



2023 GNS Sér

Question for C

Date: 2023-06-21

Question No: 07

Question For: Race Committee

Question:

First off, thanks again to all those that volunteer on the water or otherwise that make the GNS series happen! I know its not easy, or necessarily "fun".

I have a few questions -

In last nights race we noticed a few crews were using boat hooks as whisker poles. As far as we know this may be ok for cruising but is verboten in sailboat racing. Per RRS 55.2. **Spinnaker Poles; Whisker Poles** https://www.racingrulesofsailing.org/rules?part_id=123 "Only one spinnaker pole or whisker pole shall be used at a time except when gybing. When in use, it shall be attached to the foremost mast." As RRS 55.2 only mentions spi and whisker poles one would presume that boat hooks, brooms, marshmallow sticks etc are not allowed. From a safety standpoint alone this would make sense, esp in that they are attached to the mast.

Secondly, as far as I know boats racing but sailing in different divisions (start times) are not bound by racing rules but ColRegs. In other words establishing overlaps for room at the mark, proper course etc would not apply instead windward boat keeping clear would apply for example.

Further to the above, is a leeward boat racing in one division *obligated* to give room to a windward boat racing in another division room at the finish line?

I await your answers on these three questions. Perhaps a reminder of the "top ten" or twenty rules of racing and when they apply would be worthwhile sending to all those that race have registered for the GNS series to ensure a safe, enjoyable and competitive sailing environment.

B

Answer:

1. **Boat hooks used in lieu of a spinnaker or whisker pole:** You are correct, as per RRS 55.2, when in use a spinnaker/whisker pole must be attached to the mast (except when gybing. Therefore, using a boat hook held by a crew to push the clew of a sail outward is not allowed. Alternatively, a crew is allowed to hold the clew and push it outward as long as his torso is not outside the lifelines.

 2. **Racing rules and boats racing in different divisions:** Every boat racing is bound by the rules. Please refer to the preamble of Part 2. *"The rules of Part 2 apply between boats that are sailing in or near the racing area and intend to race, are racing, or have been racing."* COLREGS apply between a boat racing and another boat just cruising on the lake and not racing.
Overlaps apply. Room at the mark is not dependent on division (or even the race), windward boats are always obligated to keep clear (both under the RRS and COLREGs), etc.

 3. **Room at the finish line:** The rules apply, and you can find guidance in rule 18. Whether the outside boat needs to give room to the inside boat depends on when the overlap was established between the 2 boats. Again, the division is irrelevant.
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*Response By Alain Vrandeick Printed at 2025-07-02
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