

DeBrief: Transitional Breeze| Controls & Kite Control

January 21-22, 2018 in Biscayne Bay - coaches Phil & Nic Muller

Conditions: East wind, relatively steady in direction. Due to cloud cover we saw lulls of 5. Top wind speed today was 12 knots.

TECHNIQUES FOR TRANSITION

Sailing through this transitional breeze being active with adjusting controls is critical. Skippers need to be able to adjust the vang easily since it is light air. If crews have to bend and come on the boat the righting moment softens on the mast, this loading and unloading of the mast creates instability, which is slow.

If skippers are too weak to pull vang on, redo your vang systems to make it easier.

Playing Vang in pressure allows the crew to keep the main pinned and the boat flat (this allows the boat to climb). When you're able to build height in a puff and then transition to a lower mode while keeping the boat flat, it's almost as if the boats rolling downhill all the time. This is your goal!

BACK TO FRONT COMMUNICATION

To maximize time and action in puffs, we first need to establish good communication between the skipper and crew. In a straight line skippers need to tell crew where flat heel and max heel are. Set an intention with each other to just talk about heel for 2 minutes and sail. This will calibrate the crew's balance.

LOOK AROUND

Crews need to work in the routine to 1) check tell tales on the main to make sure your twist/return maximize flow; 2) look at the gap in main sheet to check your range <6" in steady breeze; 3) sight your fore-aft position to check the waterline. [If displacing, the knuckle should be deep in the water. If planing, get knuckle flying]

FRONT TO BACK COMMUNICATION

Crews must report pressure in the main to the skipper. With this knowledge, skipper's know when to play the vang, when to sit on the rail to hike or when to scoot into the boat.

In developing breeze, this type of breeze the sea state is usually choppy. Skippers need to tell crews when to step back because of waves or when to step forward.

DOWNWIND – LET THE CREW BE A STAR

We did a lot of gybing practice today. Skippers must let the crews shine. Here's how to help your crew sail like a rock star. When the skipper calls gybe, the crew needs to move over a stable platform. **Skipper's are in charge of the rate of turn and exit angle as well as the stability and heel of the boat.**

Quick note on sets — if in your downturn your jib is luffing while the crew sets, your angle is too low. Crews—— timing of the spinnaker check or kite float is decided based on wind speed.

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Crews: Simple kite handling requires you ladder up on old sheet to check kite or to hold clue in same spot as the boat is pivoted around the spinnaker. Once it's time to switch the kite, crews **MUST** get at least 3 hand grabs on the sheet before hitting the wire.

REMEMBER! Notes on Kite trim: Your goal isn't to trim the spinnaker in. Your goal is to trim the kite so you can **immediately ease it to open the slot** between the kite and the main.

Another quick note on heel————— skippers need to wait for the crews to step up before you set the boat on its new path. Communication helps here!! Crews can say go, stepping up, take, now, to let the skipper know they r ready to hit the wire with the kite in right spot.