

MARK TRAP

SPORTSMANSHIP & THE GAME

Knowledge, Use, and Abuse of the Racing Rules

by: Toby Baker

Team Racing used to carry a reputation ("black eye") of hard core, aggressive racing where rules were often abused in order to win at all costs. There was even an article in a national magazine entitled "Give Blood -Team Race". I disagree with the belief once held by many that intimidation and rules abuse is the backbone of team racing. It is heartening to see the care and understanding of the rules that has been exhibited by the US Team Racing Association recently.

The majority of team races are won or lost on boat speed and boat handling. However, the yacht racing rules do play a greater part in team rather than fleet where the competitors are usually scattered further about, looking for wind and space, as well as not being able to give or receive aid from others in their quest for success.

Full knowledge of the rules is essential in close racing, not only for the basic safety of boats and participants, but also for the strategy and tactics on the course. There is also a need for knowledge of psychology and human relations.

In gaining such knowledge of the rules, all sailors, including beginning racers, should have their own rule book. Sailors should not recite rule numbers or what they believe is the rule, but rather go in and find the exact wording in the

book (each time they are involved). Repeated page turning and cross referencing will give a far better feeling and understanding of the rules than a false security (bravado) of believing they are memorized. Mock protests from actual daily situations give excellent practice in protest presentation and procedure.

In using the rules, it is essential that the sailor(s) know the facts. This is perhaps the most difficult part of the entire exercise. In any given incident, there is usually three different interpretations: 1) what one 'sees'; 2) what one wants to see, which subconsciously effects the former; and 3) what actually happened. A port-tacker in a crossing situation 'sees' himself clearing a starboard tacker by 6 inches. He would like to see a crossing by three feet ("there is know way I could be this close!"), so the distance actually grows in his mind. In actuality, someone with a bird's eye view might see it even differently. Meanwhile, the starboard tacker has the same options: the port tacker is very close, but 'should not make it', so the starboard tacker believes they have to duck, while in actuality, they

THE USTRA CREED

The United States Team Racing Association was the brainchild of the competitors at the 1992 Hinman Trophy. Our organization was founded by a group of sailors who all agreed that more team racing events would mean more fun racing for everyone involved. The USTRA sanctioned eight events last year, and hopes to sanction many more for this coming year. All US Sailing members are eligible to compete in our events. The emphasis at our regattas is on close, competitive and above all, fun racing between sailors. The operative word here is fun! Although protests are infrequent, when confronted by necessary and fair protests, we hold "three minute justice" protests to keep the regattas rolling. Sailors are expected to control themselves and act with the highest level of sportsmanship in order to insure that our events will continue to be fun, enjoyable events for everyone involved.

The official newsletter "MARK TRAP" will be published quarterly. Any member who wishes to contribute should speak to Mike Zani. Articles, letters or correspondences can be sent by hard copy or on disk for MS-DOS/Mac or e_mailed. Any person who wishes or intends to hold a sanctioned regatta should also notify Mike Zani A.S.A.P., so that you can get a current list of the paid membership and so the dates can make it into the newsletter.

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may not have needed to. Contrary testimonies get even more convoluted when they presented to the jury who is dependent on testimony as well as whatever logical geometry they can reconstruct.

There is absolutely nothing wrong with protesting (if one believes they are correct), and there is nothing wrong with taking a green flag (or other alternative penalty) if one misjudged their position. There is obviously much wrong if these two do not match!

Sometimes a situation should not be resolved by whether one believes they are right or wrong, but rather can they prove it. At times, kids push protests because they do not understand the rule fully or when it would be better to ask themselves "can I prove what I thought I saw? And, do I have to prove it or does the other guy?" These two questions and their responses can eliminate a lot of protests that leave 'bad tastes' in many people's mouths. Individuals, boat combinations, and teams can do much to practice not only their boat performance but their knowledge and handling of the rules.

In practice, there are times to moves and 'dirty tricks' possible so that the perpetrator as well as the 'victim' can get used to know what to expect, how to protect against such moves, and how to defend/avoid such incidents. It is also essential that if a move stretches or violates a rule, it be called, discussed, and understood by all. As the sailor in a two person dinghy are trained to have "four eyes out of the boat", they should be alert to situations before they develop, relative positions of the boats as they are, not as one would like them to be, and ways to back up his knowledge with convincing testimony (i.e. times, speeds, distances, which way the skipper is facing, or where the vang of the leeward boat is in relation to the centerboard trunk, etc.).

At times, I have known sailors not fully prepared for aggressive tactics who would find themselves in situations that they could not sail or countermove out of. We have developed aggressive one-on-one and two-on-two drills which have helped develop a physical as well as a mental peripheral vision which has made team racing much more fun.

You have heard a team saying how the other team 'sucked' (cheated, lied, etc.), perhaps through frustration. An adult, coach, or team member should never allow these thoughts to remain. Sailing is one of the few good sports that is still in the hands of the competitor and I hope it will remain that way. Educating and training sailors to know and play by the rules and to develop the knack of seeing what is really happening (not allowing it to be distorted in one's mind) is the way we can help the sport to remain in its good state, with honesty, respect, and enjoyment shared both on and of the water by all.

A final thought from UFFA FOX:

"The art of racing is not winning, but in winning so that the rest of the fleet are pleased that you have won, and the only way that they can be pleased is for you to have shown better helmsmanship than they and also shown perfect sportsmanship."

Toby Baker is the head coach of the Tabor Academy Sailing Team, and is one of the greatest spokesmen for team racing in our day.

THE ESSENCE OF TEAM RACING

by: Mike Zani

Team racing is the ultimate challenge in boat-handling and tactical positioning. Well practiced teams are very difficult to beat. However, it is very rare for even the most successful team racing teams to win a regatta with an undefeated record of wins and losses. The best teams simply win more often than they lose. To increase your chances for success it is

important to focus on the fundamentals of team racing.

You may ask, "what are the fundamentals of team racing?" Well I am about to tell you so write it down! Firstly, it is critical that all three of your boats (assuming three on three team racing) work and act as a team and not as individual boats or sailors. Secondly, every sailor on the team (helm and crew alike) must know the plan. Finally, once your team knows the plan you must possess the ability to execute your plan.

TEAM CONCEPT (sailor, boat, team)

Working as a team makes practice and racing more enjoyable and more successful. In order to blend into a team each sailor must be excited about being on that team. If you are not enjoying your own sailing, it is going to make it difficult to mesh into a team racing environment. When sailing double-handed boats, it is important that the communication and boat-handling within each boat is efficient and enjoyable. It is only after each sailor is psyched and each boat is working well, that you can form a truly solid and formidable team racing team.

KNOWING THE PLAN

Once you have six happy sailors and three efficiently running boats your team can start to think about team race strategy. I am not going to get into specific combinations here, however, it is imperative that every sailor on the team understands and is working towards a common strategy which I will call "the plan". In order for the plan to work boats can not act independently. A team that acts as three independent boats will win an occasional race but will not consistently find success.

Deciding what "the plan" is does not always come easily. For a team to consistently come up with the correct common plan usually entails many hours of on land team discussion (usually lead by the racing coach) coupled with extensive on the water practice. The more time a team spends together thinking team racing the better their communication on and off the water becomes.

ABILITY TO EXECUTE

Execute: the ability to implement the appropriate team racing move at the correct time, which enables you to follow through with "the plan".

When two talented team racing teams meet on the water and both teams know "the plan", the team that is best prepared to execute "the plan" usually prevails. The ability to execute requires excellent boat handling, awareness of the rule situations and an intimate understanding of the many team racing moves available.

Practicing execution is best accomplished with drills that focus on the execution of team racing moves. "Pig in the middle" is a drill for three boats. The boat in first and the boat in third are on the same team,

The first place boat tries to execute a move on the second place opponent, thus, enabling the third place boat to pass the second place boat. After this has been accomplished the teams switch, again matching the new first and third place boats. "2 on 2 last place loses" is a race for four boats. The team who is in forth/last is losing the race. You are winning the race when you are not in last but, the only way to win is to get both boats on your team into first and second place. If this is accomplished the race should be stopped and re-started. These drills force you to help your team mates through execution. Both of these drills should be played around a standard race course.

Practicing execution can be frustrating for those who are learning. Please keep in mind that you are all on the same team and are trying to learn from each other. The key is to be patient and ask many questions of each other.

Have fun when team racing! It is an exciting way to enjoy our sport. Just keep in mind the fundamentals; work as a team, have a plan, and be able to execute your plan.

JUNIOR NEWS BRIEF

BY: ART GLEASON

Junior Team racing is really starting to crank up all across the country. Plans are under way for three large regional and national scale events and many more on the local scale. Jim Koehler is organizing the first Junior National team race - a event in Bring your own sunfish. Bob Bowland is organizing another DRYRA Junior invite in Grosse Point. He has run this event for several years and its popularity in terms of representation from across the country is astounding. In 1994 Teams from Southern California, the East Coast, Detroit and Chicago participated. The event was won by Wianno YC with Bayview YC finishing second. This year, in addition to those regions mentioned above, hopefully teams from as far away as Northern California, Washington State, and Florida will participate. This regatta has drummed up so much interest in Junior team racing in the DRYRA that some of the other clubs are planning on running other events for local teams this summer.

This year also marks the 7th annual New England JR. Team Race Invite, which was started back in 1989 by Carl Smit at Stone Horse YC. For the second Year in a row, this event will be at Wianno YC in Oeterville, MA. Last year's regatta was won (again) by New Bedford and featured a race off in which Wianno-X (the girls) triumphed over Plymouth YC for second place overall.

As anyone who has ever run a team race event or a national championships can attest, the largest hurdle by far in our quest to create a national junior single handed team race championships is the tremendous organization involved with such an event. One solution which eases this burden is to piggy-back a team racing regatta with another national event. For example, the National JR Single Team Race has been scheduled

immediately before the Sunfish AC's at the same club, and DRYRA's regatta occurs just prior to CORK, so teams from distant parts of the country can get two great events out of one drive. I suggest that the USTRA Junior National Championships, at least for its first few years, be run in conjunction with another national (preferably junior) event. Immediately before or following the Youths, Mallory/Cressy, or C/C 420 Nationals for example, you will have a bunch of top junior sailors and a bunch of boats and a race committee all in one place, make one of these events a day longer and do some team racing. That will at least get the event started and provide a foothold for the future. If your club is interested in participating in one of the events listed above, please get in touch with the contact person. If your club is interested in running its own junior event, please get in touch with Art Gleason, box 201200 Y.S., New Haven CT 06520 (203) 281-6955.

Art Gleason is the USTRA V.P. in charge of Junior planning. He is working to put together a proposal for a USSA sanctioned Junior Nationals.

WE ARE TRYING TO HELP JUNIOR TEAM RACING IN THIS COUNTRY GROW!

PLEASE: CONTACT ART GLEASON @ (203) 281-6955 OR MIKE ZANI @ USTRA HEADQUARTERS WITH ANY IDEAS ABOUT JUNIOR TEAM RACING!

FROM THE PRESIDENT

1) **GROWTH:** The USTRA's membership has remained constant for the last eighteen months but has grown over 50% in the last three months.

2) **SANCTIONED EVENTS:** The schedule has expanded this year. We are starting the summer off with the "potentially huge, I mean eighteen teams huge" New England Team Racing Championship (The Val Hollingsworth Trophy). There are very few people in the country who can run a better regatta than Al Kruger and Bern Noack at the US Coast Guard Academy. The middle of the summer is filled with three Junior events (on Long Island, Cape Cod and in the Detroit area). The weekend after Labor Day we have planned the USTRA Great Escape Regatta. This is going to be a low key "escape to the great out-of-doors" type of weekend. The end of the summer has the BUSA (British University Sailing Association) All-Star team coming to the East Coast for a month.

3) **E-MAIL:** The USTRA has established an electronic mail mailing list (address: Michael_Zani@brown.edu). It is going to be an

effective forum/bulletin-board for for team racing info. It will help us outline the new team racing rules appendix and an it will be efficient way to schedule events.

4) **IYRU WORLDS:** The first IYRU World Team Racing Championship is going to be held this August in The United Kingdom. The fact that the IYRU has recognized team racing is a great sign for world wide team racing growth. Potentially two teams will qualify at the Hinman to go to England and race for a world title.

5) **BRITISH TOUR:** The BUSA (British University Sailing Association) is sending an All-Star team to the US this coming September. I have spoken with their team Captain and they want to race everyday. If you are interested in racing this group of amazing team racers please contact me.

7) **CLUB RACING:** Many clubs are starting to form evening team race events for their membership. Give it a try in your area this coming summer.

8) **NEWSLETTERS:** Please send any information that you want in the "MARK TRAP" to the USTRA. We will be glad to publish material that will promote team racing.

With Wind at Your Back,

Mike Zani

ATTENTION!

The United States Team Racing Association is Changing Address !

Please be aware that the headquarters of the USTRA is moving on the 25th of May.

The new address:

26 Joyce St.

E. Falmouth, MA 02536

(508) 548-7823.

TEAM RACING COMBINATIONS

2 versus 2

- 1ST PLACE IS WORTH 1.25 POINTS SO LAST PLACE (4TH PLACE) ALWAYS LOSES

3 versus 3

- 1ST PLACE = 1 POINT, 2ND PLACE = 2 POINTS, 3RD PLACE = 3 POINTS, ...
- 10 POINTS OR LESS WINS

Winning Combinations	Stable Combinations	Unstable Combinations
1-2-X	1-2-X	2-3-6 versus 1-4-5
1-3-X	2-3-4	1-3-5 versus 2-4-6
1-4-5		2-3-5 versus 1-4-6
2-3-4		1-3-6 versus 2-4-5
2-3-5		

4 versus 4

- 1ST PLACE IS WORTH 1.25 POINTS
- 18 POINTS OR LESS WINS

Winning Combinations	Stable Combinations	Unstable Combinations
1-2-6-8	1-2-3-X	1-2-5-X
1-3-5-8	1-3-4-5	1-2-6-X
1-3-6-7	2-3-4-5	1-3-4-X
1-4-5-7		1-3-5-X
2-3-5-8		1-3-6-7 versus 2-4-5-8
2-3-6-7		1-4-5-X
2-4-5-7		2-3-5-X
3-4-5-6		2-3-6-7 versus 1-4-5-8
		2-4-5-X
		3-4-5-6 versus 1-2-7-8



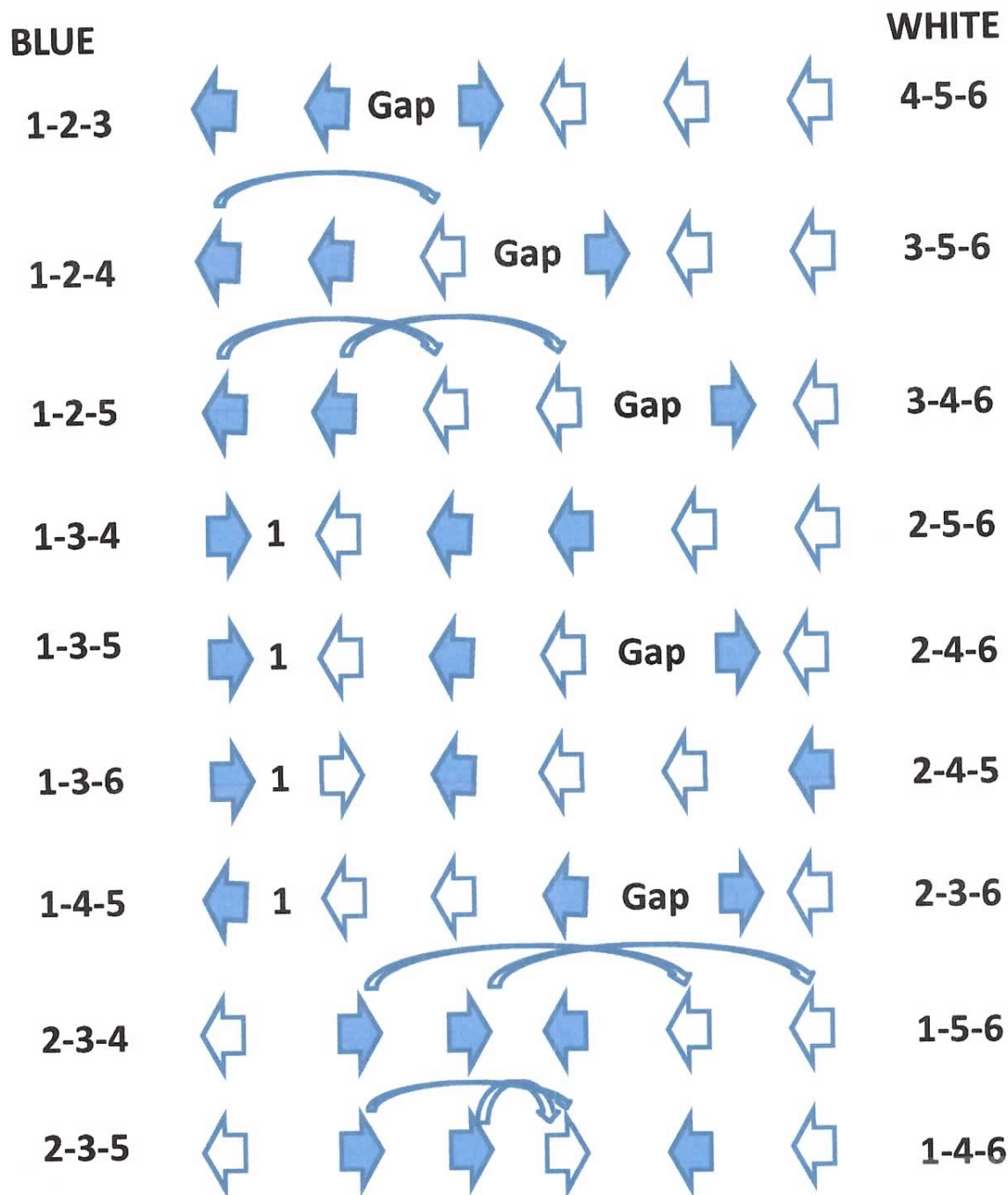
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TEAM RACING DEFINITIONS

Move	Where and When	Description	Example Situations	Occurence
Pin/Tight Cover	Upwind, Same Tack	Preventing another boat from tacking or jibing upwind. Pinning another while on starboard tack is particularly effective.	In a 1-3 combination, 1 Pins 2 and sails them away from the finish line so the combination changes to a 1-2	Every close <i>race</i>
Loose Cover	Upwind, Same Tack	On the same tack upwind of your opponent, but allowing them to tack freely. This might be used to keep an opponent sailing in the same direction you want to go. When an opponent has a Loose Cover on a teammate, an upwind teammate can Pick the opponent	In a 1-2 combination, 1 might have a loose cover on 3 so they can finish the race quickly (before anything bad can happen).	Only when a <i>team</i> has a stable <i>winning</i> combination <i>should</i> they consider <i>loose covering</i> .
Pick	Upwind, Same Tack	off by bearing off and pointing at the opponent. The covered teammate tacks out when they realize the opponent can't tack and cover without fouling his teammate.	In a 1-3 combination when 2 is covering 3, 1 Picks 2 to convert to a 1-2.	In winning but unstable combinations
High-Low	Reaches	On reaches when two teammates are behind an opponent, one teammate will sail High forcing the opponent to sail High . The other teammate sails Low and passes the opponent.	In a 1-5-6 combination, 5 sails High on 4 on the reaches and 6 sails Low passing 4. They now have a 1-4-6 which they can convert to a winning 1-4-5.	In races where the other team has a stable combination
Max-Slow	Upwind, Reaches	Making your boat go as slow as possible in order to make an opponent go even slower. Upwind and Reaching Max-Slow involves overtrimming the main and letting the jib luff in an upwind position on your opponent.	In a 1-4-5, the 5 boat goes Max-Slow on 6 in order to separate the 5-6 pair from the rest of the race (which makes it harder to convert the 2-3-6 to a 2-3-4).	Every close <i>race</i>
Passback	Upwind, Reaches	Slowing an opponent so that a teammate can pass. This slowing is often accomplished by going Max-Slow . This often involves sacrificing your position in the race. Slowing an opponent so that a	In a 1-4-6 combination, 4 passes back 5 into last so the 1-4-6 is now a winning 1-4-5	Every close <i>race</i>

Speed Passback	Upwind, Reaches	teammate can pass without sacrificing your own position. These are required when the boats are physically separated by small distances. Usually, there is no luffing of sails.	In a 1-3-5 combination, 1 must do a speed passback to turn the 1-2 before 4 can pass 1,2, or 3.	When boats are in close proximity
Peel the Banana	Upwind 2-3-6	In a 2-3-6 (which is losing), the 2 Pins 4 to one side of the course, while the 3 Pins 5 to the other side of the course. 6 sails up the middle into 2 for a winning 2-3-4.	1-4-5 versus 2-3-6	Several times during a regatta. Often in the championship rounds.
Balancing Pairs	Upwind	Keeping opponents on the same ladder rung of the course during windshifts.	In a 2-3-4 combination with 2 covering 5 and 3 covering 6, 2 and 3 must Balance Their Pairs to maintain their 2-3-4. If they do not Balance and the wind shifts the combination could change to a losing 2-4-5	Every 2-3-4
Mark Trap	Any mark	Stopping at marks to attack boats behind. This usually involves ensuring no opponents are entitled to room. By forcing opponents to sail around the trap, teammates can pass through the trap.	In a 1-4-6 combination, 4 will stop at the jibe mark and force the 5 to sail around while letting 6 through to convert to a 1-4-5.	Any unstable combination.
Sphincter	Any mark	Stopping at marks (Mark Trapping) to slow down two or more opponents. Usually a boat Sphinctering will ensure it does not allow room to any opponents before stopping.	In a 1-2-3 combination, 3 stops at every mark and Sphincters the opponents so 1-2 can extend their lead. Unnecessarily Sphinctering is considered poor sportsmanship.	1-2-3 and 1-2-4 combinations
Swoop	Upwind, Same Tack	This occurs when you are loosely covering someone upwind that you should be Pinning . To get into a tight cover position, you tack, jibe, and Swoop into a tight cover.	Self-explanatory	Rare
Legler'ing	Upwind, Reaches	Pulling your boom to windward while going Max-Slow . This creates a huge wind shadow that is hard for an opponent to escape from.	See the Max-Slow situation. Legler'ing is used for situations where Max-Slow is critical	Happens in light winds (when it is possible to pull boom to weather

3 on 3 Team Race Combinations Property of Noroton YC Team Racing



This chart shows whether each boat should be playing forward or back... and when playing back, which boat is their responsibility.