

TECHNICAL TIPS

3 – The Start

“Try to have a routine that your team knows inside out for pre start work. Think about all the data that you will need to process in order to make the decision on where you will start on the line. Every team will have their own personal preferences in which order they do them, but all should include at least the following:

- Bearing of the line.
- Wind direction. Checking regularly to monitor line bias and general overview of what the wind is doing.
- Work out bias. 90 degrees onto line bearing gives you a square line. Work out the bias by what the actual wind bearing is. If it is less, it's port and vice versa.
- Line transit (if possible) preferably through the pin end as this is easier to see. Or a back transit through the committee boat. This is crucial if you want to start in the middle of the line and want to avoid the mid line sag.
- Windward mark bearing.
- Leeward mark bearing from Windward mark. Use a system that your team is happy with and get in to a routine whereby you use it on every start. In time it will become second nature and should improve your pre race strategy”.

Jamie Lea

4 – The Leeward Mark

“When approaching the leeward mark with a boat in front of you, try not to round the mark directly astern of her. By doing so you will limit your choice of attacking or escaping the cover. If you round nose to tail, you will be experiencing the dirty air being exhausted from the sails in front. Speed will be seriously affected and you will lose the ability to climb off her and attack. To gain the speed needed, you will be forced to ease sheets and drop to leeward slightly. By doing this you will more than likely have lost the opportunity to tack off and escape the cover because boats behind will now have rounded and could be holding their height, blocking your escape route.

You are left with only one option – to continue to sail a lower angle to break into clear air. Sailing further distance and in dirty air is not a good idea.

In the build up to the rounding, try to anticipate if you are going to round too close to the boat in front and act in order to prevent this from happening. Possibly drop the spinnaker slightly earlier to drop back off her. This also gives you more time to tidy the cockpit and ensure you are completely ready and set up for the next beat.

Just prior to rounding, put some distance between the two of you by sailing lower. This will enable you to execute the perfect rounding of wide in, close out. With distance to play with, you can now concentrate on trying to climb off her.

If this is not possible, you should be able to escape by tacking off because you have better speed around the mark and have held height stopping boats behind getting inside you.”

Jamie Lea

2004 EAST COAST CHAMPIONSHIP

THE EAST COAST CHAMPIONSHIP will take place over the second May bank holiday weekend of May 29th – 31st 2004 and will be hosted by the Medway Dragon Fleet. This is a new venue for the East Coasts and we are working hard to make sure that we can give you a great weekend.

Unknown to many Dragon sailors, the Medway has a large sailing area in the main body of the river just before Sheerness port and the Thames Estuary. This gives us a wide expanse of water and the advantage of two parts of the river (Saltpan and Kethole Reaches) that are almost at a right angle to each other allowing us to set full windward/leewards. It is usually relatively flat water but a sea can develop.

The Medway fleet itself now has 22 boats and has developed considerably over the past few years. On the social side – at least as important as the racing – there will be a welcome drink on the Friday night, a casual hog-roast-

type event on the Saturday night and a formal dinner on the Sunday night at the Medway Yacht Club. Anyone who decides to come earlier or stay longer and/or join in our club racing on a Saturday will be very welcome.

If you are planning to bring along non-sailors, there are also many things to do nearby varying from the Kentish history such as Upnor and Rochester Castles and the Dickens past of Rochester to the shopping at Bluewater and amusements for children; not to mention the Historic Naval Dockyard at Chatham. There should also be opportunity for spectators on support boats.

So how do you get there? Actually, it's surprisingly easy, the Medway YC is situated about 20 minutes down the A2 from the M25 and most of the journey is on dual carriageway.

For launching and recovery, we have our own crane but, for the event, launching and recovery on the weekend will be at the new neighbouring Chatham Marina. MDL, the operators of the marina, are also sponsoring the event.

Full details of the event including logistics and accommodation will be posted on our dedicated web-page at www.medwayyachtclub.com/dragons/eastcoast.htm so please look for more details there.

Telephone enquiries to Philip Clarabut (07770 690758) and Hilary Gallo (01763 288 181)

We look forward to welcoming you to the Medway in May.

www.medwayyachtclub.com/dragons/eastcoast.htm

Dragons racing on the large Medway sailing area

