



SUPERNOVA CLASS ASSOCIATION

SEA SAILING

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As some of you are aware the class planned a training day at Exmouth which was cancelled due to an excess of the windy stuff. Alistair Goodwin was the race coach arranged to hold the session which was planned as a pre-nationals training day to look at sailing in waves and, also gate starts.

As the training day could not be held Alistair kindly agreed to hold a zoom meeting so that some training could take place. I have collected some information Alistair sent me to explain how to tack in waves, I have also captured the information pack and links to videos that Alistair sent out as pre-training day homework and finally a link to the online zoom meeting training that Alistair held for us. The information covers sailing upwind and downwind in waves including tacking and gybing and when to time your manoeuvre with the waves, it also provides some great advice on gate starts, but do remember if you are too early/close to the boat to leeward of you as they luff to pass behind the gate boat you do not have rights for any room between them and the gate boat...even if you have an overlap!!! There is a lot of great information and Alistair's virtual training sessions are a must watch item, really great training session for everyone.

I would like to give Alistair a huge thank you for supporting the class in this way, many of us are lake sailors so any additional advice and coaching on sailing in the salty waters is very much needed and appreciated and he has really done a great job considering we could not do in person on the water, thank you again.

Here's Alistair's pre-training day message:

To get the most out of training the day I have attached some video links for you to watch beforehand. (I appreciate these are other classes but most of the skills are pretty similar).

First is upwind sailing in some waves, as I believe most of you sail inland, adding waves can be quite a challenge and affect your upwind speed: <https://youtu.be/fmXXGi5Te6k>

What I would like you to look for in this video is the movements of the body, mainsheet, and rudder. When the water is flatter, they stay relatively still, just like sailing on a lake, however you can observe at 0:54, 1:02, 1:20 and 2:14 minutes into the video I get hit by a big wave and need to bear away quite aggressively as the bow reaches the top of the wave. If I just steered straight the bow would jump into the air, slam down and then get buried by the next wave. The problem would be if I only bore away without easing the sheet and putting in a big hike, in that case the boat would heel over and that is the last thing you want on a beat.

Next is gate starts, when sailing in a big fleet getting a good start can make all the difference between a good race and a terrible one: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KyCC_h-iF9U&t=71s



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In a regular start it is key to be close to the line, moving fast and have a leeward gap. The same applies to gate starts, have a look at how many boats in this video "miss" crossing behind the Rib (missing the boat is crossing more than 1M behind) are moving slowly or have a boat close to leeward and risk being pinched out. The priority in gate starts is being far enough forward that you have the space to dip down below close hauled to build up speed before crossing behind, you also need to build a leeward gap to make sure you can sail quickly after the start, which again requires that free space. A little tip to build that leeward gap is to wait just 2 or 3 seconds after the boat below starts to move before going yourself. (We will look at positioning in more detail on the day before we go sailing)

Finally downwind: <https://youtu.be/QZvql4TDZwI>

The main thing when the waves are big enough is getting the boat surfing (if there is enough wind) In this video there is only just enough wind to surf so you can see I am sailing quite aggressive angles (by the lee or a deep reach) to get the boat moving quickly before trying to catch a wave. Once I am surfing on a wave, I then try to use that speed to take me straight downwind. Body position is also key in marginal surfing conditions, keeping the weight forward will help the bow tip forward down the wave in front (like a seesaw) rather than falling off the back, but once I have speed I then move to the back (1:42 and 3:30 minutes into the video) to keep the bow out of the water.

Here's Alistair advise on taking in waves:

In my mind we need to break it down into two techniques, tacking in chop and tacking in proper swell, but there is some overlap between those two.

When tacking in chop you just need to have a look a bit further ahead and try to time your tack for a flatter spot, it's quite surprising that if you are patient and can wait a few seconds after you decide to tack (rather than going straight away) you will almost inevitably find an area clear of waves to make a quick tack. I will include a link to a video with some tacks in it and you should be able to see that I start scanning the water ahead for a few seconds before I tack. You might need to speed up the rate of turn compared to what you would use in flatter water as you want to get back on the power asap to keep pushing through the waves. Again, you can see from the video, I jump out hard after the tack to get the boat back up to speed as quickly as I can.

When you are racing in a big swell you need to be more accurate with the timing as you will still need to keep steering in relation to the waves to stop the boat jumping or diving. So, I would start to head up as the bow of the boat goes up the wave, but I would just keep on heading up, aiming to be head to wind when the boat is on top of the wave (you might need to head up slightly earlier to achieve this). You will then have the depowered zone when you are going down the back of the wave and through the trough to complete the tack before you need to start hiking your way up the next wave. But do take the time to pick when you tack as even on the days with the biggest waves there are often flatter spots which will make life much easier!

Here is the link to the video with the tacks between 2:00 and 4:30 minutes into the video:

https://youtu.be/--6k1H_zFTk



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And finally, the Supernova Class Association Sea Training Virtual Event that Alistair held for us:

Following the recent cancelled sea training event at Exmouth SC due to adverse winds, Alistair Goodwin hosted a successful **online training event** using Zoom. The session was recorded and is now available to all class members to watch at your leisure.

The sessions are in 2 parts:

Part 1:

https://youtu.be/f4A5Au_gK-U

Part 2:

<https://youtu.be/oJd0X6e1bw8>

Looking forward to seeing you all at this year's nationals with the classes biggest ever entry, especially now you all know how to sail on waves!!!!