

Wannabe a Wavesailor

Part 25

PHOTO: ADAM THULIN

LETTING GO ... COMPLETELY!

In this month's instalment of his comprehensive series examining every aspect of wavesailing, Jem Hall looks to finish his hands-free trilogy off with a no-handed jump.

ABOVE: Let go of that fear

Word on the street is that some of you found the one-handed rotational mayhem of the last few months somewhat overwhelming. That's entirely understandable, but it's cool as my schedule for *Wannabe* is always (and has to be) flexible, so before we get all nose-first let's ease up a bit and look at the no-handed jump. I'll also do a recap on one-handers, as both of these jumps are well within your grasp.

As I was planning this piece I thought about where my motivation for all these hands-free shenanigans came from, and was reintroduced via the web to some great old-school clips of Polakow doing huge one-handed moves at Ho'okipa. Thus was born my early inspiration, which in turn I have hopefully passed on to you. The hands-free jumps not only have form and grace - they also have function in that they get you, the rig and board in the right place at the right time (otherwise you will eat some shit). You can also suck it and see, from

a quick flash to being as free as a bird throughout the entire move.

I have already asked you to release the handbrake and sail with passion. Now, if you have passion and are committed to wavesailing then you should therefore love your wavesailing, but "*In order to love you have to let go of fear*" (Gerald G. Jampolsky). Remember all these motivational talks are to inspire you. This wavesailing lark requires so many qualities, and inspiration is a big part of it all - as is perspiration!

Who? Once you can jump and control the board in flight and on landing, you're ready to drop your front hand and (eventually) both hands. It's like carve gybing - once you're up to 50% consistency and are fluid, get into some duck gybes. Yep - if you don't go you won't know!

Why? Dropping one or two hands makes you drop your hips to commit to your lines

and control the rig. This low-hipped position gets the rig back, thereby flying you, and positions you to lift the tail and push the nose off. And it looks and feels so *greeeeattt!*

What? The no-hander is a jump with a release and drop of both hands while you're in flight. Try not to swat any flies or perform disco moves.

Where? Off ample sized chop and small to medium but not too steep waves, and in cross to cross-slightly-on winds. You should aim to go for a long rather than a steep jump.

When? Get off the water and drop those hands pretty sharpish, as you haven't got too much time to admire the view. Your first attempts should be a quick throw down of the hands and then back on for touchdown.

How? Let's look at the dynamics of this funky move now. ▶

Drop It!

Let's have a quick recap of the one-handed jump and all its virtues. The move is covered in more depth in the May '07 magazine and on my blog at www.ezzyblog.com/jem/ – I urge you to go one-handed as it will transform both your regular and hands-free jumps and open the door for one-handed rotations in the future. That's right – start believing you WILL be doing these now!

My financial adviser gives me a 'Reasons Why' report when looking at certain products, which might as well be in Swahili for all I know, as I just do what he suggests. Anyway, here is a pic from a different angle of a one-handed jump, and it encapsulates all that is good about them. A picture is worth a thousand words, and here is what it is saying:

- Going one-handed means you have to move hips back and low to commit your weight to harness and stay in control. This will allow you to do many things in the air.
- Body and rig back lifts the nose of the board to get you height and flying time. The rig's position also gives you propulsion during this phase of altitude.
- With the hips low and bum down you are in a perfect position to lift the tail, which is *de rigueur* for many good jumps. Having your tail up will make the jump feel and look bigger and get the wind under the board. Yep, even more propulsion!
- From your rearward position you are able to steer and scissor the nose off, just like at the end of a tack – because you know all about those, don't you! Getting the nose off means you land in good shape, with momentum and less spin out.
- You can see the big straps facilitating my ability to trim the rail. You take off on your toes and you point your toes in the air to get the wind under your board and look for even more propulsion. *[That's only 201 words. Ed.]*

Your honour, I rest my case. Release those hands (and your handbrake) from your vice-like grip on the boom and your jumps will reach nirvana.



A picture speaks a thousand, err, 201 words

"As we help ourselves ... let go of fear, we begin to experience a personal transformation." Gerald G Jampolsky from 'Love and fear – love is letting go of fear'

SKYE HIGH... ...AND HANDS FREE

Some words of wisdom from our resident pro...

"Dropping a hand is the easiest way to start pushing your sailing once you have mastered jumping. I used to drop the back hand easily – for tail-grabs and the like – but I always found dropping the front hand a lot more scary. In the end I moved my harness lines forward slightly, which then it made it easier to drop the front hand. Once you have the confidence you can start to move them back a bit."

This confidence in dropping the front hand starts from doing it while blasting, and is the fastest way to improve your stance and build up to one-handed jumps. John goes on to say that *"If you're going big or vertical and are too upright, a slight gust can see you losing control, so stay down and get below your gear to put yourself in a safer position."*

John doesn't mind whipping out doubles or big one-handed backies, but he doesn't like the no-handers. *"They scare the crap out of me! I never do them..."* Hmm – seems like he needs to come on a clinic and release the handbrake!

The bottom line is that you have to build up to these hands-free jumps, and the more you do them the more you learn and the more your confidence in this and many other moves will grow.

RRD Boards, Naish Sails and Xcel Wetsuits sponsor John Skye



Skyeboy vert and one-handed

PHOTO: RRD / DARRELL WONG

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SEQUENCE: ADAM THULIN



The conditions in Jeri, Brazil, were medium to slightly underpowered with waist-high ramps, on a 5.2 Ezzy Wave Panther and RRD Wave Twin 90 and 30-inch Flying Objects lines (I'm 6'1" / 186cms). I'd observed where the suitable ramps were and I'd come in, tack, get planing and absorb / pre-jump all the small stuff until I had full speed, in a good bit of constant wind, and launch into a no-hander leaving that fear on the beach.

1 With good speed head towards your chosen ramp while remaining hooked in. Come over the board and start to open the sail slightly in anticipation of executing a more horizontal and long jump. As you go up the face, perform the usual push down on the back leg to lift the nose and be ready to clear the board by pulling up hard on the front leg. Keep your hips back and committed to the lines. My one-handed jump competency means I am already dropping the front hand as I go up the ramp in readiness for the back hand letting go (of the fear).

2 As soon as the ramp is cleared, tuck your back leg and fully commit to your lines by leaning back. This will bring the rig back, which propels the board better and allows you to drop your other hand, or both at the same time if you leave the front hand coming off till now. I find it best to drop my hands down to keep me committed to the lines.

3 Now that you are locked in and committed the rig will be back and relatively open so you are in control. From your low-hipped position you can lift the tail further and are in a position to push the nose off with your straight front leg. This will bear the board away so you land off the wind with momentum and no spin out. Your big straps enable you to lift the rail to get the wind under it to a) fly the board more effectively, and b) aid you further in bearing the board away.

4 Coming in to land now. You've been spotting your landing zone by looking over your front shoulder, so you know when to get your hands back on. With the rig back and relatively open and the board slightly off the wind, you're in great shape for a smooth touchdown. Keep your back leg and thereby the tail (landing gear) up until just before landing.

5 Aim for a tail-first touchdown. As you're off the wind you'll have momentum and shouldn't spin out if your back leg remains slightly bent. Get the rig away and point your toes after you've landed to ensure you get back into fully planing mode as fast as possible. The long lines allow you to stay hooked in to get planing, as your rig will be upright and powerful. Now tell me that wasn't a little scary but actually good clean fun!

TUNING

All of the aforementioned tips are still vital, and you should now be feeling the benefit of your big straps, which will assist your feet / legs to do all the trimming (as your hands can't do a great deal when they're not on the boom). Talking of booms, you want some distance from them so lose the 20-inch lines please.

Jem's brand new wave technique movie *Winner to Wavesailor* is out soon.

RRD Boards, Ezzy Sails, Big Salty Weather, Flying Objects, USPmedia.TV, Prosport Sunblock and Grasshopper Porridge sponsor Jem Hall

Check out www.jemhall.com for more info

If you seriously want to improve and have a fantastic holiday book one of his '09 wave coaching clinics at Baja, Ireland, Mauritius or Brazil now as they are about to sell out!

HALL'S HOMEWORK



This is the last time I'm going to say this, so please do some hands-free jumps and rotations to build up your armoury of skills. You may need to improve, but when you want to improve you will do this!

If the wind's light you still have lots of moves to work on, such as tacking, wymaroos, front-to-sail, heli-tacks, footsteering and light wind waveriding, so get on it if you please. You will thank yourself.

NEXT MONTH

Jem looks at a specific skill – the nose-first landing. boards



PHOTO: ADAM THULIN