

## Supernova Top 10 – Settings and Tips – WPNSA 2025

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

	1st	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	9th	10th
Name	Alex Horlock	Tom White	Matt Thursfield	Cliff Milliner	Peter Mackin	Sean Ricketts	Kevin Reed	Richard Lambert
Approximate weight?	78kg	88kg	103kg	71kg	92kg	Approx 100 kg	78kg (plus kit)	90kg
What is your approximate height? Ideally in cm but otherwise in feet and inches.	183cm	182cm	191cm	180cm	162cm	176cm	188cm	180cm
Mast foot position? (Measured from forestay attachment to front of mast, or holes on the mast step)	Not sure, likely the standard recommended setting of 1120mm	1100mm	As supplied	Front of step	Two holes clear at the back	1100	1100	Not altered the standard Hartley setting since new
Mast rake while beating? (Top of mast to top of uppermost rudder fitting)	6050mm	6000mm to 5900mm	5900mm	5980mm	6050mm	Used for power control, probably not above 6000mm		Unknown. It was marked at the factory as the standard upward setting and I have used it ever since.
Rig tension setting for the	Low tension (5cm eased on	Low Tension	Very low tension	30kg at 6000mm	High tension	Shrouds are set so that I can't	Very loose.	Loose

above mast rake? (eg 'Loose', 'Low Tension' or 'High Tension')	the 'tight' position of 6100mm)					quite get the rig to my upright setting on the shore		
Mainsheet horse/bridle length? (Measured from side deck fitting to bottom of mainsheet block)	Not sure (borrowed boat)	As it came from Hartley	To the front of the centreboard case	Block goes to front of centreboard case	N/A, no bridle. Split tail mainsheet to transom a la GP14.	Single adjustment bridle used, generally end up between 500 and 460	52cm	Unchanged since I bought it from Hartley, so again, their standard measurement
Lowers length?	Just slack at 6100mm rake	Loose on beat, tight on reach	Adjustable. Took the slack out the lowers with that 5900mm rake.	Tightish	Loose-ish. Squeeze together at mast and the solid metal bits are nearly vertical. Bendy mast.	Adjustable lowers. No slack at upright (6100). 5mm to 10mm of slack introduced for 20+ knots	89.5cm	Just tight enough to take the slack out then, unadjusted all day.
Did you use a tactical compass?	No	Yes	Yes. But not many shifts of note.	Yes - not that there were any shifts!	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Which sail did you use? (eg new shape, previous shape, storm sail)	New shape	New Shape	Classic Jeckells Black	New	New	Old shape, white Jeckells	New shape	New shape

The average height was 180cm and the average weight was 88kg, but there was a very wide variance indeed!

We also asked the guys for two hints, which are in the following table:

Alex Horlock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biggest gain you can probably control is fitness. Aim for a 3 min plank hold, 3 min ski sit and a sub 7:15 min 2k row time. Start now for next year!</li> <li>• Sail the boat at a constant 5-to-10-degree heel upwind, letting it slip over further than this is inefficient, pull on the Cunningham and kicker to stay in control and then ease the main quickly in the gusts.</li> </ul>
Tom White	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend some sea opens before the nationals</li> <li>• Make sure you eat enough and keep hydrated to give yourself energy right up until you cross the finish line</li> </ul>
Matt Thursfield	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rake back more than you think and kicker tighter than you think.</li> <li>• Then keep the speed through the waves by sailing free but hunt height when you can.</li> </ul>
Cliff Milliner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This year needed weight/strength and straight-line speed.</li> <li>• Keep clear air up the first beat for as long as possible, choose wisely when to tack back onto starboard</li> </ul>
Peter Mackin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Go to sea events other than the nationals. Waves add an extra dimension to sailing that can be so much fun and doesn't need to be scary. Do 2 additional sea events between now and the 2026 nationals, see how big of a difference it makes.</li> <li>• Clean air is so important. You won't recover from a bad start by being a sheep. It's like trying to drag race through treacle. If you get buried at the start, find a way out. Even if it means going the 'wrong' way a little bit.</li> </ul>
Sean Ricketts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In theory gate starts offers everyone an equal chance at a good start. Make sure your control lines are set before committing to the start and get as close to the gate boat as possible. Focus on keeping the boat fast and steering over the waves. Loosing distance to rebuilding speed in the early minuets of the race can heavily affect your position around the windward mark, especially if you're sailing in the main fleet.</li> <li>• Tack in flatter spots. It was noticeably easier to have a decent tack in the flat spots on day 1. If you're confident in building speed for the waves you can use these flatter spots to gain a touch of height.</li> </ul>
Kevin Reed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try and keep the boat flat on the beat and reach.</li> <li>• Personal fitness was very important in the strong winds.</li> </ul>
Richard Lambert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fuel well. I ate unsalted cashews, a chocolate shortbread and a banana between races plus two bottles of water flavoured with an orange vitamin powder.</li> <li>• As a heavier guy I was able to keep the boat flat upwind, being careful not to pinch, and opening the outhaul more than I do on my local pond helped the boat power through the chop. Plenty of Cunningham and just enough kicker to keep the boat flat when bodyweight alone couldn't do it. Decent positions at the first windward mark in most of the 6 races allowed me to sail quite conservatively on the reaches, which I found quite tricky with the sea state, and on the runs, I limited the number of gybes I did by sailing by the lee much more than I do normally.</li> </ul>