

Answer to Scenario 3 – Starting Line Luffing

B is penalized under rule 15, Acquiring Right of Way. Before the boats were overlapped, B was required to keep clear under rule 12, On the Same Tack, Not Overlapped; and despite B's hail, A, as the right-of-way boat, was under no obligation to take any action relative to B. When B became overlapped with A, she instantly became the right-of-way boat under rule 11, On the Same Tack, Overlapped; however she was also initially required to give A room to keep clear under rule 15. A immediately responded to her obligation to keep clear of B under rule 11, but did not have the room (space) she needed to keep clear as evidenced by the contact. B broke rule 15; and A broke rule 11 but is exonerated under rule 21, Exoneration.

Both boats are required by rule 14, Avoiding Contact, to avoid contact if reasonably possible. A responds immediately to B's overlap but is unable to avoid contact; therefore she does not break rule 14. B clearly breaks rule 14; but as she is the right-of-way boat at the time, she cannot be penalized under rule 14 because the contact does not cause damage or injury (see rule 14 (6)).

(From Dave Perry's 100 Best Rules Quizzes, Quiz 12. Used with permission.)