

RULES DISPUTES

WHAT TO DO

The best way of dealing with incidents (rules disputes) on the water, if no boat takes a penalty at the time, is to offer a choice of:

1 AN ADVISORY MEETING, 2 ARBITRATION or 3 A PROTEST HEARING



ADVISORY MEETING

Use this if you just want to learn whether you were in the right or wrong:

- An incident has occurred and no party wishes to protest, but instead want to learn for the future from what happened
- No protest form is required
- All parties meet informally with a Rules Adviser

- The parties describe what happened
- The Rules Adviser offers an opinion on what rules may have been broken
- No one is disqualified or penalised as no formal facts are found. However, a boat that learns she has broken a rule may accept a Post-Race Penalty (specified in the Sailing Instructions and commonly a 30% scoring penalty) or retire.



ARBITRATION

Use this if you want the dispute resolved quickly and simply. This is not as formal as a protest hearing, and the potential penalty not as damaging to a boat's score:

- An incident has occurred and a valid protest is lodged within the normal time limit
- The Sailing Instructions or Notice of Race say that Arbitration (Appendix T) applies
- All parties meet with an arbitrator
- The parties describe what happened

- The arbitrator will offer an opinion on whether a protest committee would be likely to penalise any boat for breaking a rule
- A boat in the wrong is invited to accept the Post-Race Penalty
- No one is disqualified
- If the Post-Race Penalty is not accepted, the protest will be heard by the protest committee unless withdrawn
- There are occasional scenarios when it is not possible to resolve a dispute by Arbitration and instead it has to be taken to a protest committee hearing.



PROTEST HEARING

Use this if the dispute is complex, or if there has been injury or serious damage, or if a post-race penalty would be inappropriate:

- An incident has occurred and a valid protest is lodged within the normal time limit

- A hearing of the parties with a protest committee (usually of 3 people) will be arranged
- Any boat that has broken a rule will be disqualified unless some other penalty is specified.

The aim is to encourage everyone to follow **The Racing Rules of Sailing**. This is only a guideline. For more detailed information see RYA guidance on 'Rules Disputes' in the RYA Racing Rules Guidance booklet at www.rya.org.uk/racing/rules/racing-rules-guidance-book