

ODP DeBrief – November 2018

It's clear to me that we need higher standards, better methods, and more discipline.

Yesterday I sat in a conference room with two Olympic medalists, three US Sailing Team coaches, and staff and told them that the youth sailors in the country, currently have an extremely high skillset but fail on execution.

You know what to do and you know how to do it. For example: you know when to employ a lee bow and lead back, you know how to jump downwind, you know how to get a line sight on the start. But, you don't always make the best decision or fulfill the demands of the task in real time. Execution is where we fail.

Coach Fred Strammer kept coming back to the pie chart of preparation to push us all to improve our process for race prep. Here are two examples of how time is spent in preparation for the race. In the



"Pre-Start Time Management- 58 Minutes," you can see that time is wasted on breakdowns (2 minutes), waiting for the team (7 minutes). While more time is given to talking with coach (8 minutes) than to discussing a racing plan (2 minutes).

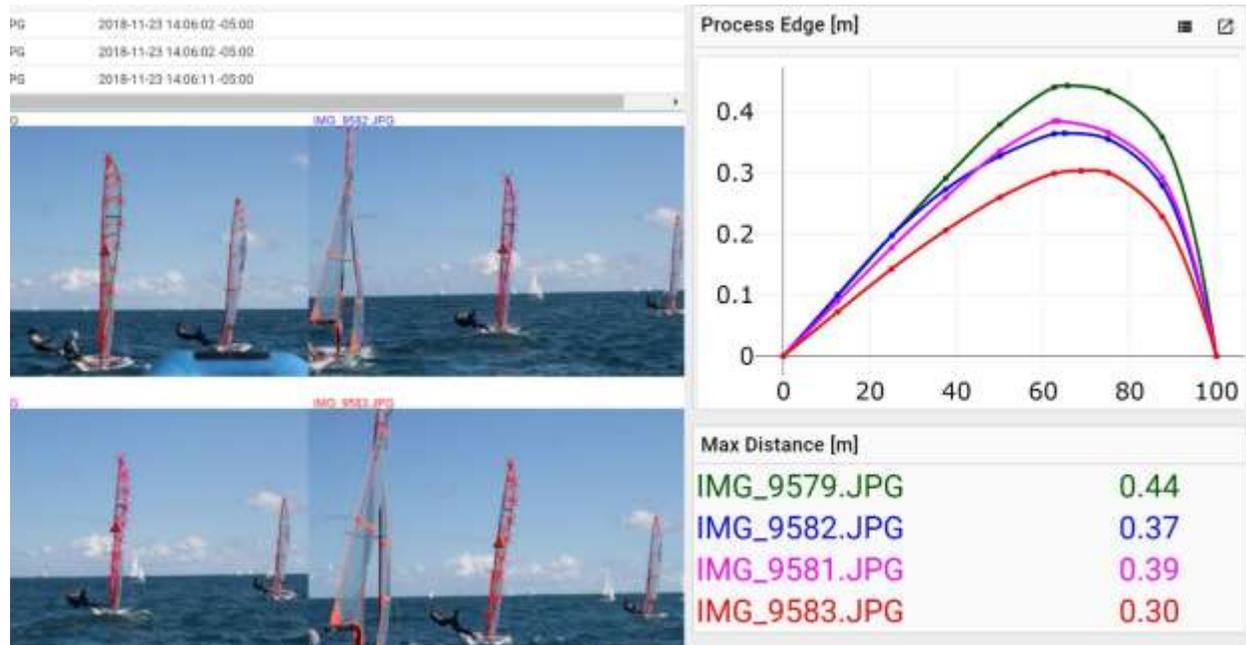
When compared to "Pre-Start Time Management - 45 minutes" you will notice that no time is wasted on breakdowns or waiting, while more time is invested in Starting Preparation (10

minutes) and allows for three occasions to have 2-minute race plan discussions in the boat. The point was made that a \$10 tow line would reduce the risk of spinnaker rigging issues and in the short term immediately address some of the breakdown and waiting issues that plagued us this past weekend.

It's clear that while this topic was discussed several times on shore in briefings, the coaching staff should have done a better job of organizing the boats and facilitating this ideal scenario for Pre-Start Time Prep with the athletes. Thus, my goal is to agree upon a set schedule and action plan with you during our next training session and work on an outline that we will refine until it's bulletproof for the upcoming regatta season ahead. We will consistently come back to this process until it is instinctive within our methodology.



Leech tension and twist ratio was, yet again, a consistent conversation over the camp. Fuzz's leech analysis program illustrates the exponential changes that occur to the leech while the mainsail is trimmed and eased while under sail. The high aspect ratio sail on the 29er has a compounding effect with regards to mainsheet position and twist. This screen shot of the leech outline analysis program shows that the change of two inches of mainsail trim is 4 inches of leech deflection (opening) at the top of the sail.



Focus on the red, pink, and blue arcs in the x/y chart: the red shows the mainsail block to block and trimmed fully with proper vang setting. While the blue and pink arcs represent the shape of the main when eased two inches. This means the leech changes two times further at the top than the bottom; for example: a boat sailing with improper vang might have a mainsheet range of 8-12 inches, meaning the change in twist could be as much as 16 to 24 inches [One in a half to two feet of twist off the top]. I would call this extreme, and it is your job to be aware of the impact of your sail trim and how it impacts the performance of your boat.

I would assume that the impact of 4 inches of leech twist at the top is the equivalent of 0.5 degree of pointing efficiency. Which, if measured over a 100 meters would result in a x

Luther made an interesting point on Sunday afternoon with regards to his suggestion that the boats need to be sailed flatter in the light air conditions we saw. This is a departure from the fleet mentality that light air requires slight leeward heel to provide artificial helm to the rudder and help guide the boat higher upwind.

Luther's point is that mainsail position while heeled impacts the leech in a similar way that we discussed above. If the boat is heeled, the upper leech does not stand up but twists off (in his mind too much to become efficient for pointing).

"Delicate"

was Luther's word for Sunday. I think his Zen Buddhist wisdom

should not be overlooked. Like I mentioned before **you have all the skills**, what you need to do is improve execution. So, while Luther's debrief may have come off as obvious and repetitive to you the importance of his message is in its simplicity. There are 5 zillion things to focus on and think about while racing, especially in light air when every beat of your heart could shake the wind out of your sails.

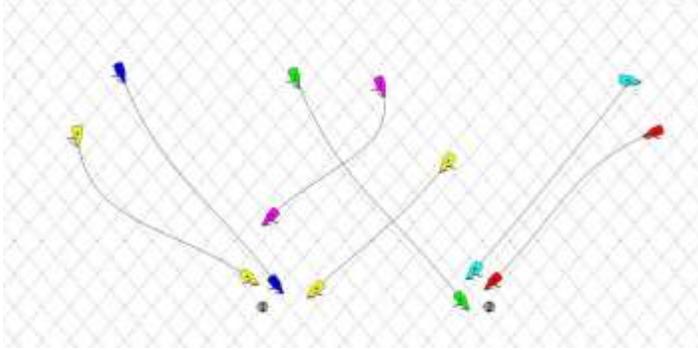
The wisdom here is that the only way to execute your job is to identify what the main priorities are and keep fulfilling them. So, "sail delicately" informs how you steer, where you sit, how slow you move, how steadily you click the main into position, how you handle your gybes, etc. This statement is so general it literally applies to everything, even your race strategy. A "delicate" upwind might mean sailing more conservative and staying close to axis, rather than sending it to an edge.

One key takeaway for me from the weekend is that we don't have a very good playbook for the gate and exit of the final upwind. Not only that, we definitely need to improve our steps out of the gate especially when it comes to vanging and getting the set up we need. I consistently observe boats under-vang'd out of the gate (when the breeze was above 11 knots or more) and few adjust to proper leech position. Back to the gate...

We need to begin the discussion of our gate exit playbook development in the final gybe to the mark. The final gybe sets you up for the exit. Look at the picture below and we can guess the outcome of the



blue kite boat whose gybe is too high and outside to make a right hand turn, course left rounding, and thus will need to gybe back to make their course right/left turn rounding. My assumption is that the blue kite, if given the option in a perfect world might want to complete their final gybe and get in and around the gate without another gybe. Judging from the angles of both white kite boats, blue's gybe is in a terrible spot to enter the gate with speed or with inside position on anyone. See the diagram below for all the inside and outside gate



positions. So back to blue, we can assume that they will need to gybe again and round left hand turn at the gate, which, yet again, puts them in the outside lane for the rounding.

This outlines how important the final gybe to the gate is and how it impacts your exit plan to leave the marks. The point is, we are going to spend some more time

developing our playbooks into and out of the gate so we're prepared for international fleets. The small domestic fleet we have here does not penalize these poor decisions with the severity that an international fleet will. If you make a bad gybe, and then another gybe at the gate on the outside, you will lose 10-15 boats in a heartbeat in Europe, whereas you lose 1-2 boats here. We will continue to talk about this.



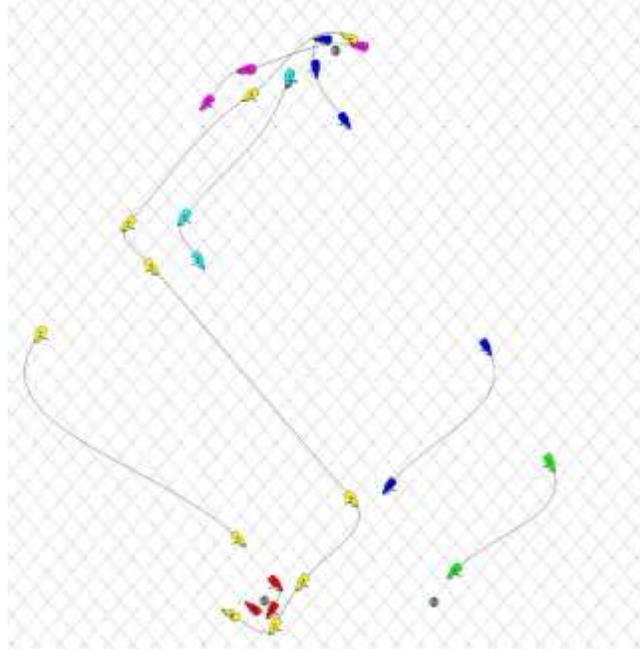
2NINER Squad: we're going to have a meeting to debrief the ODP Clinic and use it as an opportunity to prepare for racing the domestic competition in the future and learn to refine our processes and methods to be bulletproof.

I want you to be empowered with the best starting preparation routine for any condition, any timeframe, any venue in the world.

[Click here for the ODP Results Analysis from the weekend's racing.](#)

Boats who need to work on decision making and plays downwind, should read through the following: When we talk about down winds, I like to breakdown all the opportunities to pass boats. There are 9 ways to pass boats downwind in the 29er. And I'll list the scenarios from the top mark to the gate:

- 1 – Straight Set or Gybe set
- 2- High set and roll
- 3- Low set, soak, and jump
- 4- Early gybe and take header
- 5- Extend to 110%
- 6- Nail Layline
- 7- Starboard Advantage
- 8- Favored Mark Rounding
- 9- Inside Lane at the Mark



Much of our downwind racing was done when a persistent right shift came down the track. As a team, we develop plays such as “Rounding in righty, so gybe set.” I like to identify before the race the direction of the high percentage shift and then decide what to do; for example: “If rounding in pressure, than gybe at 20% or less.”