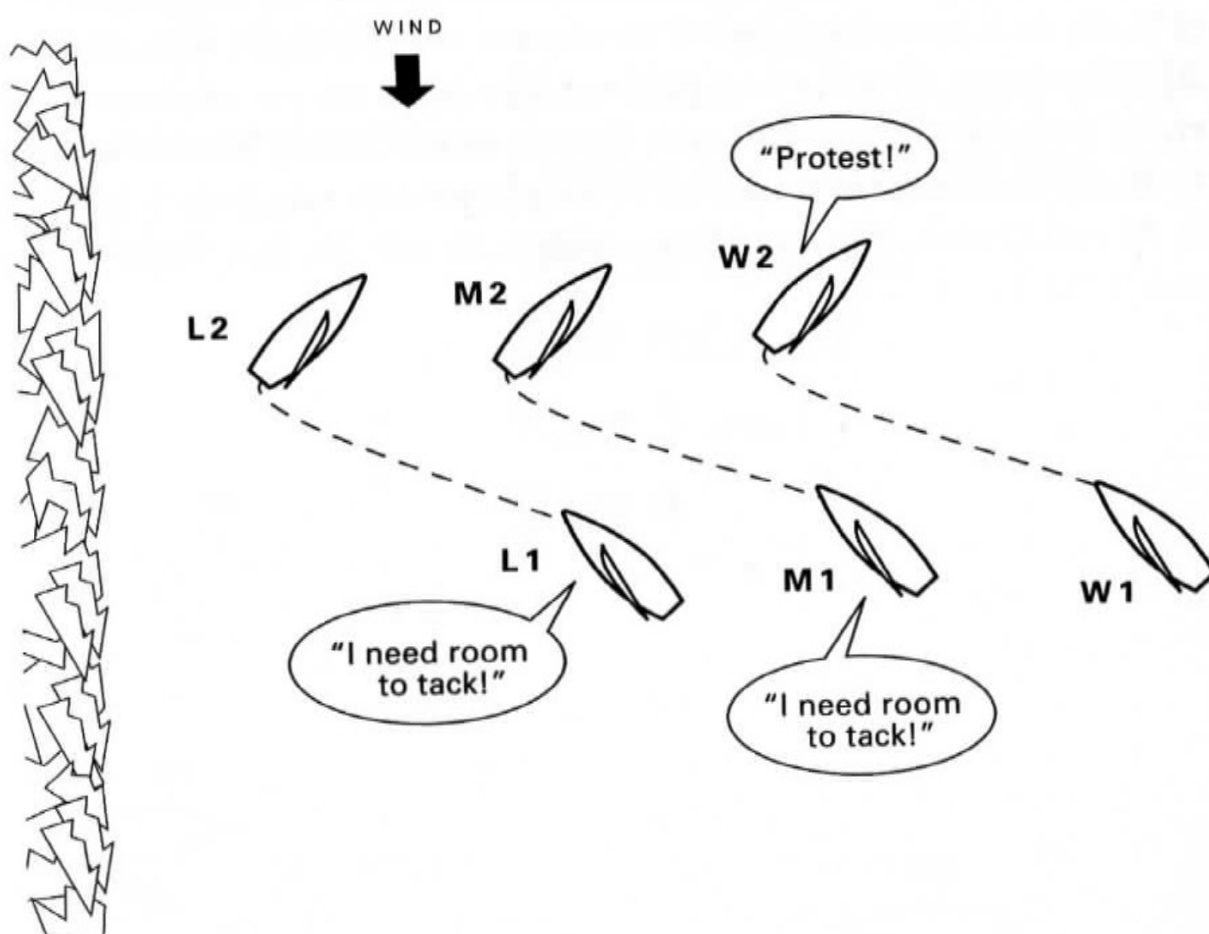


Quiz 51

Three boats (L, M and W) are sailing close-hauled on starboard tack approaching a large seawall. When L, the nearest boat to the wall, is about four lengths from the wall, she hails to M, "Room to tack!" M immediately hails to W, "Room to tack!" W immediately tacks, followed by M and L's tack. W protests M for hailing when M does not yet need to make a substantial course change to avoid hitting the seawall. You are on the protest committee; how would you decide this?



Answers to Dave Perry's 100 Best Racing Rules Quizzes are based on The Racing Rules of Sailing for 2021–2024. For a comprehensive explanation of the rules, read Dave Perry's Understanding the Racing Rules of Sailing through 2024, which is available from US Sailing: 1 (800) 877-2451 or ussailing.org. Permission to reprint this quiz for non-commercial use is granted by the author.

ANSWER TO QUIZ 51

W's protest is disallowed. The seawall is an obstruction (see the definition Obstruction). When L is about four lengths from the seawall, she will soon need to make a substantial course change to avoid it safely. Therefore L is entitled to hail M for room to tack and avoid M under rule 20.1, Room to Tack at an Obstruction: Hailing; and she is required to give M time to respond by rule 20.2(a), Responding. M is required to respond to L's hail in one of two ways under rule 20.2(c). She can either immediately reply "You tack" and then give L room to tack, or she can tack as soon as possible. Clearly in this case, hailing "You tack" is not an option for M. Because M cannot tack due to the presence of W, she must immediately hail W for room to tack, which she does. And rule 20.3, Passing on a Hail to an Additional Boat, gives her permission to do so even if she is still several lengths away from the seawall herself. When W is hailed by M, she tacks as soon as possible in compliance with rule 20.2(c), followed by M and L's tack. All three boats comply with rule 20. (See World Sailing Case 113.)

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