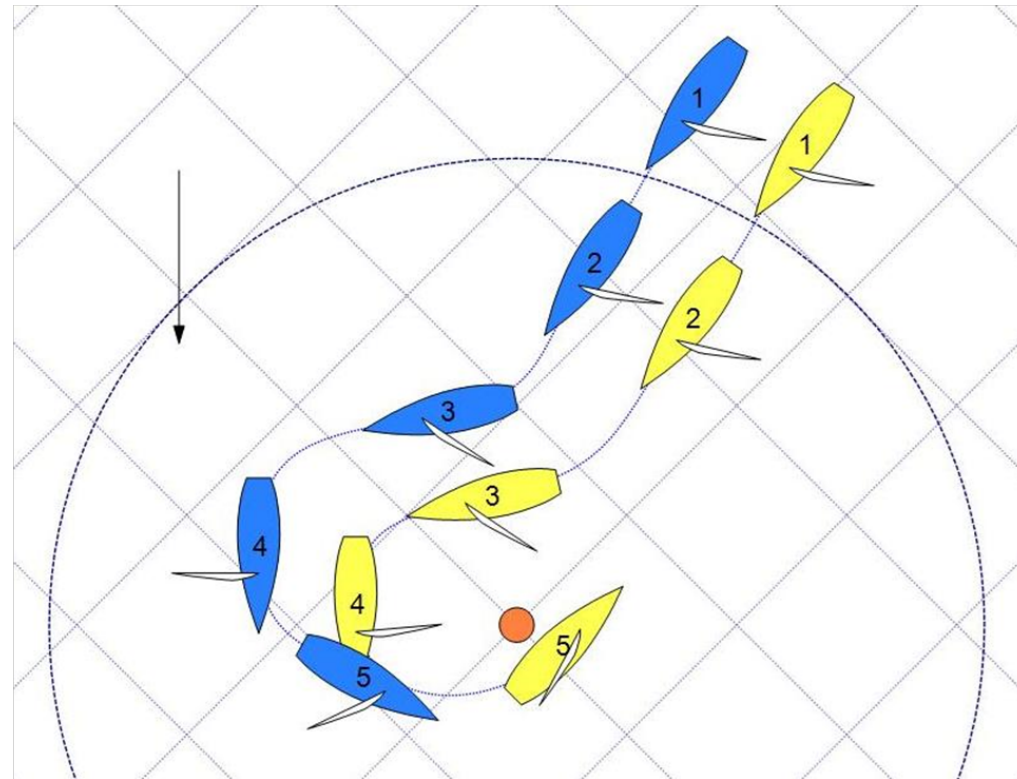


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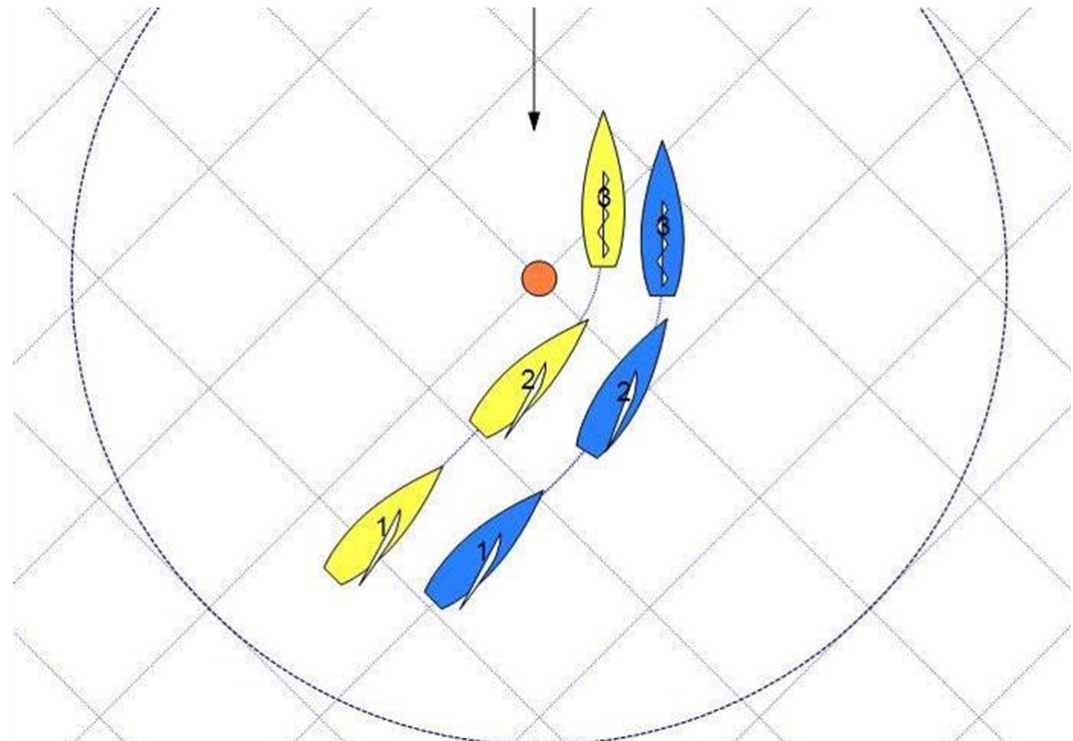
Blue shouted "You are supposed to gybe immediately and you are forcing me to give you more room than you are entitled."

Rules: 11; 18.2(b); 18.4; definition Mark-Room; definition proper course; WS Case 75



# Mark-Room challenge #3

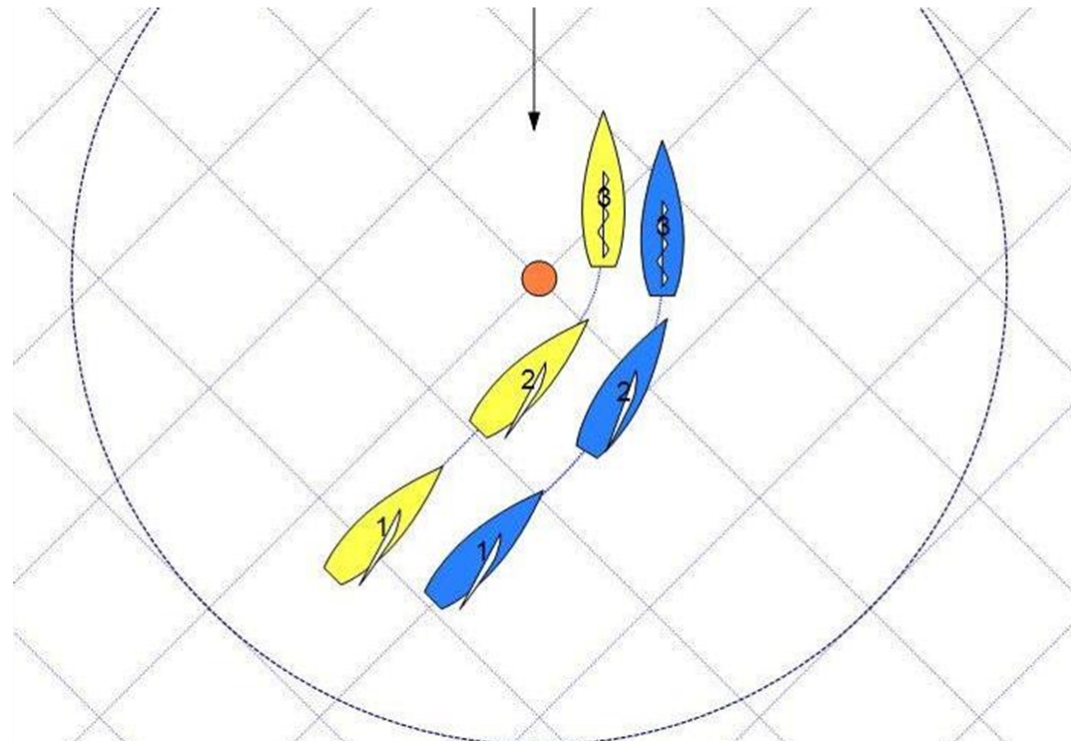
Yellow is to windward and overlapped with Blue as they enter the zone. Yellow luffs up to head-to-wind preparing to tack around the mark. Blue closes the gap and also goes head-to-wind. Now what?



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Rules: 11; 13; 18.2(b);18.2(d); definition Mark-Room; WS Case 21







Thank you!