



SYRA Case Study #4

Starting Line Rules

The Racing Rules of Sailing apply as changed by Appendix SY.

The local time is 11:09:56. Three 37 metre yachts are in the starting area. Red is approaching the line on port tack at four seconds to go before her starting signal. Blue's starting time was 11:08, but she was late in arriving and was to windward of the race committee boat when her start was signaled. Blue is now almost two minutes late and sailing toward the pre-start side of the line to start. Yellow is in the starting area but her start is scheduled for 11:20. She is checking the layline and her sail trim as she approaches the line on starboard. What rules apply between the boats?

Boats are *racing* from their preparatory signal (see definition *Racing* and RRS 26). In this case, Red and Blue are racing but Yellow is not. However, *The Racing Rules of Sailing* still apply between all the boats because they intend to race or are racing (see the preamble to Part 2).

Red, on port, must keep clear of Yellow, on starboard, under RRS 10. However, Yellow is not racing and must not

interfere with Red or Blue which are racing (RRS 24.1). In the position shown, Yellow may already be breaking that rule with respect to both boats.

Blue was on the course side of the starting line at the time of her starting signal, so she was identified by the race committee as OCS under RRS 29.1. Blue would normally have right-of-way over Red under RRS 10. However, Blue is sailing towards the pre-start side of the starting line to start, so RRS 22.1 applies and she must keep clear of Red as well as Yellow. Note that in superyacht racing, it is likely that RRS 28.1 and 29.1 are changed to prohibit boats from sailing back to the pre-start side of the starting line to start, so Blue may be breaking that sailing instruction.

