



Technical Tips

1 – Mast, the Mast and the Mast

THE THREE MOST important concerns for house buying are, the Site, the Site and the Site.

When I first met Poul-Richard, he told me a similar thing with Dragons, the Mast, the Mast and the Mast. The Mast has to be right or everything else goes pear-shaped.

Most of you already have the correct mast step position, so DON'T move it.

Some, and I mean only some, could try ONE hole back or one forward. If you have a very light helm try moving mast back, if too much weather helm, try moving it forward. Only move the mast if you think you are slow! Please realise these guidelines are only experimental ideas.

Next, make sure the mast at rest, i.e. no runners, no backstay, no ram, boom out of crutch support etc, is sitting where it wants to be. Give it a shake. Then offer the mast ram to the mast and the pin should go in without forcing the mast aft or forward. If it does fine, if not, adjust bottle screw until it does, so that with the ram cleated aft the mast is not forced to be inverted or pre-bent. Now we can get the maximum power and also de-power the mast at the appropriate times.

Check the rake, 122cm from top of Black Band. Try 123cm if windy or 121cm if light. Then tape up the remaining holes and just experiment with those three settings.

Next, mark middle of mast at deck, then measure 1cm and 2cm forward. Pull the mast ram slowly forward until mast centre mark is in line with 1cm mark on deck, then marker pen your mast ram rope.

Continue forward until midway between 1cm and 2cm mark, then make two pen marks on rope, one big one small (means 1 & half cms). Lastly go the whole 2cm and make two big marks on your rope with your permanent marker pen.

You are now able to de-power your mast during the upwind legs, knowing exactly how much pre-bend you are using. For example, if you are overpowered, put on 1cm of pre-bend, or more if you can still not keep boat upright.

With the three settings you are able to reproduce the pre-bend on each beat, but more importantly make a note at the end of the race of what was good. This can also work in very light conditions to help open the top of your mainsail and flatten out the lower part.

Higher, Faster, Longer

Stavros

Great value, top tips from

David Dellenbaugh's
SPEED&Smarts



DAVID DELLENBAUGH

Starting helmsman for *America 3's* successful defence of the 1992 America's Cup and coach and tactician for *Mighty Mary's* 1995 campaign... there is a wealth of knowledge in David's monthly newsletter, *Speed&Smarts*, packed with "how-to" tips for racing sailors.

The Dragons are grateful for his permission to reproduce articles from *Speed&Smarts* on a regular basis.

We start in this issue with Tool Box – Setting Priorities on pages 14 and 15 overleaf, and Rules Corner on page 25

Check out his sample issue of *Speed&Smarts* on www.paw.com/sail/speedsmarts/

Wet decks are no longer the enemy



Competitive sailors are particular when they select gear for their boats. They should be. On a wet, rolling deck there is no time to question the equipment. That's why racers choose Harken—not just for blocks and winches, but for critical gear like shoes. Available in seven styles that look great and grip in any kind of weather.

HARKEN

Anchor House, Bath Road,
Lymington, Hants SO41 3YL

Tel: 01590 689122

Fax: 01590 610274

Email: enquiries@harken.co.uk

Web: www.harken.co.uk