

Tactics

1. How to read the start line - Pin end bias? Committee boat bias? Port bias? Starboard?
 - *Sail to middle of line*
 - *Sail down length of line with sails set*
 - *Consider speed of boat and pointing ability for a port start*
 - *Consider favoured side of beat you're aiming for – tide*
2. How to read the beat - Is there a rule of thumb for making sure you don't over-stand the mark or tack too early?
 - *Don't line up for it too early!*
 - *Basically if you can see it over your shoulder you're about right – 90 degrees*
 - *Again consider is tide under you or against you – can you lee bow*
3. Do you cover another boat on the beat to avoid losing the place you have made?
 - *If you're on the final beat to the finish (and need / want to beat that opponent) then yes. Known as a tight cover*
 - *It's not a great strategy on the first beat to get drawn into a one on one battle, better to focus on the big picture*
 - *If you're in a good position up the first beat it's sensible to stay conservative and keep a loose cover on the fleet, i.e. tack and cover the majority. You might lose a couple of boats that take a flyer but that's better than losing out to the majority of the fleet if you ring the bell on the wrong side*
4. How to use wind shadow to stop another boat getting away from you?
 - *Essentially it's how you position your boat and sail(s) to project the biggest wind shadow without infringing the other boat.*
 - *Need to think about where your shadow projects – it's generally further forward than you think due to apparent wind*
 - *Generally I'd consider it more of an overtaking strategy than a defensive one*
 - *In simple terms you're aiming to stay to windward of overtaking boats. May have to sail defensively and make your intentions clear that you don't want an opponent to sail to windward of you*
5. How to ensure you are on starboard when others are on port so you have priority?
 - *Generally this is relevant at marks, as per the layline – make sure you don't set up for it too early but similarly try and avoid approaching on port – unless it's significantly favoured. Even if it is give yourself a few boat-lengths of breathing space*
 - *For leeward marks, especially gates then think about your approach – ideally you want to be on starboard so you have the inside overlap – and therefore entitled to room to round the mark*

Getting round the course quickly

1. How to read the start line - Standing starts? Flying starts?
 - *Check bias*
 - *Get a transit*
 - *Always aiming to hit the line at full speed – practice pulling the trigger*
 - *Flying start is more for Cat's – most single handers will always need to be "standing starts"*
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2. How to read the beat - should you always tack on the shifts? How do you know when you are being headed?
 - *Compass is the best tool*
 - *Get a feel for other boats around you*
 - *Perspective relative to the land*
 - *How the boat "feels" – i.e. slowing down and coming on top of you*
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3. Dead runs - Boat set up and trim for avoiding crash gybes
 - *I'm by no means an expert on this as I've never sailed conventional single handers*
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4. Angles of approach and exit for rounding marks?
 - *In wide, out close – aiming for the best lane for the beat*
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5. Reaches - where is the best place to be when you are surrounded by boats? High or low or middle?
 - *The Rhum line – choose a strategy and stick to it, i.e. don't deviate*
 - *Depends on course shape but VMG is the most important factor*
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6. Best way to sail down a wave and up into waves to keep speed
 - *Upwind steer up the face of a wave then down the back of it*
 - *Body movement and kinetics – fore and aft trim*
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7. How to avoid dirty wind - what sort of distance from another boat do you need to be?
 - *Can be as much as 5x mast head height*
 - *Upwind the channel is narrower but ideally you want a clean lane*
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8. When to go downwind on broad reaches and when to go on a dead run (Cats and asymmetric)?
 - *Depends on wind speed and whether you can initiate planing*
 - *Heating up will involve sailing a longer distance to the leeward mark but at a faster speed*