

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 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th	9 th	10 th
Rig Setting	Alistair Goodwin	Alex Horlock	Sam Knight	Cliff Milliner	Iain Horlock	Gavin Young	Eden Hyland	Sam Pickering	Robin Kirby	Mark Platt
1) Mast foot position <i>(Forestay attachment point to front of mast)</i>	Unknown	Unknown	1100mm	Not sure, same as everyone else	Unknown	1080mm	No details given	No details given	4 holes show at front of step	No details given
2) Mast rake <i>(Top of mast to top of uppermost rudder fitting)</i>	Unknown	6050	6040mm with rig on very tight, dropping to 6000mm upwind	5990	Unknown	6000mm			6050?	
3) Rig tension/forestay setting <i>(Simply "Loose", "Low Tension" or "High Tension")</i>	High Tension	Changes with wind speed (on in light stuff, off as wind increases)	Upwind – High in light winds, decreasing tension as the breeze increases Reach – High Run -Low	Low	Unknown	Tight, 240lbs at 6030mm			Unknown	
4) Mainsheet horse/bridle length <i>(side deck fitting to bottom of mainsheet block)</i>	Unknown	Unknown	530mm	Not sure	Unknown	540mm			To front of centreboard case slot	
5) Lowers tension/length Lowers <i>(Length of lowers from deck fitting to mast fitting when the lower is disconnected from the mast)</i>	Adjustable	adjustable (on in light, off in wind)	910mm	Loose just tight when kickers on full	Unknown	895mm half hole from being tight with full tension			Unknown	
6) Sail used <i>(Dark or light coloured Jackells)</i>	Light	Dark sail	Dark	Light	Dark	Dark			Dark	
7) Sail Battens installed <i>(Non-Tapered as Supplied, Tapered Contender battens from Matt Biggs or Tapered Dynaflex V1 or V2 from Pete Bingham)</i>	Standard (non-tapered)	Standard (non-tapered)	Standard (non-tapered)	Contender (Tapered)	Standard (non-tapered)	Standard (non-tapered), 2 in top batten pocket			Standard (non-tapered)	

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 quite different so it's interesting to see how it changed their thoughts, strategy, and focus.

- Friday – Outside the breakwater - Light winds, flat water with a building wind as the day progressed.
- Saturday – Outside the breakwater - A good choppy swell, light winds in the first race with wind building as the day progressed.
- Sunday – Inside the breakwater – Slight chop, good solid F2+ building and swinging as the day progressed.

Name: Alistair Goodwin

UPWIND	
Friday:	<p>In the lighter winds it was very important to build boat speed quickly to get plenty of flow and therefore grip from the daggerboard. Therefore, I would perch hike with a slightly eased main on quite a low angle to gain this speed, once I had enough pace, I would aim to point a little higher and sheet in all the way. If I felt the boat slowing or there wasn't enough pressure in the sail to keep my weight slightly hiked out, I would bare away slightly, always aiming to keep the boat feeling like it was driving forwards through the chop. To develop as much power in the sail I had a completely slack downhaul and medium depth outhaul, but the most important control was the kicker, as I wanted the leach to remain tight and not spill open, overdoing this would however "hook" the leach where the ends of the battens poke up to windward and make it almost impossible for the wind to flow cleanly around the sail. Tightening the kicker can also flatten the sail as the middle of the mast bends forward, this is where the lowers come in, I pulled them really tight before putting the kicker on to reduce the bending of the mast and put all the tension of the kicker into controlling the leach.</p> <p>In terms of strategy, I was very focused on going for maximum boat speed straight after the start to try and get the jump on boats around and when this didn't go perfectly try to tack into a clear lane to find undisturbed wind. With very few shifts, finding clear wind and then having quite a narrow focus on my own boat speed rather than spending too much time looking at boats around seemed to work well.</p>
Saturday:	<p>I felt the first 2 races were very similar to Friday's racing with the addition of some bigger waves, I used a very similar setup for the most part and kept my focus mainly on wave technique as there were very few gains to be made in terms of wind shifts.</p> <p>My wave technique involved steering up the wave as it came toward me to stop the bow digging into it and slowing me down, then when the bow reached the top of the wave bearing away to stop it leaping into the air and slamming down, which would kill speed. I had to adjust this technique tack to tack, making it quicker and more aggressive on starboard tack as it was almost straight into the waves and slowing it down and focusing on keeping the boat really flat whilst on port as the waves were coming more from the side and would make the boat heel on top and then away.</p> <p>The 2nd two races where when hiking become much more important as the breeze built, I pulled the kicker on tighter and started to make the lowers loser to add more mast bend and flatten off the sail, reducing drag, also started to add downhaul</p>

	and outhaul tension to reduce power and make it easier to keep the boat on its feet, but the main decider was ability to hike hard, as this kept the boat driving, which is important in waves.
Sunday:	The races inside the Breakwater were much more dominated by shifts and pressure rather than just boat speed, however having good pace was still important so I kept a fairly similar set up to Friday's light wind racing but as the Breeze increased I decreased the tension on the lowers to allow the mast to bend more and increased the tension on the kicker outhaul and downhaul, particularly the kicker as without waves to push though it was all about reducing the amount of drag from a deep sail. In terms of strategy, it was just as important to try and keep clean wind but also important to try and sail on the lifted tack wherever possible, however when the course became very skewed i.e. long tack Port it became the number one priority to get a clean wind for such a long time on the same tack.

REACH	
Friday:	The reaches were much more about maintaining position rather than trying to gain as everyone was sailing at a similar speed so just making sure that nobody sailed over the top of you and occasionally being quite vocal about the fact that neither of you would gain if you ended up sailing each other high. In terms of setup, it was important to keep as much power as possible so a tight kicker to stop the leach spelling open and losing power and again lots of tension on the lowers to stop the middle of the mast bending and reducing drive.
Saturday	Saturday's reaching was a little bit trickier as the waves coming from the side made it very easy to allow the boat to roll from side to side so you had to be very hot on keeping the boat flat by either adjusting your body position and sheeting in and out carefully being very careful not to over sheet the main sail as this can kill your speed. In the windier races choosing the bigger waves to surf low and maximise speed, and then heading up and getting the bow "over" smaller waves to not get pushed too far downwind.
Sunday:	On the reach was all about getting the boat to go as quickly as possible so not being scared to head up a little bit to get the boat planning fast and then sitting back and keeping the bow out of the water to go for maximum speed and using the gusts to sail a little bit lower and then come up in the lulls to keep your pace high

RUN	
Friday:	During Friday's racing was all about trying to keep some forward motion and stop the boom swinging in as the boat surged forwards on the waves, so sailing a little bit of a higher angle when you were in a very light patch of wind to try and keep some forward motion worked well. But trying to sail a little lower once you had a bit of pressure in the rig, to sail more directly towards the mark and improve your vmg.
Saturday:	The first two races on Saturday we're again very similar to Fridays, trying to sail higher angles in the light breezes but then take any speed you gain low and directly towards the mark. In the second two races, which were dominated by the increased breeze, it was all about getting the boat surfing and not being scared to sail big angles to get some pace on the boat before pointing the boat directly down the wave and trying to ride it for as long as possible (see my Sea Champs coaching write up)

	<p>https://youtu.be/QZvql4TDZwl</p> <p>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.</p>
Sunday:	<p>Sunday's downwind was more of a reach due to the offset of the course and they persistently left swinging breeze, so that it was mostly about sailing it just like a deep reach. Again, just thinking about trying to get some pace by hiking out, sitting back and heading up to get the boat moving well and then taking all of that speed down towards the mark when you are in a gust. Then heading up a little in the lulls to try and stay hiked out and keep the boat plaining.</p>

SUMMARY THOUGHTS

What I thought was most important and helped me to win this event was trying to work as hard as possible and gain places even in my worst races. Working hard and turning a 10th into 5th for example would require just as much effort as trying to get from 3rd to 1st in a race, but in terms of points would have a much bigger impact on the overall result. So **always, always** try to work your hardest in your worst races and turn them into “counters” rather than letting your head go down and a poor race become your discard. Always keep fighting!

Name: Alex Horlock

UPWIND	
Friday:	Clean air was key, low outhaul for good power, mast raked forwards, foot off slightly for speed / keep moving. Going left seemed to pay but mainly a boat speed day.
Saturday:	Hiking now, flat boat, lots of kicker, rig back a touch. Watch for shifts, there were some big ones.
Sunday:	Crazy day... all about keeping head out of the boat. Setup boat for lulls not gusts as easier to spill wind than find power. Very short beats meant start was again important

REACH	
Friday:	Go a bit high... it's the nationals!
Saturday:	Go a bit high... it's the nationals! Getting on waves and staying on waves is the key, this can make a big difference to how you end up.
Sunday:	Go a bit high... the wind comes in from that side in theory! (There was also a tide pushing us down so huge gains could be made here... all a bit silly though

RUN	
Friday:	Stay out on the right looking downwind at start of run at nationals (you don't want to go in under the blanket from the reaching boats too soon)
Saturday:	Waves, waves, waves, do everything to stay on them... changes in direction up to 45 deg from dead run and using trying to navigate onto the next big bonus is key. Outhaul off and rig tension off a bit (let boom out more)
Sunday:	Look for the wind... no one knew what was going on, forecast was to shift left all day so right of run was higher %age chance (obvious in hindsight!)

SUMMARY THOUGHTS

As usual, all sorts of conditions at the nationals... it wasn't over until it was over and there was always lots to be gained and lost. Flat boat, clear wind, good start and tacking on the shifts is the recipe for success.

Name: Sam Knight

UPWIND	
Friday:	Looking to power the rig up as much as possible, using the mainsheet rather than kicker to tension the leech and leaving plenty of depth with minimal outhaul (sail about a hand width from the boom at its deepest). Out of the gate early to keep a clear lane (although I had a bad start in the 2 nd race, recovering after the 1 st beat). Happy to sail a little lower if I felt the speed was dropping too low and I had the space to do so. I was really happy with my boat speed so I tried to stay fairly central on the racecourse (low risk), confident I could chase down any lucky corner bashers.
Saturday:	Weird first race – wind dropped out but large waves made for sloppy sailing! All about maintaining speed, sailing fairly low vs a few of the other guys around me at the start meant I got squeezed out of the front row (happened several times over the weekend). Tacked out, took a few sterns to get clear air then really worked the low mode. 2 minutes later I cleared the fleet so free and fast was the way! 2 bad starts (2 nd & 4 th race) and one as pathfinder limited my options for the rest of the day. As the breeze increased I moved back into a higher mode, as the speed was there to punch through the waves. Trying to focus on the patch of water 4-5 boat lengths ahead, bearing away to avoid breaking waves and looking for flat spots to tack. Kicker hard on, half Cunningham and rig dropped 1/2 way back on my calibration tape. Hiking about 6 inches further back than I would at Bartley to improve the pitching over the waves. Speed was good, possibly lacking height but mostly having to take bigger risks after bad starts meant I was more expansive, picking one side of the course to work away from other boats.
Sunday:	Three completely different races! Another bad start in 1 st , beats are a lot shiftier than they have been in previous races (course is now in the sound under the cliffs) so opportunities to make or lose places similar to inland sailing. Settings similar to day before, sat further forward as the water is flat, and outhaul on tight. Thinking of starting later in 2 nd race as pathfinder has won R1. With a minute to go wind is starting to drop, all forecasts say wind should go left so I reckon this is the moment, quickly sail back to the committee boat to start early. Works a charm as I tack and cross the fleet about 30s into the race. Bit of a wacky race, keep my head out the boat trying to spot the next shift like I would at Bartley. Big differences in pressure across the course, so I decide to go for the gusts rather than worrying about shifts as I think the extra speed will offset any extra distance sailed. In the last race I finally get a decent start but can't quite climb over the boat below. Major mistake – I forget my race plan (look for shifts) and tack away for a better lane. Miss the next shift, and with the race being 15 minutes long never have the chance to make any distance back.

REACH	
Friday:	Rig upright, everything else loose with just enough kicker to hold the boom down. Trying not to deviate too far from the rhumb line to the next buoy, slow speeds make the extra distance sailed too much of a risk.
Saturday:	Rig upright again. Kicker about 50% on to hold the leech tight. Both reaches are quite tight, so not too much opportunity for surfing. Working the boat really hard, taking the higher route earlier to take advantage of any waves that were offset enough to gain an advantage from.
Sunday:	Different in every race! With flat water keeping clear air was the priority, then watching what was coming up in the next 20-30 boat lengths to make sure I was prepared for any changes in pressure. Slightly less kicker on the day before – about 40% to hold the leech, but rig still fully upright.

RUN	
Friday:	Low, low and low. Rig raked to let the spreaders swing and the boom out as far as possible. No kicker on, and plenty of depth in from the outhaul. Pushing as low as I dared without slowing up too much, In the light I prefer the distance saved over any extra speed (in the Supernova, opposite in the 400!)
Saturday:	First race was mostly focused on keeping some drive in the sail, sloppy seas meant it was difficult to keep consistent flow over the sail, so pointing a little higher and keeping the speed up seemed to work. As the breeze picked up I was able to work the waves more and more, felt fairly quick relative to those around me, I think because I pushed the boat lower when I was surfing saving distance to the mark and extending the time I was on the wave. Using plenty of heel to steer the boat, really hiking it to windward to bear away on the front of the wave and the opposite as it passed underneath, and I slowed down. Kept about 25-30% kicker to give some drive from the leech, as the day wore on the 'run' was more a succession of broad reaches across the waves.
Sunday:	Flat water sailing, so as little kicker as I felt comfortable with, pushing for depth again and keeping free air as much as possible. For the second race in particular it was important to keep an eye on the breeze building from behind, It wasn't often square to the course so making sure I was positioned correctly was tricky, a very wiggly leg as I made big course alterations to pick up new breeze.

SUMMARY THOUGHTS

Certainly, an event that had something for everyone! A complete range of conditions, sometimes within the same race. As a dedicated lake sailor I think it is often difficult to make the switch to the sea, not just because it's lumpier. Inland we are programmed to search out the next shift or gust, often pointing as high as possible to save distance upwind before sailing pretty much as straight as we can to the downwind marks. On the sea, this is pretty much reversed, there are no real shifts to find (true of the first 2 days) and the large fleet means the racing is much more about generating straight line speed and keeping lots of power in your rig.

From my own perspective, I was very happy with my sub 12knts speed. I felt quick enough to be able to sail conservatively, making sure I didn't get tempted into banging corners or taking undue risks, which is a massive bonus. I think of all the races I was most upset with the 2nd race, when I had a terrible start which meant I had to chase down a result rather than playing it safe out the gate and making sure I was on the course with a clear lane.

Above 12knts, I wasn't particularly off the pace, but I struggled to hold a lane early in the race, meaning I was mostly trying to make up placings after the first leg. I think this was partly down to bad starting, I consistently found myself to high compared to the gate boat and having to slow down to get a gap, rather than accelerating, and also a tendency to try and sail the boat a couple of degrees lower which meant I got sucked into boats below me. I'll be practicing a 'high' mode for next year!

So, a few bullet points to focus on for the next time we get back to the sea;

- Focus on boat speed, not shifts (hiking hard!)
- Set your boat to generate plenty of power (any of the gold fleet can help with this!)
- A clear lane out the gate is more important than where on the line you start
- Think about where you performed best, so you can take advantage later – If you have great boat speed then don't get tempted into tacking every 100 yards, and If you point really well then position yourself underneath other boats and squeeze them! Knowing your strengths is just as important as knowing weaknesses.

Name: Cliff Milliner

UPWIND	
Friday:	Tidal flow in and out of the Sound entrance seemed to play a big role. Left seemed to pay on first beat.
Saturday:	Needed power to sail through the chop/swell
Sunday:	Shifty, wind swung around left to the forecast direction as the day went on

REACH	
Friday:	Tight rig, sail the waves
Saturday:	Tight rig, sail the waves
Sunday:	Tight rig, sail the waves

RUN	
Friday:	Hard, sloppy runs. Sitting forward, keeping still
Saturday:	Catching/surfing the waves was the key, but hard to do as it wasn't that windy
Sunday:	Just like lake sailing, by the lee where you can

SUMMARY THOUGHTS

The Top 3 had an upwind speed advantage all weekend and were very consistent, Sam was very quick downwind all weekend. All 3 started early in the gate and used their upwind speed advantage to get good top mark positions.

Name: Iain Horlock

UPWIND	
Friday:	Get a good start from the gate boat, nice and close...then play the shifts as and when other boats nearby allow. Stay as still and as far forward as you can in the boat without overdoing it.
Saturday:	Keep the speed on despite the large swell. Change your kicker and other sail controls throughout the day for upwind settings as the conditions change.
Sunday:	Don't pinch too much, sail fast, take height when you can. Daggerboard was almost all the way down.

REACH	
Friday:	Slacken all controls off, put the mast more upright look around for breeze.
Saturday:	Sail up and down like a laser to keep the speed on.
Sunday:	Stay high if you can, try not to let people go over the top of you. If you find yourself in the bunch do something different i.e. go really low or really high to gain some places back.

RUN	
Friday:	Look around for breeze once your set up for the run. Change angles dramatically to get to some pressure if needs be.
Saturday:	Sail by the lee if you can, make your boat unstable by raising the daggerboard...unstable is fast!
Sunday:	Stay on the plane as much as you can, I don't bother changing the daggerboard much in heavy weather. It's good for stability during the gybes too. Look behind regularly to stay in the bands of pressure.

SUMMARY THOUGHTS

We had three days of very changeable conditions, which meant you needed to be adaptable. The main thing in a fleet of that size was to get a good start as close as possible to the gate boat, then sail as fast as you could for the first 5 minutes of the beat. I didn't sail with a compass instead used the other boats around and, in the distance, as good shift indicators.

Cracking event, something for everyone in that regatta.

Name: Gavin Young

UPWIND	
Friday:	Getting a good start was key for the whole weekend, this was difficult at times, and it was really easy to get over excited and arrive a little early having to slow a little rather than accelerating as you approach to pass close to the back of the gate boat. In the light airs I set the boat up with a relatively flat sail to allow the wind to stay attached to it as much as possible and focusing on speed and not pointing. Getting clear air was key and looking for pressure to sail towards was key over shifts or pointing. At this nationals I decided to try and start much earlier than I have at previous nationals that deploy a gate start, I decided that if my boat speed was better than the pathfinder then I should start early and get going as soon as possible trying to generate space to tack so I was not forced to the corners of the course, some time ducking a boat or two to sail in the direction I wanted to go rather than just sailing on one tack to the layline keeps you options open. Generally, stay towards the middle of the course.
Saturday:	Interesting conditions especially early in the day when we had a good swell with very light wind, it was important to keep the boat moving focusing on speed and not pointing, keeping the boat as flat as possible where you can but also using weight adjustment to help steer over the waves rather than inducing your turns with the rudder which only slows you down. As the wind increased you could really get going and needed to keep eyes out for the best route through the waves to keep your speed up, remembering not to sit too far forwards so that you can keep the bow up a little to promote it rising over the waves rather than ploughing it in. Kicker tension is key, as soon as the wind eases you need to ease the kicker a little to get good air flow over the sail and allow you keep your boat speed up in the lulls and lighter airs. Generally kept to just left of the middle of the course but had a bad start in one race and on the second beat I choose to foot of from the leeward gate and get some real boat speed on, I sailed straight to the layline really focusing on speed whilst I had good clean air and also intending to get some separation from the fleet. When I tacked back I had recovered back into the front group, so when you are not where you want to be sometimes getting some separation in clear air allows you to get some leverage over the fleet and make some gains....you can also make some big loses but when your behind its worth a try especially if you can generate some good boat speed.
Sunday:	Set up similar to lake sailing as the water was pretty flat, so set sail flat for pointing. Lucky first race as pathfinder, as I set of it became obvious that I was getting significantly lift which meant people were arriving late to cross the line as I was further up the course than everyone was expecting, once release I chose to keep going for a long time, that side of the course was pretty quiet and when I tacked I was pretty much on my own with just a couple of hundred meters to the mark and no one around me. A strange, rare moment of luck although my up-wind speed felt pretty good. After that you really had to watch where the wind was coming from rather tacking on the shifts as the wind was not consistent across the course, with a higher wind speed on the right in the first race with less wind on the left which then filled in on the right as the wind swung form the west back towards the southwest in the later races. Start was every thing as the race were really very short

REACH	
Friday:	Keep the forestay tight, in the light airs and flat water I kept the outhaul similar to the beat as keeping the wind flowing over the sail was important and power not needed as not any really waves. Keep high enough to get clear air especially in the light winds, you don't want people rolling over you but try not to get caught up going too high otherwise you will have to bear away to the mark towards the end of the leg which can allow the boats inside you to gain an advantage and get an overlap at the mark, so aim lower when you can making sure you account for the tide.
Saturday:	Forestay tight, outhaul out to generate power and kicker on enough to keep the leach just tight, as the wind increased you could really use the power to play the waves, bear away and go deep in the big waves, as you drop of them sheet in and aim higher again to maintain speed until the next big wave to bear away on....great fun but lots of hiking to keep the boat flat and driving, as well as moving weight forwards at time to rid a wave or stay on a wave for longer.
Sunday:	Back to flatter water but with some wind, so sail set for speed rather than full on power (sail about 4 to 6 inches from the boom at the middle of the foot. Focus was on looking and staying in the wind patches and gusts as much as possible to sailing low in the gust and higher in the lulls to keep the speed on. Kept to the righthand side of the reach to take advantage of the new wind as it arrived. I normally try and go low but lost out massively in the last race, I went low as there was a mass of boats around me and I didn't want to get into a luffing match, but the wind really increased and filled in allowing a huge mass of boats to sail over the top of me with no wind left to power me along, some times going high is the better decision!!!!

RUN	
Friday:	Light airs meant sail set relatively flat, forestay stayed tight otherwise the rig just flapped about, left weight forwards in the boat and kept as still as possible. Tried to sail as straight a line as possible to the mark as there was not enough wind to generate enough speed to make up for any increased distance from sailing a higher course. Keep you head out the boat and look for breeze and make sure to sail towards it.
Saturday:	First race was tough due to the swell and light airs, similar set up to Friday but sailed a little higher to keep pressure in the sail and prevent it from just flapping around in the swell, also put a little kicker on again to stop the sail flapping around in the waves. As the wind increase you would start to get the outhaul off more and relax the forestay and kicker, catching waves and sailing deep even by the lee at times and then hardening up to generate speed to catch the next wave. Lift centreboard to reduce drag but if you feel unstable try pulling a little licker on or putting the board down a bit.
Sunday:	Staying in the breeze was key on Sunday, water was flat, so you didn't need to play the waves as much, the run was really a deep reach so it was really about boat speed, sailing into patches of wind and sailing deep to stay in them for as long as possible then sailing a little higher in the lulls. General the wind seems to keep building on the righthand side so sailing low did not seem to be a good option as you could get rolled by the bats behind coming up on the stronger breeze.

SUMMARY THOUGHTS

Very different conditions across the 3 days. Light airs are all about keeping moving, never point too high or have your kicker too tight, it's better to bear away a little and keep some speed over pointing high and losing speed. Flat is fast and in lights airs make sure you keep your weight forwards. Probably the most important thing is keeping your head out the boat looking for clear air and pressure. Staying out of trouble is key, getting stuck with other boats

arguing who is in the right is just not fast. The most challenging conditions is downwind in waves with little wind. You just have to sit still, point as deep as you can and adjust the rig to stop it slopping around as best you can, sail the shortest route and make allowance for any tide, also be willing to sail a little higher to keep some forward speed bearing away as low as you could as soon as you felt some pressure. Keep pressing hard and never give up.

As predominantly most of us are inland sailors, you need to remember to sit further back in the boat when you have some waves to keep the bow up a little is faster than ploughing the bow into every wave, boat speed is probably more important than getting all the shifts correct as the shifts are less often and not as extreme as on the lakes and reservoirs. Remember the tide and make sure you factor it in especially at the mark rounding's where you can suddenly get caught out and end up hitting a mark.

Name: Robin Kirby

START

Pick a nice gap to leeward and importantly no one that can drive the boat higher/ harder than you off the start. Look at the angle to the windward mark and do a few practice starts prior to the sequence beginning. If it looks too busy once in sequence crack off whilst there is a time and find another gap. Practice holding boat perfectly still against a mark at your local club. It will come in handy for your next start!!

BEAT

Windy, depower boat and keep it perfectly flat at all times, drive the boat by keeping it in a bow down condition, don't pinch. Lighter conditions and very wavey conditions I noticed a tiny bit of leeward heel helped with boat speed. Seems like it shouldn't but just my opinion.

RUN

Prep for the rounding long before, think about rights and gaps for entry. Set the rig and sail as much as possible prior to rounding to help drive the most around the windward mark to create a gap to the boat behind. On the spreader mark don't go too deep too quick and let Gavin pass you 😊🙄👀. Then once boat up to speed have a good look around for waves and pressure. Try and keep surfing as much as possible.

LEEWARD GATE & FINISH

It's not over till it's over. Even when you think the guy behind you isn't a threat, they can get their bow inside you at the last minute. Alistair taught me this and it was a bitter pill to swallow especially with a bleeding nose from the resulting capsize. Moral of the story keep nice and high and act early decide room so there aren't any late arguments / distractions. No one is fast when chatting...