

Snipe Crew Advice- all based on the [Pyramid of Sailing Success](#), to which I subscribe.

Boathandling

- Perfect tacks-adjust the amount of backwind to the breeze (more in less, less in more), make sure the jib comes in to 90% trim immediately, and then finish from there as boat accelerates.
- Perfect jibes- lots of ways to do this depending on team, but most problems start with the pole not coming in early/fast enough. Be looking at the end of the pole. Aim to extend the pole in one long smooth pull.
- Hiking- is an art in Snipes. Know your straps. Customize the strap adjuster so that there is a bowline loop "handle" as the stop knot, and the totally released setting is your max hike (do this on land on the dolly with someone sitting on the other side of the boat). In lighter breeze, tighten the straps so that you can hike accurately. Apply the perfect amount of pressure to keep the boat as flat as possible without going on to the windward chine. The crew should hike earlier and lower than the skipper at all times.
- Practice clearing the daggerboard of kelp, both upwind and down. Upwind you need to ease the vang to make room for the board to go up and down as quickly as possible. Downwind you should put your foot on the flapper to keep it down, then grab the board at the front (below the knuckle) and back edges and raise and lower it quickly. You may need to unclip the leash to raise it far enough, but be careful to not raise it out of the trunk.
- Keep all lines tidy at all times. Repeat; keep all lines tidy at all times.

Boatspeed

- Give your skipper as much info about how you're doing on speed relative to other boats as possible. This is your department.
- Speed info must be accompanied by height (pointing) info to be meaningful. Downwind we need to compare depth (how low everyone is sailing). Speed and height are the opposite ends of the performance spectrum. We need to find the winning balance, which constantly varies based on pressure and wave state.
- The boats on the weather hip are the ones the skipper needs the most help with as that is the biggest blind spot.
- Work your shoulders in waves to squeeze every ounce of pressure into the rig as the boat comes down. I try to think of getting the boat back in the water as fast as possible. But never onto the weather chine.

Strategy and Tactics

- Keep your skipper informed on where you are relative to the fleet (i.e. most boats are on this tack, or not).
- When on port tack sailing upwind, it is critical to call starboard tackers. We need to know if there are several in a row before we can decide to duck or tack.
- Know how to read a compass and what +/- means on each tack (header or lift)

- In terms of compass headings, “left is less”.
- Be able to talk in terms of righties and lefties.
- A header is any windshift toward the bow (relative to the original angle); a lift is any shift aft. So as an example if we’re on starboard tack sailing 270, and then we see 280, the number has gotten larger, so we’re experiencing a rightie, which on starboard tack is a lift.
- The rule of thumb upwind is to tack on the headers (to get on the lifted tack). Downwind we aim to jibe on the lifts (to get on the headed tack). Realize that a perfectly set Windward/Leeward course is already the worst case scenario. Any shift makes one tack more direct to the mark, and the other less, by the same amount. Our job is to stay on the more direct tack.
- The rules of thumb above should generally be applied with variable urgency depending on where we are relative to the race course and to the fleet. Basically, the further we are from the center of the racecourse, or the majority of the fleet, the more interested we should be in tacking back when an acceptable combination of pressure, wind angle, and wave state presents itself.

Speed, Tranquility, Patience

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