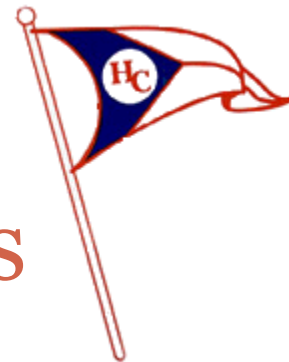


Hudson Cove Basic Racing Preparations



THOMAS CONWAY
JAZZ #289

Weeks Before Racing



USE THE TIME BEFORE RACING TO GET THE BOAT READY TO MOVE FAST. YOU WILL PREPARE THE BOTTOM OF THE BOAT TO BE SMOOTH. THIS IS THE TIME TO TAKE CARE OF PAPERWORK.

Tighten Rig



- Make sure shrouds are tight.
- The headstay should have little give to it at rest.
- The backstay should be snug in its max out position. It should have room to tighten it up at least 6 inches.

Sails



- Sail at least once before racing to make sure your sails are hooked up properly.
 - Best to adjust without the pressure of racing.
- Check for any tears and patch immediately.
- Check your leads and the rest of the running rigging to make sure they are in the right setup.

Down Below



- If possible, remove items that are not used. I empty boat each winter and bring most, but not all back onboard.
- Make sure you have winch handles, extra sheets, repair gear, sailing gloves, race instructions, rules, etc.
- Make sure gear is stowed for rough weather.

Paperwork



- Get PHRF Certificate in early.
- Fill in HBRA form right away to help race management.
- Get crew commitments to make sure you are not left shorthanded.
- Read the Racing Rules. You don't have to read the whole manual, but a review of my rules intro course or a review of US Sailing's quick reference is helpful.

Before You Go to the Boat



**MAKE SURE YOU KNOW THE FORECAST AND
ANY VARIABLES BEFORE YOU LEAVE FOR
THE BOAT.**

Know Who is Coming



- Set clear expectations on cancellations and the best way to reach you.
 - ✦ I use text messages and cell phone messages.
 - ✦ Set a time to cancel by, if possible.
- Have alternate plans ready in the event of cancellations
 - ✦ Maybe a crew member that can be available last minute.
 - ✦ Have plans to sail shorthanded.
 - ✦ Jump on another boat if you are too short on crew.
 - Good way to learn new things

Know the Weather



- **Check the regular forecast for temp and sky conditions.**
- Know if rain is possible. Bring the right gear.
- Check for any fronts that may move in
- Wind and cold necessitate foul weather gear, not just rain.
- **Check the marine forecast**
- <http://weather.noaa.gov/cgi-bin/fmtbltn.pl?file=forecasts/marine/coastal/an/anz338.txt>
- **Check buoy observations on the river and look for trends**
- <http://www.iwindsurf.com/myWeather.iws>
- **Check any River cams for a visual observation.**
- <http://www.hudsoncove.com/>

Know the Current



- **Know the direction the current will be.**
 - It is the most predictable condition.
 - Relate it in your head to the wind conditions.
 - ✦ Downwind in light air against the current is murder
 - Know if the current will change between 18:00 and 21:00
 - Know the strength of the current.

Things to Check Before Heading Out



**BEFORE YOU LEAVE THE DOCK, MAKE A FEW
OBSERVATIONS AND PREP THE BOAT.**

Things to Check



- Check the wind on the river and the sky conditions as you drive up.
 - Note any differences from what you expected based on your web observations.
- Make sure the radio is charged and working.
- Remove covers and check for little creatures.
 - Much easier to deal with at the dock

Things to Check (continued)



- Rig the lines you'll need
- Have the winch handles in place
- Setup GPS
- Have the boat ready to hoist sails before you leave the dock.

Pre-Race Sailing and Prep



ONCE YOU LEAVE THE MARINA, IT IS A GOOD TIME TO START SAILING. YOU CAN GAIN A VALUABLE FEEL FOR THE CONDITIONS IF YOU HAVE SAILED BEFORE THE RACE.

Sail Early



- Check the wind as you head out.
 - Note differences from what you saw on the web and from your drive up observations.
- If there is wind, get the main up early. This will help you see changes in wind direction and strength.
- If possible, sail to the start area.

Start Area Maneuvers



- **Check the current on the starting mark**
 - You already know the current, but seeing it affect the actual starting line puts things into perspective.
 - Will it push you over or pull you away?
- **Run the line**
 - Try to notice if you have to sail tighter going in one direction on the line. The tighter direction is usually favored.
 - If comfortable, point the boat straight into the wind. The end of the line the boat is pointing to is favored.

Sail Upwind from the Start Area



- Write down the compass heading on each tack.
- Trim sails for speed so your gear is set for the conditions.
- Track the wind oscillations.
 - Are they 5 or 20 degree shifts?
- If you have instruments, note the true wind directions and the strengths of the puffs.
- After sailing upwind, decide if one side of the course is favored.

Pre-Start



**NOW THAT YOU KNOW WHAT YOUR PLAN IS
FOR THE UPWIND LEG, YOU SHOULD FOCUS
ON THE START WITH 10 MINUTES TO GO.**

Get Course



- Check in, if you have not already.
- Listen for the course for the evening.
 - Know what the course looks like.
 - Know the bearing to the first mark and what side to leave it to.

Stay Away from the First Start



- Try to stay near the favored end of the line.
 - This is where you want to start.
 - It is tougher to get back to the favored side.
- If the current is pulling boats away from the line, stay closer to the line or even upwind of it off to the side.

Watch the First Start



- See who gets to the line first.
- Take note if the boats that got to the line first is in the best position.
- Pick some boats to see how they do after the start.
 - Have a crewmember track their progress.
 - Did one side pay off?

Commence your Starting Routine



- Stay close to the line.
 - You can always restart if over early
- If using a timed approach, turn around at 40% of time. The turn takes time and it is easier to slow down than speed up.
- This part is a course on its own, so this is just keeping it simple.

First Leg (Upwind)



**SAIL FAST, SAIL ON THE FAVORED TACK,
STAY OUT OF TROUBLE.**

Sail Trim



- There are three sail trim modes to keep in mind
 - Light Air (0-8)
 - Medium Air (8-14)
 - Heavy Air (14-20)
- If it is over 20, keep things loose and survive. Take everything slower and give plenty of room to other boats.

Light Air - Main



- Ease halyard to get some wrinkles along the luff. (mast side)
- Keep outhaul snug, but not tight. Sail should have shape at the bottom.
- Move traveler to max windward side of boat.
- Ease vang completely.
- Ease sheet so the boom is centerline or slightly above.
 - Ease sheet below centerline when footing for speed.
- You want all telltales off the back flying.

Light Air - Jib



- In flat water, tighten headstay and halyard, but do not over tighten.
- If choppy, loosen halyard so you have wrinkles on the headstay and let headstay sag a foot or so in the middle.
- Let the jib out to build and maintain speed. Only sheet in to normal if the boat is in a groove.
- If slow, foot until you get back to speed. Never point in light air when going slow. That is death.
- Lead should be forward.
- Inside telltales should fly straight back. Foot if they waver.

Medium Air - Main



- Tighten halyard to remove most wrinkles.
 - Cunning ham may be needed for wrinkle removal as well.
- Outhaul in tighter, but not max.
- Set traveler around mid-ship and tighten sheet.
- Top telltale may not fly, but that is OK. It should occasionally flap into view.
- Drop traveler when footing for speed, not sheet.

Medium Air - Jib



- In flat water, headstay should be very tight. Halyard should be stiff as well.
- If wavy, loosen headstay and halyard for more power and less point.
- Jib should be trimmed in full. Usually that is just off the spreaders.
- If slow for a moment, crack out jib sheet until speed returns.
- Lead should be forward and telltales should break evenly.
 - If top inside telltale is breaking before bottom, move lead forward.
 - If bottom inside telltale is breaking first, move lead back.

Heavy Air - Main



- **Flatten Main**
 - Backstay or runners tight.
 - Outhaul to the max.
 - Halyard should be tight, no wrinkles.
 - Once under way, use Cunningham to tighten luff even more.
- **Sheet in hard.**
 - Drop traveler, if overpowered.
 - If traveler down max, dump sheet until no longer overpowered.
- **Keep vang loose and not locked.**
 - If you need to dump the main, a tight vang can cause catastrophe.

Heavy Air - Jib



- Keep halyard tight in small waves and loosen a little if wavy.
- Sheet in max. You may need to adjust the sheet as the puffs come and go.
- Drop lead back so the top of the sail is underpowered.
 - The top inside telltales should not fly if the breeze is close to overpowering your boat.
- If overpowered, drop lead back further and ease jib sheet if necessary. Don't just head up. You need your speed.

Other Upwind Practices



- Keep an eye on which side is favored and paying off. If you are on the wrong side, bail early.
- Keep an eye out for starboard tacks boats.
- If oscillating wind, sail on the lifted tack.
 - If the wind is changing in one direction, head off in that direction. For example, if the wind is going right, go right. Eat the header and enjoy the lift on the opposite tack.
- Try to sail in clear air.
 - Tack out of bad air early.
 - If you don't want to tack, try to pinch or foot out of the bad air.
- In foul current, stay shallow = less current.
- Avoid the port tack layline. You have no rights at the mark and there are usually starboard tack boats heading away from the first mark.

First Rounding



**YOU MADE IT TO THE FIRST MARK. NOW
GET AROUND IT CLEAN AND KNOW WHERE
THE NEXT ONE IS.**

Approach



- Try to setup on the starboard side outside the 3-boatlength layline.
 - If more than 100 yards from the mark, don't worry about the layline too much. Odds are something will change anyway.
- Leave extra room for rounding in foul current.
- Two tacks close to the mark is usually better than over-standing.

Rounding



- Know the heading to the next mark before you round.
- Ease sheets
 - Main first since that will push the boat up.
 - Jib second since it is pushing the bow down and that is where you want to go.
- Ease the backstay, Cunningham, outhaul.
- If broad reaching:
 - Trim the vang if the breeze is on. This keeps the top of the main in line with the bottom.
 - Move the lead forward or rig an outboard lead.

Remaining Race and Finish



**HAVE FUN AND SAIL FAST. THE HARD
WORK OF THE START AND FIRST LEG ARE
OVER, BUT STAY FOCUSED AND FINISH
STRONG.**

Observe the Race Course



- Time the competition at marks to know your place.
- Continue to monitor wind strength and direction. It can change a lot around sunset.
- Off the wind, sail for heavier breeze.
- If doing well, stay between the competition and the next mark.
- Monitor the radio for course shortenings.

Adjust Sails Constantly



- Always trim the main and jib when not on the wind.
- Get the telltales flying and experiment.
- Don't choke the main off the wind. Ease it out. Even let it luff a little, then bring it back in.
- Make sure the jib is out. A choked jib will lead to a choked main.
- Wing the jib if possible. It exposes more sail to the breeze.

Finish the Race



- Check the finish line at the final mark and observe which way to cross it.
 - A bad line and a beat on the final leg has sent boats across the wrong way.
- Look for the favored end.
 - It is usually the end that is closer to you.
 - If you can't tell, go to the end that is easier to reach.
- When finishing near other boats, keep in mind that finishing marks are treated like other marks and buoy rules apply.

Post Race



- Talk about what went wrong AND what went right.
- If there was a problem with a maneuver, try to practice it on the way in.
- Sail in.
 - Allow people to switch roles. It helps the crew functions better.
 - Let someone else steer. Enjoy your beer.
 - Try different trim settings and keep an eye on speed changes.
- Inspect gear for damage and make a note.
- Spray off any salt when done sailing. This one thing can prolong your boat's gear.

Questions?



**THE ONLY DUMB QUESTION IS THE ONE
THAT GOES UNASKED.**