

The Start

Jamie Lea · BDA Magazine 2004 Annual, p. 28

Summary. A short checklist for a team's pre-start routine. It lists the data to gather before choosing where to start: line bearing, regular wind-direction checks, line bias (a wind bearing 90 degrees to the line means a square line; less than that favours port, and vice versa), a line transit through the pin end or a back transit through the committee boat to avoid the mid-line sag, and the bearings of the windward and leeward marks. The point is to use the same system at every start until it becomes second nature.

“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:

- a. Bearing of the line.
- b. Wind direction. Checking regularly to monitor line bias and general overview of what the wind is doing.
- c. 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.
- d. 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.
- e. Windward mark bearing.
- f. 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*

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