



THE NEW HIKING RULE 2007

As the class develops, new ideas and techniques come to the fore. Most are welcomed, but occasionally the class decides that something needs to be kept in control. This has been the decision with the hiking techniques for the boat.

Watching the various methods, it was decided that some were too extreme and either unsafe or not good for the class generally. A new wording was passed at the AGM last year and with modifications published in January. However, as the rule was tried we found that it did not quite cover our needs so a new wording has been agreed with ISAF and is now in force.

The new rule is:

C.10.7 When hiking, the crews shall either sit in such a way that at least a part of the back of the thigh/buttocks is in contact with the deck or gunwale edge, kneel on the aft corner of the side deck or, stand with at least one foot on the cockpit floor.

The new wording is the result of studying many photos of Melges sailing to see the way in which the boats are actually sailed by the majority of the class. Below are a series of photographs and descriptions to help you understand which hiking methods are permissible and which are outlawed.

“Part of the back of the thigh/buttocks is in contact with the deck or gunwale edge”. I think that everybody understands that this is the normal way the boats are hiked upwind in particular. It is a sitting type position with the legs down the side of the boat and the body over the hiking lines.

This is shown below with the three photographs overleaf:-





Of course, downwind the crew still comply because they are sitting on the deck:-



“Kneel on the aft corner of the side deck” This is frequently used by crews to look aft and yet still hike:-.



The picture above shows the crew looking aft kneeling over the Pushpit and below we have the helm also kneeling but with one foot on the cockpit floor.



“Stand with at least one foot on the cockpit floor”. This is shown above but also as an example here with both feet on the floor and with one foot on the floor.



The previous photos show the types of hiking methods used and approved in the class. **Howevern't forget that there are some techniques which we no longer want to see such as:**



And again for the forward crew:





These final three photographs are just an example of techniques which were legal when the photos were taken but are not now permitted. Please read the rule carefully and think about how you sail. Good Sailing.

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