

# Supernova Top 10 – Settings and Tips

The following table provides the basic rig set up used by the Nationals top 10. These are generally set up on the bank before launching, with mast rake/rig tension being adjusted as required on the water depending on the leg you're sailing, the conditions being sailed and the helms preferences/technique.

	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup>
Rig Setting	Matt Thursfield	Sam Knight	Eden Hyland	Cliff Milliner	Gavin Young	Steve Hawley	Iain Wilson	Jonny Everett	Will Gifford	Bruce Howett
1) Mast foot position (Forestay attachment point to front of mast)	As supplied when collected from Hartley.	1100mm	No Details Provided – But was sailing the class loan boat 1315 with the new HB sail	3 holes from the front	1080mm	1115mm	As supplied Hartley boats	1100mm	Three holes from the back	No Details Provided
2) Mast rake (Top of mast to top of uppermost rudder fitting)	Upwind huge rake, 5900mm Less when really windy to 5850mm Offwind, maximum upright, to 6100mm	6040mm with rig on very tight		6000-5950	Tight 6030mm (Light airs and reach) Medium 6000mm (Upwind and run) Loose 5910mm (When running deep)	6050 mm (60lbs tension)	One hole back/more raked than supplied	6100 to 5950	6050	
3) Rig tension/forestay setting (Simply "Loose", "Low Tension" or "High Tension")	Upwind, no tension Offwind, Low Tension to allow spreaders to break forward.	Upwind – High in light winds, decreasing tension as the breeze increases Reach – High Run -Low		Loose	My Datum is 240lbs at 6030mm rake, then gets looser as I let the rake back as above	Loose (upwind) tensioned otherwise	Not running high rig tension anymore, just enough to take any dynamic load out of the rig, then just whatever feels fast on the day.	Low tension	Loose	
4) Mainsheet horse/bridle length (side deck fitting to bottom of mainsheet block)	With max rake, tighter bridle to allow main to be pulled in to rear quarter. Sunday pm slightly looser.	530mm		Block comes to the front of the centreboard case	565mm in light airs (not hiking upwind) 540mm in all other airs	500mm	As supplied	600mm	Have it so it fits just to the front of daggerboard case	
5) Lowers tension/length Lowers (Length of lowers from deck fitting to mast fitting when the lower is disconnected from the mast)	Adjustable, but didn't really consider throughout the weekend!	910mm		Just tight when kicker is ¾ on	895mm which is basically ½ on the vernier from being tight when the mast rake is at 6030mm	890mm	As per website set up guide	Medium lowers, to limit lower mast bend....over 18kts of wind and I've had gone to loose lowers to bend the mast more and thus depower rig with a flatter sail	4 holes down	
6) Sail used (Dark or light coloured Jeckells or HB sail)	Dark Jeckells	Dark Jeckells		Light Jeckells	Dark Jackells	Light Jeckells	Dark Jeckells	Dark Jeckells	Dark Jeckells	
7) Sail Battens installed (Non-Tapered as Supplied, Tapered Contender battens from Matt Biggs or Tapered Dynaflex V1 or V2 from Pete Bingham)	As supplied but with Bainbridge batten tensioners with slight tension applied. Can buy from Force 4 Chandlery!	Standard		Standard with a stiffer top batten	Standard but with 2 battens in the top pocket, top 2 set just loose bottom 3 with a little tension	Dynaflex v2	Standard	Standard	Standard	

In the following sections we asked the guys for some tips, focus points key settings and thoughts on sailing around the course on the, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, if you remember the conditions were a bit different so it's interesting to see how it changed their thoughts, strategy, and focus.

- Friday – SW on shore wind, strong F5 gusting F6, with big choppy waves, only sailed 2 out of 3 races.
- Saturday –SW on shore wind, slightly less wind F4 gusting F5, still very copy waves but more manageable than Friday.
- Sunday – NW offshore wind, stronger than expected with a good F5 dropping to a F3/F4 for the last race.

## Name: Matt Thursfield (105kg)

UPWIND	
<b>Friday:</b>	<p>Start was key, hunt for clean air, look around for trouble inside last minute before pathfinder starts and be flexible as to where to go for a clean start. Look for sailors 'dropping down' on you, keep away from them. Rules are one thing, but a protest does not help once you've lost 3 boat lengths, sat in dirty air from the next guy to start. Check below to ensure you are not going to get squeezed. Kicker a bit free to get power, get going, then tweak kicker in and drop rake back. I also hike harder than at any point in the race for the first 3 minutes. Every boat that 'heels' loses a ¼ length each time – flat and power gets you clean air and then you can take a rest.</p> <p>I rake a lot, I also pull a lot of kicker (to the point I need to free a couple of inches to tack then reset once up to speed.) The leech is tight, has no hook, no twist. My bridle is on cleats so I ensure set tight to allow main (with the boom so low) to still come in to the quarter. Not too tight (which would lead to main acting as kicker.)</p> <p>Wave pattern was choppy on Friday – I looked at tell tales so rarely, my eyes were on every wave to get through them – body weight position meant trim was good for 95% of waves to not crash over the foredeck. Speed not height – speed cuts waves in half – height loses you power so the next wave slows you more.</p> <p>I was tacking as I went down a wave - I went through 90 plus degrees, power on new tack then back up to pointing. I set my Tacktick to 86 angle which worked well. On that note, I reckon I got one beat wrong all weekend as Tacktick just told me where I was going – not blind – there were shifts of 20° which I personally wouldn't have read without the compass.</p> <p>I also work as hard as possible in that last 100yds of the beat – hike harder again to get that last bit of speed and the dividends paid on the reach as cleaner air!</p>
<b>Saturday:</b>	<p>All very similar although wave pattern was much more settled, kept quite a lot of heel to ensure body kept above wave crest. Main further out and a bit freer upwind to cut through the waves – in slight lulls, I was freeing kicker (1-2cm) to put a bit more depth to rig although still fairly tight – and as wind rebuilt, kicker back on.</p>
<b>Sunday:</b>	<p>The morning was a different challenge – Jonny E and I did a couple of '2 minute tack' beats which told us the shifts were huge – so it was knowing your angles to then ensure you were on the correct tack – even if a bit trapped on left of beat, if a shift came</p>

	<p>from the right, tack, go further left as the wind was always going to flick back. Never bang a corner in those offshore swinging breezes, you only win 1:50 beats!</p> <p>As got a bit lighter, I used less rake (6000mm) a smidge less kicker but still had an unhooked, untwisted main.</p>
--	--

REACH	
<b>Friday:</b>	Keep as flat as possible so no rudder needed – Cunningham off before windward mark (have elastic to pull slack into system) so when bear away it frees up, battens can pop, and the mainsail works. Board for me stays around 2/3 down as I needed my weight supporting by the board – kicker still quite tight but less than beat.
<b>Saturday:</b>	Saturdays first reaches were (too) broad for me – I can't advise on those as I'm a bus with others planing around me! First to sixth is not a good plan – chop a leg off maybe and reconnect at the leeward gate!
<b>Sunday:</b>	Back to being tighter it was about keeping clean air and finding surfing waves – there were some in the morning – Sam passed me comfortably on one of Sundays reaches – it's all about body mass for me.

RUN	
<b>Friday:</b>	<p>Ian Dobson of GP14 legend taught me to always have your bow pointing down a wave – throughout Friday I was by-the-lee, heading at 150° to the waves, never straight down – always gybe as surfing down a wave as so much less pressure in the rig. Was looking side to side to hunt the best wave for the 'here and now', as not a wave pattern forming to make it worth looking back.</p> <p>Must have rake at 6100mm or so to allow room under boom – kicker on Friday kept boom under control – make sure your spreaders can break forwards – get a metal file on them with a spot of silicon spray.</p> <p>Main focus on runs is the balance of the boat. Steer with knees, not rudder. Letting the dog wag the tail!</p>
<b>Saturday:</b>	With bigger waves, I sat much further aft, had a couple of submarine moments as misread what was happening. Must also bring main in as you catch a wave as apparent wind flies forward. Kicker a fraction more eased, just to give a little more boom

	clearance from the waves if too much heel. Was zig zagging to keep boat on as many waves as possible, by the lee, then harden up, repeat.
<b>Sunday:</b>	I hunted for clean air – read whatever Sam puts as he was a magician on Sunday on the runs.

### **SUMMARY THOUGHTS**

I know where I am fast – upwind is my making hay time, and I know I’m aiming to build a buffer for the offwind where I aim to survive to then rebuild the gap upwind.

I rake and I kicker – my Aero days were the birth of the mantra ‘Kicker is King’ and I’m learning it is just as vital in the Supernova. 5950mm upwind with a ‘lot’ of kicker is fast – certainly for me.

Work harder than anywhere in the first three minutes, then burst again for the approach to each windward mark.

I lost more on the offwind on Sunday as the breeze eased and as the waves became less of a factor. So wave technique at a sea event is worth investing some time before the next nationals.

One final pointer – I have 5mm lines throughout my control lines. I’d never go back to 4mm. I am constantly changing ‘gear’ – “never ending alterations of most” (not outhaul) is my other mantra. No chance with 4mm.

## Name: Sam Knight

UPWIND	
<b>Friday:</b>	Low mode appeared to be the best way to power through chop. Mast raked to about $\frac{3}{4}$ of max, kicker on to pull boom down to deck and hanging off the cunningham. Noticeably 2-3 degrees lower than following boats, but increase in speed was more than enough to overcome the extra distance. Added speed also meant I could punch through the bigger chop or avoid any breaking waves if needed. Hiking at the mid-point on the toe strap to lift the bow, shoulders well back and using body weight to push and pull the boat up and down the waves. Looking to exit the gate early and tack within a 2 minute window, happy to take a few transoms to break into free air.
<b>Saturday:</b>	Same settings as Friday. Smoother, longer waves meant the low mode wasn't quite as effective as the day before, but as a lightweight I don't have enough power to push through the larger chop when trying to sail higher. Right hand shift around $\frac{2}{3}$ rds of the way up the beat, there in race 2 & 3, briefly there in race 4 but followed by a large backer on starboard which favoured boats on hard left.
<b>Sunday:</b>	Much flatter water, but still very overpowered through the first 2 and $\frac{1}{2}$ races. Similar settings and sailing to day before, started later in the gate to try and stay central on the beat and make sure losses were minimised in any shifts. As a lightweight, pretty much the worst conditions vs heavyweights as flat water mean they can hold max power without having to worry about wave technique, most beats today were about minimising losses in anticipation of better speed downwind.

REACH	
<b>Friday:</b>	Top reach fairly tight, meaning waves are almost at right angles to the course. Rig as upright as possibly with $\frac{2}{3}$ kicker to hold the leech tight. Working very hard to keep the boat flat and driving.
<b>Saturday:</b>	Reaches a lot broader, so less kicker than Friday. Have to be careful not to get too high as you would lose out when approaching the mark, generally the lower track was much quicker and allowed for max speed pretty much the whole way across. The broader legs allowed for a better angle at the waves, but still not great. I had a max target of three waves per reach, anymore and you were likely to end up far too low and struggling to get back to the mark.

<b>Sunday:</b>	Straight line was best in flat water. Really well laid reach, pretty much max speed and power the whole way across. Again, the lower path was usually quicker than the high, especially if you had enough distance from the upwind boats to drive underneath without too much wind disturbance
----------------	--

RUN	
<b>Friday:</b>	Tricky downwind sailing, especially in race 2 with the increase in wind. First race was able to utilise the waves really well, not afraid to spend a lot of time sailing by the lee to extend surfing time and always looking to find the breaking waves for max speed. In race 2 the added breeze meant we were starting to push through the back of the waves, so more about avoiding the steeper areas and finding a clean exit from the wave you were on (looking for the flat spots in front). Sailed a little broader than R1 as not willing to take the risk of sailing by the lee, and making sure gybes only happened at max speed shooting down the front of the bigger waves. Probably had ¼ kicker in race one, moving to ½ in the second to prevent death rolling.
<b>Saturday:</b>	Similar to the first race on Friday, making sure I drove as low as possible when surfing to save distance to the mark and extending time spent on the wave. Often found myself on the left of the leg (looking downwind) despite not having gybed as I spent so much time by the lee trying to weave and stay surfing.
<b>Sunday:</b>	Interesting leg, as there was a small chop following and some residual swell moving diagonally right to left. Really paid to gybe asap and use the swell to accelerate forward. Again, sailing by the lee meant I could sail at a slight angle to the swell, staying on it for longer and getting a good shove towards the bottom gate. Not afraid to head up occasionally to build up a bit more speed before a hard bear-away back towards the gate.

## SUMMARY THOUGHTS

An unusual event, with three full-on days of 15knts+ breeze. It was interesting that in the chop and waves both ends of the weight spectrum were able to compete, as technique was just as important as power in the rig. On Sunday, there were clear speed differences on each leg, upwind favouring the larger helms and downwind heavily favouring the smaller!

I think the overall lesson from the weekend was the importance of consistency and risk-free sailing, those sailors that could avoid the bigger incidents and sail in clear air were able to put distance on the boats around them. Look at the footage of the starts on Facebook, and you can

see how the first 10-20 boats had space and time to accelerate and hit the gate boat at max speed, whereas the middle starters (around 2 minutes) were forced to fight for a clear lane. It's no surprise therefore, that most of the race winners were starting early and taking the opportunity to get an early jump on the rest of the fleet. My personal objective was to start early and look to tack onto port within 2 minutes of starting. I felt that this reduced the risk of hitting the left hand side too hard, and also gave me a clear game plan to work off meaning I wasn't worrying about my next move.

## Name: Cliff Milliner

UPWIND	
<b>Friday:</b>	Cunningham on full. Outhall $\frac{3}{4}$ off. Kicker eased more than I would for flat water. 6000 rake didn't want boom to hit water as I can't keep the boat flat 😞
<b>Saturday:</b>	Cunningham on full. Outhall $\frac{3}{4}$ off. Kicker eased more than I would for flat water
<b>Sunday:</b>	Cunningham on full. Outhall $\frac{3}{4}$ off. Kicker on hard

REACH	
<b>Friday:</b>	Tight reach Cunningham on full as I was overpowered. Outhall off. Kicker on quite hard. Stayed high to hold a lane, tried to play the waves but not lose too much height
<b>Saturday:</b>	Deeper reach so powered up fully, drive down the waves to get depth and up in the lulls. Try to get low so I can power into the mark zone with speed
<b>Sunday:</b>	Deeper reach so powered up fully, drive down the waves to get depth and up in the lulls

RUN	
<b>Friday:</b>	Catching the swell was key, quite hard angles to get speed to catch, then deep by the lee when needed. Keep looking sideways to find big wave sets and stay away from everyone
<b>Saturday:</b>	Same as Friday
<b>Sunday:</b>	I was slow downwind on Sunday, not sure why 😞 so don't copy me...

## SUMMARY THOUGHTS

Interesting how the top 10 all started in the same place for Fri/Sat and all followed the same game plan. Start early, tack when you can cross the fleet. Sam always tacked first, and we all followed. All very civilised. Sam tended to go further right on the first beat, not sure if he knew something about the tide the rest of us didn't 😞. He sailed the boat flatter and wider than most of us and was therefore very fast for small



guy. I think that made the diff in his upwind speed. Not many shifts on Fri/Sat but Mat always pointed his boat in the right direction and kept it simple. There was quite a big tide effect on the port layline lifting you into the mark as the day went on. Tacks were costly so wave technique to keep your straight-line boat speed was important

Sunday. There were some shifts for a change. Wind was forecast to go left, and it did big time in the first beat of the last race which caught some of us out as the right had been paying nicely all the other beats, with flatter water and a lift on port as you went right and a lift on the starboard layline.

## Name: Gavin Young

UPWIND	
<b>Friday:</b>	<p>Well, the first day was a wakeup call, plenty of wind but with big choppy waves, I was hoping for some big waves as the wind was blowing straight on shore with the SW that we had so was surprised how choppy it was. We had a strong but very steady SW breeze with the tide running towards the wind so no real tidal tactics. With no real shifts and no tidal tactics, it was all about boat speed upwind and getting a good solid start with a clear lane and space to tack onto port as soon as you could clear the fleet. After that it was all about steering though and over the waves, not pointing and keeping the boat speed and momentum up to get through the chop. I set the rig at under 6000mm rake, had a slightly fuller sail (outhaul out a little) to keep some power, slightly less kicker than I would have on flat water and then really pulled the Cunningham on to de-power so I could keep the boat relatively flat and really drive it making sure not to pinch, power and speed through the chop was more important than height. I don't like to rake the mast too much as you don't want the boom too low such that when you let the mainsheet out the boom hits the water and you capsize, but on reflection the breeze was steady enough that I could have tried raking a little further to de-power a bit more and maybe point a little higher, but overall, I was pretty happy upwind although Sam and Matt were always that bit quicker than the rest of us upwind. Message here is don't be frightened to try some adjustments in the rig to see if you can match or get a bit more speed than those around you. It's one of my weaknesses having the courage to make an adjustment in case I go slower, but on the flip side getting your head out of the boat to pick your way through the waves is the higher priority.</p>
<b>Saturday:</b>	<p>Pretty similar to Sunday in terms of set up although the waves were a little smaller and the wind slightly eased, the wind did ease a little more towards the end of the day so left the rake at 6000mm and stopped pulling on the cunningham.</p>
<b>Sunday:</b>	<p>Sunday was a surprise, was expecting less wind and much flatter water, the reality was the wind strength certainly for the first 2 races was a challenge for most, the waves started nice as we left the shore, but the further offshore towards the start line we got the bigger and choppier it became. The wind was an offshore NW which had some good detectable shifts in it, nowhere as shifty as inland but some good 20 deg shifts non the less. For the first race the tide was just finishing coming in and the rest of the races had a falling tide running SW. My starting process all weekend had been to start early and get out of the gate as soon as possible in a clear lane on the basis that I consider myself to be faster upwind than the 10<sup>th</sup> place boat, this worked well all-day Friday and Saturday. Generally, one of the first to start with Sam and Eden, found that we had loads of room and could generate some good space so long as you concentrated and passed as close as possible to the gate boat so not to give away any space to windward or slip into the track of the boat that started just before you. Generally, we managed to get a jump on</p>

the fleet and with very few boats around us were able to tack across when the time was right. The conditions during the first 2 races favoured going right so an early start did not pay resulting in a 10<sup>th</sup> place and being pathfinder for the 2<sup>nd</sup> race. My settings and priority over speed rather than pointing were the same as Friday and Saturday as we had a strong breeze and need to power through the choppy conditions. Being pathfinder is always interesting watching the fleet coming at you, it's surprising how busy it gets in the middle of the line with many people starting next to somebody or just not rounding very close to the back of the gate boat, as it's quickly moving you really can aim for it and not hit it, as soon as you ease a bit to go round it you suddenly find you have lost a couple of feet or meters allowing someone else to get a jump to windward of you. With the wind in the NW direction although initially I got headed as I sailed up the line on port tack, I then got lifted a good 20 degs making starting late (lucky for me as pathfinder) going to the right side the favoured approach. In the last race the wind was forecast to swing slightly towards the West, this favoured an early start although, most of the leaders started further up the line as that had worked well in the previous 2 races and I stupidly let this change my plan so decided to start later. The shift to the left did happen as the wind moved to the west and the early starters that went left up the beat really got a good lead at the WM, should have stuck to my original plan and gone early as I had done most of the weekend!!

## REACH

### **Friday:**

On Friday the reach was a bit tight making it difficult to do too much in the strong breeze, it paid to play the waves and try and surf them a bit, but you could not go too low as the wing mark was set high. There were some gusts coming through so although I like to sail the reach by going low you had to keep an eye out for people sailing over you in the gusts. The tide was going out, so you could sail a lower track to prevent having to bear away too much at the end which would lose you ground over those reaching in on a lower track, not such an issue though as it was a tight reach. In terms of settings, I pull the rig tension on fully to power up the rig, cunningham fully off (I let this off on my final approach to the windward mark, so it had time to release before I bear away), I also ease the kicker and let the outhaul off before bearing away. I eased the outhaul a little to keep some power in the waves but did not let it off as much as I normally would as it was a good breeze, and the reach was set quite high (Something we asked the RO to change for Saturday). Due to the waves, I generally sailed a little high and then looked for opportunities to surf a wave and then headed back up until I spot the next wave to catch, constantly working the waves and "looking for a hole" to point the bow at, trying to sail downhill on the waves as much as possible.

### **Saturday:**

The course set for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> days were much better with a much deeper reach. This allowed you to power up more and really play the waves giving some options for sailing high or low. The tide was generally going out which meant you wanted to sail a lower course you didn't get too high as you approach the wing mark and have to bear away letting everyone else sailing

	in under you claiming water in the last 50 metres. As the reach was set lower and the wind had more gusts than Friday you really needed to look out to ensure you kept in the wind and did not let people sail above and over you at the same time as trying to go lower to counteract the tide. The reach was fantastic and as it was set lower allowed you to really get on the waves and go low on them before sheeting in and sailing a bit higher ready for the next one.
<b>Sunday:</b>	Similar to Saturday in terms of settings although as the wind eased, I eased the kicker and the outhaul to power up. As the wind was NW with an incoming tide it was taking you high on the reach so during the first race you had to aim a bit lower, during the 2nd and 3 <sup>rd</sup> race the tide had turned and was running SW which meant you were sailing with the tide on the reach. So same as before, rig tension fully on power it up and play the waves making sure to keep in the gusts and prevent anyone behind sailing over you unless they are sailing an extreme high course in which case, I tended to keep low and get them at the end of the reach, as they bear down to the mark you are now reaching in with speed and will generally be better off and gain water at the wing mark.

<b>RUN</b>	
<b>Friday:</b>	As the breeze was up, I left the rig tension where it was from the reach, let a little kicker off but did not let the top twist off too much otherwise the rock and roll starts and ends with the capsize to windward especially if you start pushing deep. I felt that my speed was reasonable at the start of the run and was still in front of Cliff until the end of the last run!!!! Frustratingly I seemed to lose out in the last 1/4, this happened in both races on Friday and a couple of races on Saturday. On reflection I was concentrating too much on going low, I managed to surf well and then bear away by the lee to stay on the wave for as long as possible, but I needed to head up more aggressively to keep my speed up so that I could get on the next wave. By not heading up more and sailing a slightly higher course I was missing waves and although I was sailing deeper Cliff sailed a slightly higher course for the last half of the run, he looked a long way away but as we got near the mark, he was a couple more waves in front and was able to reach into the mark a wave ahead of me. Running in waves is all about getting "a wave ahead" rather than sailing shortest course. It was frustrating after being ahead for the rest of the race. Something to work on for next year. When its choppy or wavy sailing slightly higher to keep speed with the waves is a higher priority than sailing low.
<b>Saturday:</b>	Like Friday really, it seemed to take a few races of Cliff sliding in just ahead of me at the last leeward mark for me to work out way I felt in a good position for most of the run only to lose out in the last 50 metres.
<b>Sunday:</b>	Seemed to be sailing well downwind on Sunday, I was sailing a little higher and concentrating more on getting over waves than I was about sailing deeper (Lessons from Friday and Saturday). On reflection I probably should have let the tension off a little more downwind to let the leeward spreader push out to get the full sail shape back, this may have given a little more power, I

get nervous letting it of when the breeze is up as a capsize to windward with the boom up can easily result in another bent mast!!! More gusts on Sunday so definitely looked out for those, if was had a gust when I left the WM I stayed in it left or right which ever direction felt would allow me to stay in it for longer. If I did not have a gust when I left the WM I aimed to sail the middle so I could go left or right depending on how the gusts were developing behind me, this also allows you to defend from the fleet behind just sailing around in a gust.
--

## **SUMMARY THOUGHTS**

Staying calm and clear headed allowed me to make good decisions. Overall, I was pleased with my starts this year going early each time as planned really meant I could easily get a clear lane with room around me to foot off if required or tack when I was ready. I was more consistent this year with my worst position being 10<sup>th</sup>, I normally end up discarding something at least in the 20's. The conditions were steady so with a solid plan this helped to keep my results consistently in the top 10, much harder to do that when we have very shifty changing conditions like we had last year at Plymouth. Need to work on my upwind speed in the choppy waves, as a lake sailor (like most of us) it is hard to improve much without more time in the salty stuff. Same goes for downwind, I need to tweak my approach a little to surf a little longer and keep speed to catch more waves, again more time at sea needed.

One area that I can improve on is keeping space around me on the run. On a couple of occasions, I managed to end up sailing next to someone, in one race I was going downwind well on port and then ended up alongside Iain Wilson, I managed to catch him up but then just could not seem to make it past, instead of staying close I should have gybed back and sailed away from him to open up my options again and give me more room to play the waves. When you are next to someone you just get constrained and are not free to just move around as needed in the waves. So that is 3 things for me to focus on for next year.

**Name: Steve Hawley**

**SUMMARY THOUGHTS**

Start early and get clear air, there was no point in getting stuck in the pack. As normal for sea sailed a bit freer upwind, more important to surf than sail on downwind leg, a miss timed wave was costly. Tack on big shifts, the tac-tic compass was really helpful in preventing me making a rash decision.

## Name: Iain Wilson

UPWIND	
<b>Friday:</b>	Clear wind out of the gate and just work hard and steer around the big waves.
<b>Saturday:</b>	As above really, no real strategy re left or right just keeping an eye on the fleet.
<b>Sunday:</b>	Easy to switch off on the last day so ultra-concentration on the start, fairy central path as if was offshore and some shifts.

REACH	
<b>Friday:</b>	I learned something quite key here and am surprised it has taken me 45 years to pick this up. Get the boat set up for the reach on the s/b layline on the beat. (kicker dagger board) this way you will not be overtaken by 10 boats in the early part of the reach.
<b>Saturday:</b>	Go low on the big gusts and get height back on the lulls.
<b>Sunday:</b>	Same as Saturday

RUN	
<b>Friday:</b>	I seem to have finally more or lost my downwind gremlins. For me it just about how to get comfortable in the boat allowing full exploitation of waves and gusts. I basically grab the two front falls and use them as an anchor, meaning that if a wave moves the boat, you can remain still and sail more aggressively*. Nothing worse than jumping around the boat reacting to waves.  *pumping.
<b>Saturday:</b>	As above
<b>Sunday:</b>	Tended to go left just because that's how it panned out with the fleet behind.

## **SUMMARY THOUGHTS**

Please enter your thoughts here: My key focus this year was the start. I pretty much nailed all but one. On the bad one I was only about 1- 1.5 meters off the stern of the gate boat. This meant I had boats crossing me halfway up the beat. I know we all think we know how critical it is but if you watch the videos there are some very decent sailors not quite on the money. Basically, in this wind, on approach forget the gate boat, aim at the guard boat amidships about a boat length away and you will end up clipping the stern of the gate boat. Also, upwind by and large I seemed as quick as anyone so just I kept tanking along. If you are fast through the water don't tack unless you have a really compelling reason to.

Other than that, self-management. Stay hydrated and fuelled, consolidate strong top ten positions rather than taking risks, (a couple of times I relinquished the odd place , to cover a few other boats). Four or five pints beer/ cider cap, not easy with the company that I tend to keep.



**Name: Jonny Everett**

UPWIND	
<b>Friday:</b>	Max boatspeed, above all else. Aiming for a good start with a gap under me. It's a drag race in the first beat. 2nd beat, form a plan during the previous leg, keep out of traffic and in clear air to maintain boatspeed
<b>Saturday:</b>	Ditto
<b>Sunday:</b>	Wind off the land makes for more shifts and therefore tactical upwind decisions. Beat 1 still a drag race but aiming to go up the middle of the course with a late start.

REACH	
<b>Friday:</b>	Keep the boat moving and don't get rolled
<b>Saturday:</b>	Ditto
<b>Sunday:</b>	Ditto

RUN	
<b>Friday:</b>	Keep it upright, use the waves
<b>Saturday:</b>	Damage limitation against the lighter sailors
<b>Sunday:</b>	Keep it upright, use the waves

## **SUMMARY THOUGHTS**

This championship was all about upwind speed for me. As the breeze came up, I raked the rig more, lots of kicker, keeping the outhaul full for drive through the waves. If the wind had got up to the 20/25kt range I would have been using lots of Cunningham too but I never seemed to find the F6 gusts..... The conditions were a good test for the fleet, with a bit of everything thrown at us. It certainly wasn't anywhere near the wind levels and sea states I've experienced with junior fleets at Pwllheli, I was hoping for some of the epic SW rollers that the higher winds bring....Alas, that was not to be this time.

## Name: Will Gifford

UPWIND	
<b>Friday:</b>	Depower sail with down haul, sit out hard, ride the boat over the waves so it doesn't slam, punching through them is better.
<b>Saturday:</b>	Eat wine gums before the beat! Again, sit out hard, use the waves to your advantage. Keep boat flat. If you're in pain, then you're going fast!
<b>Sunday:</b>	Flatter water but still punching waves so work hard and let some kicker off in the lulls

REACH	
<b>Friday:</b>	Kicker off a bit. Bear away keep flat, surf waves when possible. Do not capsize when in fourth position!
<b>Saturday:</b>	Dagger board halfway down. Bear away in gusts. Steer boat by leaning it and use as little rudder movement as possible
<b>Sunday:</b>	All of above.

RUN	
<b>Friday:</b>	Steer boat by heeling the boat not with rudder movements as acts as a brake
<b>Saturday:</b>	Avoid lobster pots!
<b>Sunday:</b>	Keep looking forwards. It's tempting to look back at all the sails, but it can make you not focus on the job In hand

### SUMMARY THOUGHTS

Overall, I learnt a huge amount from others at this event and still have lots to learn. I found drinking lots of water helped between races. A large bag of wine gums each day too! Keeping calm is something I'm still working on!

Found that a tight toe strap helps much more than a loose one. Making the most of the clear wind.

I use a saying in my recovery regularly which is....."win with the stickers, stick with the winners". Best wishes Will 😊

# Sam Knight's Bumper Sound Track – Personal Notes on 2022 Nationals Round Up

Sam Knight has also kindly provided his 2022 national round up notes and it makes great reading about the event, the venue and prevailing conditions – Thank you Sam for sharing this with us, it's much appreciated.

## Friday

### **Race 1**

*16-18 knots, Steep chop*

Started early. Gavin accelerates out from underneath, but I find a gap to escape on Port. Take a couple of transoms before finding clear air and getting the hammer down. Noticeably sailing lower than following boats, rake @ 3 (1 being the furthest) with max kicker to bring the boom to the deck. Plenty of cunningham, medium outhaul to give shape in lower third. Boom generally out well beyond the hull, keeping the boat flat and driving as fast as possible to push through the chop. Not afraid to deviate around breaking waves, always looking for flatter spots for tacking. Extend out from the fleet on long port tack, sacrifice 5-10 boat lengths to tack back and cover the fleet. Round first, slight extend on top reach before pushing out around 20-25 boat lengths down the run. Cover fleet through second beat, sticking to centre of the course. Extend again on the last run, biggest win of the weekend, just under 1 min. 1st

### **Race 2**

*18-20 knots, Steep chop*

Slight increase in breeze. Settings as above, and race fairly similar with first beat more square. 1st boat out the gate, and able to tack to cross on port within 2 minute window. Sean makes a small gain on final approach to mark, but overstands final lay. As before, small extensions on reaches, large on runs. With wind increase, very important to wait for max surfing speed before gybing. Again, loose cover on fleet and come in well ahead of 2nd. Racing then abandoned for the day. 1st

## **Saturday**

### **Race 3**

*16-18 knots, Smoother waves, 1-1.5m*

2nd boat out of gate, settings similar to day before. Low and fast again, but noticeably less effective than day before as guys sailing high can still maintain speed over waves. Manage to cross on port, but Sean and Matt are able to pip me to top mark. Make small error on top reach trying to push over Matt and end up too high, losing distance. Unable to claw distance back upwind, Mainly hanging on to challenge downwind. Pushing very low on the waves, often sailing by the lee to surf for as long as possible. Almost make it but miss out by ½ boat length at last rounding. 2nd

### **Race 4**

*16-18 knots, Smoother waves, 1-1.5m*

Similar to previous, except unable to tack across without taking a lot of transoms. About 2/3s of the way across the port leg start to get headed, take the shift and salvage a top 10 round the first mark. Learn from first race, and stay low across the reach making 4-5 places before the run. Good speed on the run, round the gate 15 lengths behind Eden. Tack fairly early for the centre, Steve gets a good lift from the right to lead at the top, can't catch either before the final rounding. 3rd

### **Race 5**

*16-18 knots, Smoother waves, 1-1.5m*

Reasonable start (early again) and able to tack across, only ducking Matt. Aiming for the same lift as race 4, works nicely and round just behind Matt. Sail underneath to take the lead, Extend on run and cover from then. 1st

### **Race 6**

*16-18 knots, Smoother waves, 1-1.5m*

Start of race is fairly similar, find the right-hand shift and look to cross back across the chasing pack. Unfortunately get backed and end up fairly deep on the first reach. Manage to gain some ground on reach and run - into 5th by the gate. Get out of sync with the shifts upwind, lose 1 place and a lot of distance on leaders. Again, excellent downwind speed - almost gain the inside overlap on the group ahead but miss a couple of waves on the final approach. 6th

## **Sunday**

### **Race 7**

*16-18 knots, Choppy*

Offshore, so breezy with short chop upwind. Early start lands me deep, unable to find a clear lane and end up around 15-20th around first buoy. Make good gains on reach (rig @ max upright, ½ kicker and everything else loose) to round on the back of the top 10. Realise there is some residual swell from previous day moving diagonally right to left looking down the run. Gybe as soon as I reach the run, use the swell really well to push around the chasing group. Make major error by going to wrong gate mark - right hand is clearly biased but I'm already committed to left. Lose 10 boat lengths to Matt in the lead and sucked back into the chasing group. Start final run-in 6th, but able to use the swell to fight into 2nd. Again, miss Matt by ½ boat length round final mark. 2nd

### **Race 8**

*16-18 knots, Choppy*

Another bad first beat, but able to make gains in final 3rd to stay in contention. Good speed offwind again means leading starting the second beat. Sail too low out of the gate - going for speed means I have to duck Jonny as try to get back to the centre of the course. He has a 10 boat length lead on the final run, reel him in around ¾ of the way down but make 2nd major error of the day by trying to gain the inside overlap. Jonny defends, and we lose a lot of distance to Matt and Eden. On the outside as we round for the final reach, try to sail underneath Jonny and instead lose a place to Eden. 3rd

## **Race 9**

*14-16 knots, Choppy -Knew I needed 2nd or better if Matt didn't win*

Less breeze, start fairly late as the gateboat has done well in the last couple of races. No good again, small recovery in 2nd half to round 15ish. Push really hard on the reach and gain to the back of the top 10, great downwind to end up 3rd at the gate. Third big error here as I split from top 2 rather than following. Seems to have worked well as clearly ahead of Steve as I tack back, but unable to cross the rest of the fleet coming downwind meaning I'm forced back to the left. Big lift and breeze from the right means I lose a load of distance to top Steve and Eden. Probably halve the distance downwind, but to no avail. 3rd

### **The good**

Downwind boatspeed was biggest differential, especially on the 3rd day. Really good at extending the surf by sailing by the lee, and spotting the best wave sets to aim for.

Good at cutting losses on the last day. Beats were difficult to predict and breeze still at the top end meant often chasing the big guys upwind, but I was happy that I could still make sure I was on the right shift without getting tempted into looking for a miracle gust. Meant I was still in contention for the downwinds where I could make gains.

Great speed in the upper ranges on the first day. Low mode worked really well in the chop, keeping the boat flat and driving through the waves. Also meant I could quickly build more speed if needed to punch through anything too steep, and quickly avoid any breakers that threatened to put the brakes on.

A clear plan for the first beat was crucial - always starting early to take advantage of a clear lane and then looking to tack away within first 2 minutes of starting to hit the centre line of the course. This meant I could concentrate on boat speed and focus on building a gap to tack into. Once central I could either tack back to cover off the early starters or continue if the shift was favourable.

### **The bad**

Bad decision making on key points on the last day. Only needed 1 more place from any of those three races and had the speed and positions to make sure. Too often tempted into breaking away or pushing too hard when following the fleet would probably have done the job.

Lack of a high mode meant I lost out in crucial moments - mostly on the last day. Allowed boats that were behind to trap me out to one side, rather than being free to take advantage of any gusts or shifts.