

NOTES ON SAILING FAST ON SB3.

15.JULY.2009

- Main sail trim follows general rules in light to medium winds:

Maintain twist by minimum sheet tension, maintain boom in the middle of the boat by setting traveller high. As wind picks up, trim sheet and drop traveller. Boom should always be in the middle.

- Main sail trim for strong winds (i.e. when overpowered). There seems to be two approaches that work (we have generally used the first one):

(1) Have traveller middle to high. Vang medium to high. Backstay full on. Trim mainsheet maximally. When gusts come and you are overpowered, ease mainsheet. When breeze drops, and you feel overtrimmed ease backstay.

(2) Have traveller in the middle. Vang and backstay full on. Mainsheet on. When gusts come and you are overpowered, ease traveller. When you feel overtrimmed, ease backstay.

- Downwind technique:

In light air (below 20) trying to make use of gennaker to surf does not seem to work. It is better to try to go as low as possible, using the gennaker more or less like a spi. Crew should sit as forward as possible, with bowman (and the fourth person if present) sitting on the leeward. Trimmer and driver should be in constant communication so that driver can sail low or high depending on pressure in the gennaker.

In stronger wind (+20), when surfing works, use gennaker for full speed but still try to surf towards leeward. To achieve this, main sail trim seems crucial. When you pick up speed, and start surfing, go low and trim mainsail in all the way (as apparent wind shifts forward). Another important aspect in big breeze is to keep the boat flat. If the boat heels too much, it won't surf. When this happens, ease gennaker, go low and try to slowly go up again (to build up speed). Also, it is important to move crew weight backwards as the boat heels or when it picks up speed. The opposite applies when the boat slows down; move forward to avoid the stern of the boat to be buried in water. Pumping, when done right seems very helpful too...

- Upwind technique:

Weight always forward, even in big breeze. Heeling the boat helps to drive through big waves, especially in light winds. Thus, crew should be dynamic in placing the weight correctly. Playing the jib sheet is also very useful for this. In light to medium winds and choppy conditions, jib trimmer and driver should be in constant communication. In wavy conditions, active driving really helps.

- Tack/Gybe:

Usual rules apply.

Gybing in big winds should be done quickly and when boat is fast. After the gybe crew weight should be backwards and driver should be ready to bear away (to avoid broaching). Light wind gybe should be as soft and slow as possible. Boat heeling is crucial and should be achieved by soft weight placement by the crew. During gybing bowman should help gennaker trimmer to take it over by pulling on the sheet at shroud level. The mainsail batten would usually not flip by itself. This should be managed by the driver and not by bowman.

Tacking as usual. In light winds, roll-tacks are the norm. The first to cross should be mainsail trimmer and he/she should immediately bring traveller up. Next goes driver. The others cross only if needed. Jib trim is crucial on the exit from tacks. Never overtrim it.

- Sets:

When putting up the gennaker, it is useful if it is stretched while going up. Trimmer should pull sheet as the gennaker goes up. This might make it more difficult for the tack to be pulled in, but it is still better to keep the sheet trimmed. Once the gennaker is up, trimmer can ease so that the tack can be pulled in. In big breeze, crew weight should be backwards as soon as gennaker is up.

- Rule of thumb for mast setting:

Mast should be straight, leeward shrouds should be flapping (i.e. slightly loose) when sailing upwind.

- Mast shroud tensions for light wind (i.e. base setting):

29 on low shrouds, 31 on high shrouds. Add on this as wind picks up.