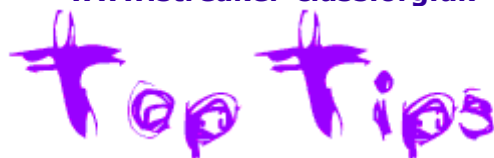




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SETTING UP, TUNING AND SAILING

A few thoughts on how to set up and make your Streaker go faster during the following season. The contents are extracted from a previous article written by Alan Simmons. Please bear in mind any measurements etc. are not 'cast in stone', and may require tweaking for individual circumstances.

Mast Rake

With the mast stepped in the hull (and rigging tensioned sufficiently to remove slack at the shroud pins without bending the mast forward) measure the distance from the aft face of the mast to the front of the daggerboard case. This should be 2'2" (660mm), level with the mast heel. If it is less the mast stop may be too far aft. Using the main halyard, hoist a tape to a point level with the bottom of the mast upper band. The tape should indicate a measurement of 20'1" (6.120m) to the top of the centre of the transom (see "Rig Set Up"). This setting (mast tip to transom) is a starting point and should be adjusted - more rake for better pointing up wind, less rake for better off wind performance. Only adjust small amounts at a time, keeping that setting for several races in differing conditions. Ensure that the shroud adjustment devices have sufficiently small increments to permit this - if you use single line holed plates, just move one hole at a time and recheck the distance.

Main Halyard

The sail must be raised to its maximum possible height (lower edge of the upper black bank) and tacked down to the top of the boom. Tension on the luff of the sail must not be sufficient to generate vertical creasing just aft of the mast - use a wire halyard and hook rack for stretch free and locatable hoists.

Outhaul

For medium wind strengths (force 3 to 4) the sail should initially be set such that, at the point of maximum draught there is a gap of 6" (150mm) to 8" (200mm) between sail and side of boom, level with its top. For very light or strong breezes the foot of the sail should be outhauled until the foot is tight, even with a strong horizontal crease. The amount of tension applied to the foot will only be found with experience. Progressively ease the foot on offwind legs but not beyond the initial setting - mark either the control line or use measuring strips on the boom for the position of the clew of the sail.

Cunningham

This control should be used sparingly to remove horizontal luff creases in light to moderate breezes and then progressively as the wind strength increases. It can usually be released on the offwind legs, as these become broader - apart from removing horizontal creases the purpose of the cunningham control is to bring the sail draught forward as it is blown aft in increasing wind strengths.

Kicker

This controls the mast bend, via the sail, and as a consequence also sail twist. It should be used with caution, not too much and not too little depending upon the point of sailing and the wind strength. Upwind in moderate breezes apply lightly - the mainsheet will also bend the mast so do not over tension. As the breeze increases and possibly you feel that you are being overpowered apply more. Offwind, let it off, but do not allow the boom to rise unduly or risk a chinese gybe - when the wind gets ahead of the sail - sail twist is a science in its own right, suffice to say that a closed or hooked leach will cause the sail to stall whilst an open leech will allow proper separation and smooth flow off the sail.

Traveler and Mainsheet

The primary sail control, like all others should never be used to excess. Upwind on the beat it should not be hauled 'block to block' (as in a Laser) assuming that the traveler is fairly tight. If it is too tight, diagonal creases will emanate from the clew toward mid mast height. Not only does it look messy, it can do nothing to improve smooth flow across the sail. For upwind sailing the mainsheet should be pulled in to bring the boom aft and vertically above the leeward corner of the transom. In light conditions this can be achieved by easing the traveler and only gentle application of mainsheet - for upwind sailing in all but the lightest of breezes use a centre mainsheet jammer to cleat the main. Offwind, hold the sheet between the jammer and the boom take off block. For the hardy

amongst you with just ratchet blocks or the sheet led from a block on the traveler just keep the ratchet of offwind.



RACE TRAINING

By Glen Truswell



Okay, so we've all read the usual text book style articles written by the so-called class or industry 'experts', but as that type of format is not really my style, I will try to be a little different. It's also probably worth mentioning right away that despite my past sailing successes, I am not trying to justify my sailing existence or sell you anything, so just relax, this won't hurt at all! That said, I'll start with a controversial statement just to get the ball rolling and we can progress from there.

"Sailors who can race a class of boat to its optimum in very strong winds, then inherit similar competitive ability in less testing conditions with very little or no other training. In contrast no length of racing/training in light or medium conditions will ever give you the same aptitude or ability to race to your true potential than when the wind really blows hard."

So is this true? Probably not to the letter, but nevertheless, it is my belief that all the techniques and skills we master to enable us to sail the boat effectively in such extreme conditions, must then filter down in some proportion or another to any lesser wind strength. So if you agree with this, a part of what I said above must therefore be true. However, I'm sure there are some of you who are still a long way from being convinced! OK to help prove or disprove this point of view, let's for the time being concentrate on heavy air sailing safe in the knowledge that it is true the same principles and practices should be applied, albeit in lesser proportions, as the breeze

decreases. However, first we need to understand there are primarily three critical elements required to race and not just survive; 1. Mental Approach, 2. Boat Handling and 3. Gust Awareness. So lets now look at each of these in turn.

MENTAL APPROACH

Due to the fact that really windy days on a weekend are rarer than a happy Royal Marriage and tend to be over twice as fast, the stance that I take on this subject is a very enthusiastic one. It is my belief that when you are presented with the opportunity to race at any level, or just sail alone in these conditions, you should welcome them with open arms and capitalise on them fully. So on these days your aim should be to go out on to the water to raise your own standard and mental attitude over a period of time to enlarge your personal 'racing' window. This way you will find that you are able to 'race' more effectively both in your mind and in practice over the water.

Despite being a trait of many potentially great sailors, it is not conducive to the development of our skills to adopt the regressive approach of purely surviving the conditions of the day to consolidate your position on the water. Now many of you might think that it is irresponsible, to risk damaging equipment in such conditions, for only one days sailing. But I know that on such days it is possible to progress my ability in a given class of boat across the whole wind range, thus making it of the same value as maybe 20 or 30 days sailing in lighter, less testing breezes. Also having been there and done it in many classes, sailing in such conditions with boats which are built and equipped correctly is not directly related to owning one with more damage than an Italian Taxi and as many weaknesses!

With these practice sessions I have found that it is quite achievable to quickly progress to reach a standard where racing in 35knots can be regarded as "just another day's sailing". Beyond this, like any other race or series, when you are good enough you will be able to compete with the best and ultimately win.

BOAT HANDLING

Upwind the emphasis is on keeping the boat flat by playing the mainsheet and steering the boat accordingly. In very strong winds when the boat is beginning to almost trip over itself instead of driving forwards, performance can sometimes be enhanced by easing the daggerboard up a little in order to let the boat use some excess power in the form of leeway. You should be hiking middle to rear of the cockpit (dependent on water state) and concentrating on

preventing the boat becoming so overpowered that it stalls - unfortunately this is very common in single-handed dinghies like the Streaker.

In this sort of stiff breeze, technique is more critical than weight and in gusty/shifty conditions you are likely to benefit from hiking less hard whilst being locked in, yet still maintaining good mobility. So when the inevitable backer hits you, you can avert a costly capsize to windward by moving your weight more swiftly. Also it's worth remembering that bearing away round the windward mark will be made a lot easier by pulling the daggerboard up on the approach, easing the main and trimming your weight right back for a fast, smooth, trouble free rounding.

On the reaches, body weight is obviously trimmed even further back, concentrating it around the widest part of the boat, both for leverage and to tilt the hull back on to its flattest rocker and fastest planing area behind the daggerboard case. I find that it also pays dividends to tension the toestraps to lock you in to the boat and raise your backside clear of the water. This is most important in the Streaker, as the freeboard of the hull is so minimal.

At this point, your tactical emphasis should be on gust awareness and utilisation while riding any waves present with a smooth accuracy akin to a good surfer.

Although I generally like surprises (as long as they do not involve a twenty stone, semi naked, sex starved woman peeling off in the pub on my Birthday), when running on windy days, the shocks and surprises you can give yourself can be of similarly traumatic magnitude to the aforementioned stripper. This being the case, the first step is to master the technique of running with absolutely no threat of capsize given the conditions of the day. To help enable this, concentrate on staying very alert and on spotting a gust approaching from astern, I would try and ensure you are on a broad reach to prevent the 'death roll' when it catches up with you. Then once the initial shock of the gust has passed and the boat is travelling at it's fastest, you should bear off progressively and return to a more square position with wind approaching from a truer aft direction.

If you can achieve this, which don't misunderstand me is difficult enough in itself, then consider this: Sailing in high winds on a run is the only time in sailing when verging on loss of control is very, very fast. Personally when utilising this technique, I sail very loose in terms of both steerage and mainsail trim and do very little to stop the boat from going out of control. The difference being, at the point

at which it is just recoverable, do so and start the whole process again.

In effect you have to perpetuate a state where the boat is out of control and doing its own thing for 80% of the time (sailing with the brakes off), you then spend the other 20% putting the cart back on the wheels so to speak. It is a dangerous technique which takes a lot of time to master. However if you can achieve the balance, when you have your back to the wall at the windward mark it's a real saviour! Even when leading a race, if under pressure I would deploy this technique to eliminate the psychological boost a competitor would have by momentarily getting ahead of you.

GUST AWARENESS

Gusts are critical elements, which can determine your heavy weather performance. This being the case, they must be constantly monitored both up and downwind. Without being patronising, very simply they are recognisable by a darker patch of water, areas of more frequent white horses or spray blowing off the water dependent on the wind strength! They represent an area of increased relative wind velocity and often just as importantly, a change in wind direction. Upwind they must be looked out for and anticipated so you can prepare your directional tactics for the leg and also in the short term so you are prepared to trim the mainsheet rapidly upon their arrival. This prevents the boat heeling, which can lead to the boat going into irons or at a minimum losing ground to leeward, neither of which are desirable.

Downwind, gusts are of equal tactical importance. The main objective is to use the extra speed and manouverability the gust gives you for as long as possible whilst still making good ground toward the next mark. On a reach this translates simply as heading up in the lulls seeking out gusts, and when finding one, bearing away. In doing this, instead of sailing straight out of the gust you sail lower and stay in it for longer than the boats around you steering a more direct course.

In the strongest gusts keep bearing off down the waves, deviating up to 25 degrees from your intended course. In this action you will speed up and unload the rig, thus reducing the chance of capsize. The enemy is never speed, but load build up in the rig.

Remember: If on a very breezy reach, your rig is displaying more pulling power than Cindy Crawford at a rugby club bash this is very bad! Bear away and capitalise on what it has to offer, when the gust has all but passed, head back up to your intended course or slightly

above as this will power the rig back up and maintain the speed you developed in the gust.

Thinking of the gybe mark to validate this theory, in contrast to popular belief it is sensible to time your gybe to coincide with a gust. The reason being, is that when the boat has already accelerated and is moving at it's fastest, the pressure in the sail is at it's least.

When comfortable with your boat handling on the run it is simply a case of finding a track downwind, which allows you to sail in the most, and largest, gusts for as long as possible. As on a reach this can only be done by good observation and general awareness of what is happening on the race track, with this knowledge it is then possible to quickly respond to the location of any such areas of higher wind velocity. IN

CONCLUSION

If nothing else, I hope this quick article may have sparked a couple of the thought process that might just inspire you to try these and other new things, develop them and possibly help us all raise the level of our sailing.

FINALLY, ENJOY YOUR SAILING!!



Windy Streaker Sailing *By Alan Gillard*

As any of you who have tried it will know, windy weather Streaker sailing can be a difficult, but exciting experience that needs some practice and preparation to enable you to enjoy it to the full. To start with the boat isn't very well balanced on the helm. Upwind, despite it's obvious natural love of heading into wind, the boat becomes difficult to tack and maintaining the optimum heading needs excessive rudder movement if you are to keep on top of things. Downwind, just as you're thinking "whoopie here's that really fast

reach I've been waiting for", you set off to find that the boat keeps trying to broach out of control, with the rudder cavitating wildly just when you need it most.

After many hair raising moments myself, besides plenty of practice, I've found the best way to overcome these problems is actually rake the rudder forward by up to 10 degrees. I also believe

that the rudder should be towards the minimum width, i.e. 200mm wide. Raking the daggerboard aft in the boardcase also helps, but the rest is a matter of technique and speed of reaction to the wind and waves as they try and knock you off course.

Given you've survived the reach, there is every possibility this will be followed, or punctuated by a Gybe!!!! Which as everyone knows can be one of the hairiest manouvers in a stiff breeze no matter what class of boat you sail. Before I pass comment on this particular problem, let me say I don't profess to be an expert on windy weather gybes, but I do believe that good preparation before you go for the gybe can help improve your chances of avoiding testing the coldness of the water.

What do I mean by preparation, well like every other part of your race, some degree of forward planning is essential, so lets start a few lengths away from the point we want to gybe and take each element as it arises:

1. The daggerboard should be pushed fully down, but angled aft, for stability - this also gives you something to stand on if you get it wrong, but lets not be defeatist just yet.
2. The kicker should be freed off a touch to let the boom rise up - this lets the leach of the sail twist off to leeward and helps dissipate unwanted power as you complete the gybe. Plus the out board end of the boom rises a few inches and lessens the risk of it hitting the water, which in turn could seriously add to any momentary loss of control.
3. As you approach the gybe, make sure you keep the power on and the boat planing as fast as you can and try to pick your spot - look behind for any big gusts that will hit you when you're at your most vulnerable and look around you for some flat water, especially

important if you sailing in a confused sea.

4. Bear away positively, but whatever you do don't throw the boat at the gybe, instead you should turn progressively away from the breeze.

5. Just as the wind is moving directly behind the boat, try and sheet in some mainsheet and then as you see the top third of the leach begin to twitch, pull the sail over as early as you can - the later you leave it the harder it swings across and more chance there is you'll go for that swim you've been trying so hard to avoid.

You should find that not only does sheeting in the main a touch mean you can control the sail as it slams over onto the new gybe, but it also means the wind can get around the back edge of the leach a fraction earlier and this will actually help you get the boom over earlier that would otherwise be the case.

6. The very second the sail starts to come over, centre the helm, in fact you can almost reverse the helm as if you are canceling the gybe. The reason for this is to keep the boat stern into the wind until you've got complete control of the situation, then you can head up and wind the power back on again and worry about picking your way through the boats that didn't make it.

Of course as the boom comes across you must also move your weight smartly from one side to the other, to counteract the force of the main sail changing side. One other thing, keep as far aft in the cockpit as you can to stop the bow from digging in. Above all else don't just sit there and wait for the boom to swing across on it's own, because by then it's too late and both the momentum of the sail crashing across and the force of the wind hitting you beam on will spell disaster and it will be time to look for the soap and a towel before you can blink.



Organising An Open Meeting

"An Idiots Guide"

By Jenny Clark

Being asked to organise an open meeting for your club is an honour,

but it can also be hard work. The aim of this article is to put forward the benefit of experience and to give tips and ideas so that when you are asked to organise an event, you at least have some idea of what to expect, and how you can make it easier work. There are several things which generally help to make an open meeting a success.

These are;

A good attendance from your fellow club members.

A large crowd of visitors representing the clubs in the surrounding area.

A club atmosphere which makes visitors welcome.

A steady force 3-4 in a direction which permits perfect first beats and scorching reaches. An excellent OOD who is able to set super courses, run races perfectly and has excellent knowledge of the racing rules.

Copious quantities of cheap food and beer.

Whilst some of these can't be guaranteed there are a number of them which can, but the key to success is to **START PLANNING EARLY!** My number one tip is "make sure everyone knows the date well in advance". Why not do a mailshot to club members three months before - get the date in their diary and encourage them to come along (especially those who've never taken part in an Open before). Novice sailors often feel that they simply couldn't cope, although you may be well aware that they are no worse than the travelling fleet.

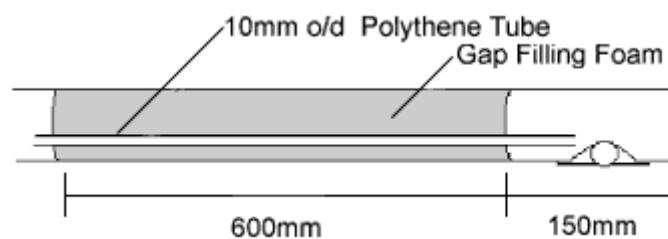
There is an unwritten rule amongst sailors that if you support other club's open meetings they will support yours. Do you or anyone else travel to other Open Meetings? If so, spread the word about your club event at the next few Open Meetings, if not, why not - after all why should anyone come to your club if you don't go to theirs? If you're a non travelling member of a club why not look at the open meeting programme at the beginning of the year and pick just one meeting to try and attend - you might just get the travelling bug!



Anti-Turtle Mod' *By Malcolm Rook*

Two years ago I changed boats from a Laser to the Streaker (too

old, too light, too short and clapped out knees). There was only one problem - when I capsized the boat always turned turtle. The final straw came when I got caught in a very heavy squall, capsized and got blown off my upturned Streaker. Something had to be done. I considered Peter Crook's granny lines but these did not overcome the cause of the problem - I just wasn't fast enough to right the boat before it turned turtle. After considerable thought I realised that the cause of the problem was that water flooded into the top of the mast at such a rate that it did not provide any buoyancy. Tying a float to the top of the mast was considered but was seen as just too wimpish. The final solution I developed was as shown below.



The main halyard is threaded through the polythene tube and tensioned to keep the tube straight and in the correct position while the foam is injected. It is necessary to extend the nozzle on the container of foam to start injection some 750mm down the mast. The foam is injected stopping approximately 300mm from the top of the mast. Natural expansion will then fill the mast up to approximately 150mm from the top. Don't worry if it expands too much. Just dig out the surplus and all is well. Be mean when injecting the foam as excess is messy and will collapse the sealed cells. A warm humid day is best for a fast cure.

Since incorporating the foam I have capsized on several occasions and in every instance have had time to scramble up onto the gunwale while the mast lays flat on the water. This even with a good sea swell running. I have found it to make righting a Streaker as easy as the Laser. The system has now been tried on a number of other boats at Filey and is to be recommended for the less agile among us. Anyone with any questions can contact me by e-mail: maiulto:malcolm@bytemaster.co.uk

Alternatively, 55x 38mm Ping-Pong balls fit very nicely inside a Streaker mast between the rivets attaching the hounds and the top of the mast. They are lightweight are easily installed and provide positive buoyancy. The halyard simply rolls around the balls. The local sports shop should be able to supply them.

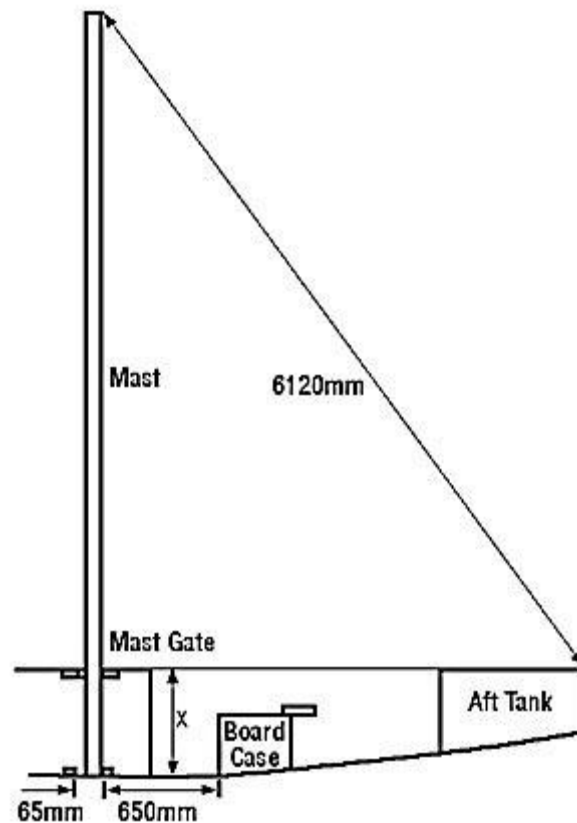


Setting Up Your Streaker Rig

By Alan Gillard

Set the aft Mast heel stop to a position of 650mm from the front edge of the board case as a starting point. I measure this along the spine which means you have to take 2 measurements one either side of the bulkhead, not forgetting to allow for the thickness of the bulkhead. You need a good length of screw through the aft heel stop because when the mast bends this stop takes all the force. Position the front heel stop 65mm forward of this.

Place the mast in the boat. Fix the mast so that the aft edge is hard against the aft heel stop and the back of the mast gate. Connect the shrouds to the shroud adjusters with what I would call hand tension. That is as tight as is possible without requiring outside help. Connect the forestay again to a shroud adjuster (they are more reliable than rope) at the bow with the same hand tension. The mast should still be tight against the back of the mast gate and the heel hard against the back heel stop.



Next measure the mast rake. Pull the tape up on the main halyard. The rake I look for is 6120mm (20'1") measured from peak of mast to top aft corner of transom and aft deck. Now it may be you will not achieve this mast rake. The reason for this is because the deck height at mast gate level (Dimension 'X') is different from boat to boat.

To achieve this mast rake adjust the length of the aft heel stop. Lengthening this heel stop slightly will rake the mast more and vice versa by shortening the heel stop. It is better to adjust the length than to keep re-drilling the hole(s) for the screw(s) in the stop.

It takes time to get the rake right but the above process is repeated every time the stop is adjusted. Finally tape up the shroud pins and rings and forget about it.



Mind Over Matter

By Sailgurus

Way back in the iron curtain days, the mystic geeks of Eastern Europe ran some experiments with reference to the way athletes train and the results they obtain. They got several groups of athletes of various disciplines, and put one half of the athletes on the then conventional hard slog winter training schedule, the other half being put on a regime of meditation, contemplation, visualisation and some gym training. When the snows cleared, it was noted that the athletes on the new regime compared favourably with those on the old, but were fresher and hungrier than their comrade colleagues. Interesting. Let's look at a slightly different way of applying these lessons to sailing.

Lady Luck - It is impossible to discuss mental strength without touching on the subject of luck. Luck is usually the domain of mentally strong people. It may be defined in various ways, but my preferred definition, which covers most competitive situations, is that "Luck is the point at which chance meets effort". A statement initially attributed to Ben Hogan, golfing legend, and used in a particularly appropriate manner by our very own Shirley Robertson after Sydney is "The harder I work, the luckier I seem to get" - an enlightened practical view of the previous definition. Luck plays a huge part in most competitive and complex fields, and it is constructive to think it may be influenced to come in your direction by better planned effort.

Mental Strength in Sailing - This is a quality which is so subjective that it is well nigh impossible to state "mental strength is...." However, we can explore some advantages of mental strength, which is what this article sets out to do. It is a common conception that mental strength in sailing makes a sailor into a winner. To an extent, this is true. It is certainly a brick in the foundations of a winner, but it serves a far greater purpose than merely enabling an athlete to do extraordinary things at the right moment. Much more fundamental than making an athlete a winner, it stops them being a loser! Let me explain: Two athletes have the same talent and therefore the same potential. One athlete is erratic, one remarkably consistent. The latter will always shade the former, primarily because the consistent one knows they are entitled to "be there". Sailing is a sport of infinite variables, and the reason most of us fail to fulfil our potential isn't that we can't do "it" [whatever "it" may be] well enough, but simply that we don't do it well enough often enough. So let's look at psychological strengths as being tools to stop us doing things badly rather than as mystical boosts to our talents. These are known as mental anchors, and give competitors a

mental "performance platform", below which they find it hard to slip.

Constructing Mental Platforms - Training enables us to become proficient in a variety of skills which, when combined, are the recipe to make a successful racer. It is therefore fact that we all need to train to polish our skills to optimise talent. Because racing is rarely a matter of there being only one way to get round a race track, it is difficult to use visualisation to improve the sailor's performance in the way a sprinter does whilst doing their pre-start focus gazing down their lane, seeing the stride pattern, perhaps imagining footprints in their lane that they will tread in. It is possible, however, to visualise a tack or gybe, or the sequence of sail trimming, and many other individual component skills from pre-start routines through to the gicing sequence. The benefit of this is that individual actions may be memorised as a logical sequence. In effect it is a process to gain experience whilst not in a sailing environment. If you've thought it through accurately, your mind will be fooled into thinking you've been there and done it. The power of mental rehearsal is enormous. Interested?

Courtesy of Sailgurus

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