

I think the main take-away is that if a boat is clear ahead approaching the zone, you will have to give her mark room, so plan to be able to pass astern – and if that requires that you hail any boats around you to provide that room – do it early. If you are the mark room boat, protest if you are hit. If you are the trailing boat and hit a boat with mark room – then take a penalty turn – that will cost less pain than being DSQ in a hearing and save everyone time.

My opinion on the incident.

At time 09, 71 was clear ahead of 23 by several boat lengths approaching the zone. We cannot see where 71 enters the zone, but reasonable to assume she was entitled to mark room when she did and before turning to round the mark. For time stamp 11 onward, 23 was clear astern of 71 in an overlapped group of three boats, however each was keeping clear or giving mark room to the other. 71 turned to port to round the mark and was hit near the stern by 23. No other boat appeared to be preventing 23 from passing astern or giving mark room to 71. My opinion is DSQ 23 under R 18.2(a)(2).

The boat outside of and overlapped with 23 has to give mark room to 23 – and that includes the room for 23 to comply with her obligation to give mark room to 71. By the same token, 23 needs to give room to the boat inside and overlapped to also clear 71. In a protest hearing, if 23 claimed that she asked for room from the outside boat, and presented evidence that such room was not given, she may be exonerated and the outside boat would be penalised.

In a hearing, the PC would try to make a diagram to represent the ‘facts’ that they are able to determine, however in the absence of a clear fact, they may use their experience as to what ‘probably’ happened. They would look at the positions of the boats approaching the zone and project forward to the point of contact.

This incident could have been handled on the course if either 71 or 23 hailed for room and hailed protest, and the guilty party takes a penalty turn. If you are not sure, then take a penalty and then discuss the incident after the racing to clarify what (probably) happened and which rules to apply.

Below are some screen captures as the incident develops and at bottom, a diagram built from those captures.



The red hull 71 half out of frame at right edge of picture is about one boat length to leeward of and giving mark room to Orange hull 86.

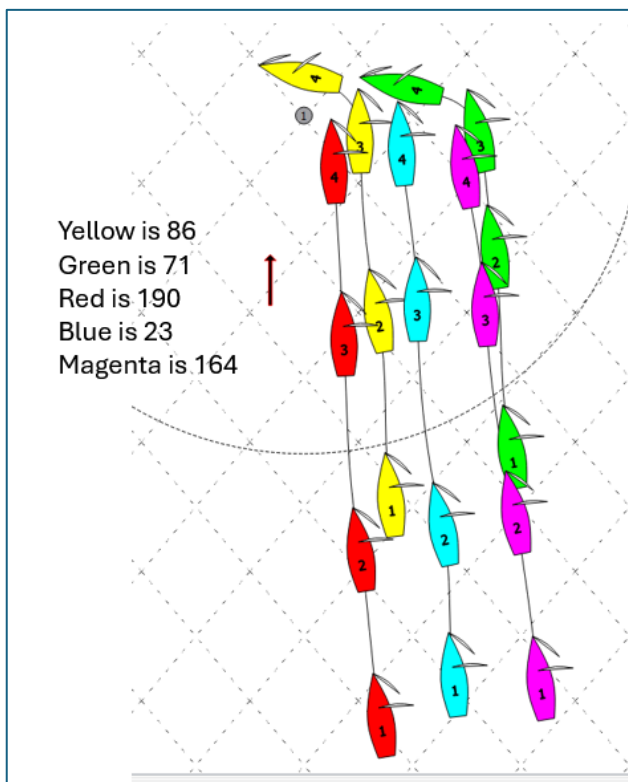
Note the three overlapped boats, dark maroon hull 190, dark grey 23, and light grey 164 are about two boat lengths clear astern of 71, and are required to give mark room to 71.



Here 164 is giving room to 23. Red hull 71 is out of picture to the right but 83 Orange is half boat length from mark, so it may safely be assumed that Red hull 71 is still about one boat length to leeward and well inside the zone.

Here, 83 rounds the mark and 71 follows, and 23 contacts 71 forward of her transom.

From her heading, 23 does not appear to be trying to pass astern of 71 and there is clear water between 23 and 161.



There is no picture for 71 represented by the green hull between positions #2 and #3, but the PC may assume and draw that from their experience as what her probable course was from the other information.