

Stalling is a Killer, Greg Wells' Flying Fifteen Datchet Training Weekend, 31 Oct - 1 Nov 2009

TMCSITW - Sailing is "The Most Challenging Sport in the World"

Jim Saltonstall

1. Boat Preparation

Attention to Detail
Use the Tuning Guides
Weight
Controls
Greg now regards adjustable jib cars as a must- have.
In our light airs on the first day, fuller sails will stall too easily.

Four key controls for Greg

Kicker
Mast Ram
Rig Tension
Jib Cars – windy / waves

Sails have changed

Much deeper shapes, more power means more risk of stalling
We all go fast - the best don't go slow!
New rig will be less crew weight sensitive

2. Race Preparation

Weather – start looking at 4-5 days before the race
Visualisation
Be early
Tuning Run with a benchmark boat
Sail the Beat – feel the course
Look around
Get a feel

3. Boat Handling

Starting
Acceleration – FF's don't accelerate
Don't roll tack
Avoid slowing down rather than being super fast
Tacking
Tack like a keelboat
Use little rudder
Slow crew movement
Gybing - Dinghy like
Heel to windward

Then shouldn't fight the boat through the gybe

Acceleration

Basic rule is to keep the boat moving
Roll tacking in the very light but might work, generally it doesn't pay
Tack smoothly with minimal helm input
In heavy breezes, let jib off and tack on main pressure
Just don't let the boat slow down
Tack like a keel boat, not much rudder and tack slow
Gybe like a dinghy. Windward heel, and boom over.

Mark Rounding

Wide out
Narrow in
Upwind (Paul Brotherton)
Downwind (Steve Goacher) go with wave like a windsurfer
Body Movement
Transom swing is DRAG!
Wide Curves are best
Avoid spin turns if you can.

Upwind

Few helm inputs

Downwind

Avoid the go slow
Lots of fore and aft body moves
If wind pressure in the kite dies, head up a little early to keep way on.
In very breezy conditions, weight well back.
Conversely, weight right forward in the light conditions

4. Rig Settings

Changing Gears – stop slowing
Tuning Guides – use them
Stalling is a Killer
Sail Trim – Main, Jib, Spinnaker (curl, curl, curl)

Changing Gears

If crew moves inboard, then don't forget to change gear, Mast Ram forward, slacken. Keep boat absolutely flat
If you need height after a start, try ramming on the mast, flattening the main and point up. Trade speed for height. Watch for a stall though.
Outhaul – leave it on !!

Heel

Greg likes a little bit of heel, and never sails dead flat. Likes a small amount of running - windward heel downwind, which is especially helpful if you want to go low or dead downwind. This can help down a wave (like Steve Goacher)

In light stuff

Greg eases kicker an inch or so around
Light winds have light rig tension
Greg sets at rig tension at 350lbs max. and never goes tighter

5. Feedback on Day One On-The-Water Exercises.

On a short line, even if there is a pin bias, always go to the committee boat end. Avoid leeward end of a short line.

Tacking - Use less rudder

Rig settings needed to be softer

More pre-bend

Routines going into manoeuvres needed more attention

Dropping Spinnaker sooner before Leeward Mark Rounding

Gybe preparation started too late

Gybe routines need generic attention.

6. Day Two - Greg Wells – Sunday Q&A

Running in light airs

Crew needs to report pressure changes in the sheets,

Easing helm heads up,

Strengthening can go deeper.

Talked about when kite pressure drops, harden up a bit – 90% of the time

Close reaching, when overpowered -

Cunningham and outhaul on,

Kicker off,

Crew get right back

Get uptide (Not at Datchet!) in case the wind drops

In the light, take the lee bow tide first

Reaching when overpowered

Aim to de-power the main – to reduce the drag

Dump kicker by at least an arm length

Cunningham on hard to blade the sail.

A high boom won't close the spinnaker leech down by bearing down on the sheet.

Shift your weight astern to keep boat planning and get the pole up to lift the bows.

7. Tactics

Start at the favored end

Nail first shift

Sail Inside the beat (Use the Compass)

Don't hit laylines early.

Tack onto layline 10-20 lengths before the mark.

Don't panic – have a strategy

Sail the fleet

Good position and defending then sit on the fleet

Be at Arrowhead as you sail away from the rhumbline, and

Sit on the fleet as you come back to the rhumbline.

Use Shorelines

Looking for the right angle shift

Go close to a lee shore for wind

Sail Inside the beat - aim to

“Start at the right end, in clear air and nail the first beat”

Greg's rules:

Start at the right end – use compass!

Sail “inside the beat” – start with the long tack, shorter later

Don't hit the laylines early

Don't panic

Sail the longest legs first

Use the shorelines

Keep up tide

Use your compass to sail on the favoured tack as much as you can to the mark - Don't hit laylines early

Avoid if Possible

Getting Trapped after start

Taking Risks

Immediate tacks at the Start

Immediate Tacks after Leeward mark

Gybe sets – get ready then gybe, don't rush
Boatspeed confidence is key

8. Microcompass

Three functions – compass, tactics and timer.

Tacking Angle **Use 70 degrees at Datchet. 80 on the sea**

Ensure the CALibrate function is at 5 degrees - dampens swings

Use with Compucourse – loose in the bag pockets.

9. Racemaster

Two displays

Top – compass

Bottom has 3 modes: TMR, Line, WND

The hard data that it works off are:

MWD

Tack Angle

Everything comes from there.

Once on water – set “tack angle” and “mean wind direction”

Tack angle is about 70 on a lake/reservoir, and 80 at sea.

Tack Angle

Measure TAK angle to get a 'feel' / sense check of conditions
Sail on port tack first in TAK mode adjusted with B1- first button
Depress B2 for 'snakes' for 2 mins on each tack
Then Starboard tack on the snakes for 2 mins to set Tack Angle
Repeat three times for accurate settings.

Then record the first beat course bearing for MWD

Change the **damping to slow**

Be in line mode

Press and hold B2 (enter setup)

B4 to skip

Select SLO

Press Dot button

Press and hold dot button

Then do **line bias.** – also gives you perpendicular.

Downwind

Get – on a run – keep bar display below the line.

As upwind – try and do long gybe on the run

If the angle shows more than 20-25 degrees

Get a gybe in 10-15 degs gives good speed,

Light winds - sometimes go dead downwind

Can be good (Heavy) but try hard to stay on plane.

Use hotter angles in the light airs

Go dead downwind in the heavier airs, but
Get it planing if you can.

Spinnaker Hoist

2 person job!

Pole on early

Sneak a bit of guy on

Kicker off a shade in light, more in heavy

Tends not to hoist straight away at top mark

Prefers to sail a bit high then hoist.

Helm takes sheet.

Check out the YouTube “470 Olympics” footage for good gybe sets.

Run

You can do a lot of the run without a pole!

Store the pole early

Makes gybe drop (float drop) easier

“Float Drops are the way forward”

Greg doesn't like to rush his hoists.....



