

Corinthian Spirit in Sailing

The Corinthian spirit is a high sense of fairness and sportsmanship in competition. It is embodied in the Racing Rules of Sailing.

Learn the class rules, and make sure your boat is “legal” in the Corinthian spirit.

If you are an accomplished sailor, help the newcomers with trimming their boats, learning the rules, the tactics, and sailing techniques in the Corinthian spirit.

When you are required to take a penalty, take it even if no one calls you for it. In other words, if you hit a mark or are over early, even if no one notices, do your turn in the Corinthian spirit. Do your turn as soon as possible; don't wait for a favorable wind, etc.

When someone is doing a penalty turn, some people say they “have no rights”, but that is false. Although the penalized boat is obligated to do their penalty turn clear of other boats, Rule 24.4 states a boat shall not interfere with another boat taking a penalty turn. To help other boats know you are doing a penalty turn, announce your number and say “doing a 360”, then announce “360 complete” to let them know you are racing again.

If two boats touch, by definition, at least one of them has violated a rule. If you don't know which boat, do a 360 yourself, in the Corinthian spirit. If you know the other boat is at fault say your number, then “protests”, and then his number. You are obliged to do this, because the other boat is being penalized with respect to the whole fleet, not just with respect to you. By protesting, you are being fair to the fleet.

When acquiring the right of way, a boat shall first give the other boat room to keep clear. In this situation it is in the Corinthian spirit to warn the other boat, to encourage him to keep clear, by calling their number and saying “starboard” or “leeward” or “mark room” or “come up” etc.

We all want to win, sailboat racing is competitive, but it can be conducted in a gentlemanly manor, in the Corinthian spirit.

Harvey Mickelsen, Commodore

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