

# Rule 42 Most Common Breaches Laser Standard, Laser Radial and Laser 4.7



**THIS PAPER IS INTENDED AS A GUIDE TO JUDGES AND SAILORS**

## **PRINCIPLE:**

**The judges will give sailors the benefit of the doubt, however, when they are sure a sailor is breaking rule 42 they will act to protect the sailors that are complying with the rule.**

## **CLASS RULES AFFECTING RULE 42: NONE**

### **Class Specific Techniques and Breaches:**

These classes share many of the same breaches of rule 42. The Laser Standard sailors are heavier than the boat and using their extra muscle mass they can really throw the boat about by moving their body. Nearly all the men move aggressively and one problem for judges is spending sufficient time analysing the actions of an individual sailor without being distracted by possible breaches by other competitors.

The Laser Radial and Laser 4.7 sailors are lighter than the boat and in many cases have less impact when they move. The few aggressive sailors really stand out against the majority of the fleet.

## **STARTS**

### **1. One Roll and One Body Pump**

A single roll or body pump at the start is permitted unless it clearly propels the boat. Very often one roll is combined with a strong body pump at the completion of the roll and this may break the basic rule.

#### **Permitted actions:**

- One roll or one body pump that does not clearly propel the boat

#### **Prohibited actions:**

- One roll or one body pump that clearly propels the boat. - BASIC 4
- Repeatedly rolling the boat. - 42.2(b)(1)
- Repeated body pumps

#### **Gathering evidence:**

- Is the competitor causing the boat to roll?
- Does a single roll or body pump clearly propel the boat?
- Is the roll or pump repeated (more than once)?

### **2. Sculling**

Generally sailors scull from above a close-hauled towards a close-hauled course. Sculling a Laser tends to be forceful as gentle movements with the Laser rudder have little effect, except in light air.

#### **Permitted actions:**

- Gentle rudder movements through the centreline that do not propel the boat or prevent it from moving astern.
- Sculling, even forceful, when a boat is above close-hauled course and clearly changes direction to a close-hauled course. – 42.3(d), SCULL 1
- Repeatedly moving the helm to reduce the speed. – 42.3(f)

**Prohibited actions:**

- Sculling below a close-hauled course, often in an effort to stop the boat immediately going back to head to wind or to duck in to leeward of another boat
- Forcefully sculling on both sides – SCULL 2
- Crabbing, but only if the rudder movements are forceful enough to offset the steering caused by backing a sail. This will result in the boat moving to windward, parallel to the starting line. – SCULL 3

**Gathering evidence:**

- Are the tiller movements forceful?
- Are they propelling the boat forward or preventing it from moving astern?
- Is the boat above a close-hauled course and clearly changing direction towards a close-hauled course?
- Is the sculling offsetting previous sculling?
- When backing a sail, is the sculling preventing the boat from changing her heading?

**UPWIND****1. Pumping**

Rule 42 breaches in Lasers do not happen often on the beat to windward. The likelihood of breaches grows in tactical situations or in light air conditions when competitors want to speed up the boat by using their extra muscle mass, especially in the Laser Standard class.

In all classes, competitive sailors will often be seen continuously shifting position. This is usually a combination of torquing to change the fore and aft trim of the boat, as well as hiking out to keep the boat as flat as possible, and make it go faster. In lighter winds body movement that is perpendicular to the direction in which the boat is moving can result in body pumping, which will invariably cause the leach to flick. For these breaches to be properly observed and identified the judges must position themselves behind the boat, to be able to connect the body movements with the flicks on the leach. Note that in very light winds it is also possible to rock a Laser upwind with good effect. Repeatedly rolling the boat upwind is rocking and only become body pumping if it causes the leach of the sail to flick.

Both prohibited actions are clearly observable from astern.

**Permitted actions:**

- Torquing to change the fore and aft trim of the boat in phase with the waves. – OUCH 1
- Vertical or athwartships body movement that doesn't cause the leach to flick, the boat to roll or break the basic rule.

**Prohibited actions:**

- Body pumping or aggressive torquing causing repeated flicks on the leach. – PUMP 6
- Torquing on flat water. – OUCH 2
- Repeatedly rolling the boat. - 42.2(b)(1)

**Gathering evidence:**

- Are there waves?
- Is the sailor's body movement in phase with the waves?
- Is the sailor's body movement vertical or athwartships?
- Can you connect sailor's body movements with the flicks?
- Are the flicks repeated?
- May the flicks on the leach be caused by the waves?
- How does it appear compared to the other boats?
- In very light wind, is the competitor causing the boat to roll?
- Is the rolling repeated (more than once)?

**2. Roll tacking**

While tacking sailors move their bodies to roll the boat and steer it through the manoeuvre. The only restriction is that the body movement doesn't cause the boat's speed to be faster than it would have been in the absence of the tack. A problem is caused when the sailor delays righting the boat after reaching close-hauled on the new tack. At this point the exception allowing the body movement no longer applies. The vigorous righting movement is judged

under the basic rule 42.1 and if that single righting moment increases the speed of the boat it is prohibited.

**Permitted actions:**

- Body movements that exaggerate rolling and cause the boat to sail out of a tack at the same speed as she had just before the manoeuvre. - ROCK 8
- Moving the mast to windward of vertical at the completion of the tack. – ROCK 9
- Repeated tacks related to wind or to tactical considerations.

**Prohibited actions:**

- Body movements exaggerating rolling and causing the boat to sail out of a tack at a speed greater than she had just before the manoeuvre. This is usually only observable in very light wind conditions by the clear drop in speed after accelerating out of the tack. - BASIC 7
- Mostly Laser Standards:  
Delaying righting the boat after the tack is completed on a new close-hauled course, followed by a strong body pump or vigorous sheet trim that clearly propels the boat – BASIC 6
- Mostly Laser Radials and Lasers 4.7:  
In very light air, delaying righting the boat after the boat has reached a close-hauled course and rolling it further to leeward before trimming it flat; if this action is repeated in their subsequent tacks it breaks 42.2(b)(1).
- Repeated tacks unrelated to wind or tactical considerations. – 42.2(e)

**Gathering evidence:**

- Is the sailor delaying righting the boat after the tack?
- Is it followed by a vigorous trim of the sheet or body pump?
- Is it clearly propelling the boat?
- Do the individual tacks increase the speed of the boat beyond normal upwind speed?
- Does sailor's body movement cause the increased speed?
- Is the increase in speed after the tack followed by a sudden and significant decrease in speed?
- Can the tacks be justified by wind shifts or tactical considerations?

## **DOWNWIND**

### **1. Pumping**

Pumping breaches are most likely to occur on downwind legs. Both body pumping and sheet pumping are not permitted by 42.3(c).

When reaching in stronger wind conditions, sailors will hike out aggressively in order to keep the boat flat. This trimming is seamanlike and allowed by the rule. Sailors will also change course continuously as they surf the waves, and adjust the trim of the mainsheet accordingly. They may also pump once per wave (or gust) to initiate surfing (or planing). The resulting combinations of movements need to be carefully observed to determine which movements are permitted and which are not.

Movements that are not permitted include athwartships body movement causing the leach to flick, or sheet pumping when the boat is already on a plane.

Illegal sheet and or body pumping may also be observed during the run. Positioning of the judges is crucial to be able to distinguish between aggressive but legal sailing and rule 42.2(a) breaches.

On a reach body pumping may best be seen from behind and to leeward of the Laser, in order to observe the athwartships body movement and the effect it has on the leach.

On a run sheet pumping best seen from a position abeam of the observed boat, and to leeward.

**Permitted actions:**

- Trimming the boat or sail in the prevailing conditions. – PUMP 2
- Pumping a sail once per wave or gust of wind to initiate surfing or planing. Note that to qualify as surfing, the boat must rapidly accelerate down the front of the wave – 42.3(c)

**Prohibited actions:**

- Body pumping causing repeated flicks on the leach. – PUMP 6
- Trimming the sail in order to fan it. – PUMP 1
- Pumping the sail when already surfing or planing. – PUMP 12
- A third consecutive unsuccessful attempt is prohibited – PUMP 8

**Gathering evidence:**

- Are there surfing or planing conditions?
- Does one pump per wave or gust of wind initiate surfing or planing?
- Is the boat pumping while already surfing or planing?
- Could the trim and release be a response to wind shifts, gusts or waves?
- Is the repeated trim and release fanning the sail?
- Can you connect the flicking leach with body movements?

**2. Rocking**

After the start rocking caused by body movement is the most common reason for rule 42 penalties. Laser sailors sailing downwind change course continuously by luffing and bearing away using their bodies to facilitate steering the boat. This is allowed under rule 42.3(a) as long as there are waves and the boat changes course in phase with them. The amount of heeling must be consistent with the amount the boat turns. The best position for judges to observe both the effect of body movement on the boat and any steering by the sailor is from directly astern.

**Permitted actions:**

- Heeling the boat to leeward to facilitate heading up and heeling the boat to windward to facilitate bearing away, provided it is linked to wave patterns. – ROCK 6
- Adopting static crew position, a static setting of sail or centreboard that reduces the boat's stability. – ROCK 4

**Prohibited actions:**

- Repeated rolling of the boat that is not linked to wave patterns. – ROCK 7
- Repeated rolling of the boat in connection with a change of course, by making big body movements followed by a relatively small change of course. - ROCK 6
- Repeated rolling of the boat in the absence of waves. - ROCK 7
- Single body movement followed by repeated rolling especially after inducing a roll to windward and before the roll is completed moving the body inward to counteract against it. – ROCK 5

**Gathering evidence:**

- Is the competitor causing the boat to roll?
- Is the rolling helping the steering of the boat?
- Are there waves to steer the boat through?
- Is the heeling of the boat consistent with the boat's turn?
- Is it linked to the wave patterns?

**3. Roll gybing**

In light air, sailors sometimes make repeated gybes in order to gain speed especially when approaching the zone or trying to break another boat's cover. As with roll tacking delaying trimming the boat flat after the gybe has been completed puts the sailor at risk that the movement will not be covered by the exception but instead judged against the basic rule.

**Permitted actions:**

- Repeated gybes that are related to changes in the wind or to tactical considerations.
- Body movements that exaggerate rolling and cause the boat to sail out of the gybe at the same speed as she had just before the manoeuvre. - ROCK 8

**Prohibited actions:**

- Repeated gybes that are not related to changes in the wind or to tactical considerations – 42.2(e)

- Body movements that exaggerate rolling and cause the boat to sail out of the gybe with greater speed than it had just before the manoeuvre. This can be observed by the clear drop in speed after accelerating out of the gybe. - ROCK 7

**Gathering evidence:**

- Do the individual gybes increase the speed of the boat?
- Does the sailor's body movement cause the increase in speed?
- Is the increase in speed after the gybe followed by a sudden and significant decrease in speed?
- Is there a delay between the completion of the gybe and the righting of the boat?
- Is the gybe accompanied by a sheet pump?
- Can the gybes be justified by wind shifts or tactical considerations?

**TIPS**

1. Ask questions!
2. If you are not sure about a technique, ask in writing for a clarification so that other sailors can also benefit from the answer.
3. If you get a yellow flag penalty, ask the judges for an explanation of what you can and can't do.
4. Remember, the more important the event, the higher the ratio of judges to sailors, so your sailing technique will be under closer scrutiny when it matters the most.

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