

Jesper Bank's non-Technical Tuning Guide

In 1998 when Jesper Bank had just won the Worlds and come second in the Europeans, Patrick Gifford was finding his main and genoa difficult to set up. After an exchange of faxes with Jesper, back came a clear, non-technical tuning guide, which is reproduced here...

Dear Patrick,

I have the exact opposite feeling about the sails than you have. As you have noticed, we sail with everything quite loose. Virtually no tension on the lowers, and the uppers so loose that the leeward shroud is loose (only just) in eight knots upwind sailing.

Looking up the mast it is straight sideways in winds up to 14 knots. As the wind increases, you tighten up the lowers until the top goes to leeward by approximately 8cm. This setting should be reached in 25 knots. Between 14 and 25 knots you apply the tension on the lowers that gives you the best feeling on the helm.

This is not as scientific as could be, but use it as a guide and try it. Forget what you are doing today. Look at the tension on the upper shrouds and on the lowers, get the feeling right. Then measure the tension. Not before.

You have most observations right (I had set out what we thought, from observation, he was doing). We do not use any runner tension in winds up to 6-7 knots. The appropriate headstay tension is coming from the mainsheet. This means that when you have set your main right, your headstay sag is also right. How can it possibly be any simpler?

The tension on the luff of the genoa is decided by the twist of the sail. Apply halyard tension until the telltales fly the same. If for some reason you want the top of the sail more powerful and less twisted, apply more and more tension.

As the wind increases, runner tension is needed. As a guideline: have 4-6cm of forestay sag with three people on the rail.

To make all this work you need a good stiff top (Jesper used fixed jumpers). When we measure the tension on our jumpers 50cm from the turnbuckle, our gauge shows 25. That tension gives you a 1cm forward bend when there is no sail up. When sailing in 10 knots you will see a 1-2cm aft

bend over the whole length of the mast.

This is a different approach to tuning, but I think a much more fun way, which leaves the fine tune open to each individual's style of sailing.

When you use the sails like this you will never feel underpowered or oversheeted.

In your basic set-up the most important factor is mast bend. Get that right and then try my way. I know you will feel the difference.

Jesper Bank

STOP PRESS... New BDA Website

YOUR COMMITTEE decided earlier this year to redesign our website and bring it up to date, and in November we launched the result of our hard work.

Please log on to www.britishdragons.org and tell us what you think. We have changed the format and updated much of the old site, and you can now connect directly through the sponsors links to Musto, Peticrows, Bolle and Aberdeen Asset Management sites.

Your new website will be updated every two weeks, and we invite all members (and prospective members) to contribute and send us your photographs with a few lines of description.

The Class Captains of each Fleet will be reporting monthly to keep us up to date with 'what goes on' down their way, and if you have an amusing, interesting, or spectacular tale to tell, we look forward to posting it on the site.

www.britishdragons.org

TOM HARRISON DRAGON JEWELLERY

The new range of Tom Harrison Jewellery, produced exclusively for the BDA, includes:

Pendants, Earrings, Charm Bracelet, Cuff Links and Tie Pin in Sterling Silver and 9 or 19 carat Yellow Gold.

**These can be ordered from the new BDA website:
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