

ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service



L 004

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Situation

At a light wind regatta, there was a lot of weed in the water on the racecourse. A boat equipped with two lifelines lowered the bowman over the side, using a halyard attached to a harness so that he could get better access to remove weed from the keel and rudder with a weed stick.

Question 1

Is using a halyard and harness in this way making it a 'device designed to position their bodies outboard' and therefore breaking rule 49.1?

Answer 1

No. A harness, when used as part of a trapeze, is a device designed to position a crewmember's body outboard and using it breaks rule 49.1 unless the class rules authorise it. A halyard and a harness (when not used as part of a trapeze) however, are not devices designed for that purpose and therefore using them as described in the question does not break rule 49.1. Class rules may put limitations on the use of a halyard.

Question 2

If the answer to Question 1 is 'yes', does this also mean that using a halyard and harness to access the outer end of a spinnaker pole, which is outside the lifelines, also break rule 49.1?

Answer 2

Not applicable.

Question 3

Does the scenario in Question 2 at the same time break rule 49.2?

Answer 3

Rule 49.2 only applies to boats when the class rules or sailing instructions require that they are equipped with lifelines. The rule specifically permits positioning parts of the competitor outside the lifelines briefly to perform a necessary task. Tripping a spinnaker or removing weed may be seen as a necessary task, in which case it would not break rule 49.2.

Question 4

If the answer to Question 2 is 'yes' does this mean that a person can only be hoisted up the mast on a halyard and harness if he does not go outside the vertical line of the lifelines?

Answer 4

No. Provided the crewmember is hoisted up the mast briefly to perform a necessary task, rule 49.2 is not broken even if his torso goes outside the vertical line of the lifelines.