



REACH FOR THE SKY



wannabe a Wavesailor

This month **Jem Hall** gives you a break from his fully frontside series to get you focusing on, believing in and enjoying the freedom of flight as he covers the basic jump.

Photos by **Dave White**

As spring moves into summer I hope you're all managing to get some sailing in – and, it goes without saying, doing so with passion. How are the tips working out? Are you working harder in light winds to get your fundamentals firing? What are the key tips that are helping you to be a better sailor? Have you considered getting equipment that will help you to improve faster? Are you thinking about travelling to get some much needed consistent conditions? Are you praying for some low pressure systems to ease your pain and put all these tips into practice? And finally, are you the pilot and not the passenger?

If indeed you are looking to move your sailing up, forwards and enjoy it more, then this article is for you as we're now going to look at the basic jump. As you're now looking to make changes to your sailing you will already have identified that you need to work on your mental preparation, tuning, gear selection, and, of course, application of technique.

If you're not yet jumping then there's no better way to take you out of your comfort zone than to get you airborne, and for those already getting it up regularly it's time to do so more efficiently and with more height. There's a great view to be had up there, and the higher you are the longer you get to enjoy it.

Many of you wannabe wavesailors may already be jumping a little when you flop off a wave or meaty bit of chop, but I'm now imploring you to put much more in, for what you reap is what you sow – and the more you sow the higher you go. Jumping higher and with more efficiency will give you more time and smooth your path to learn more radical



ABOVE: Jumping allows all sorts of expression
RIGHT: Great tail up jumps lead to better forward loops
BOTTOM RIGHT: Jumping both ways well ensures aerals can be nailed.
 (Photo: Clark Merritt / SoloSports)

jumps in the future. In some conditions making decent jumps is the difference between getting out the back and taking a beating – or a ‘learning experience’ as us coaches like to call it.

Jumping is one of the best parts of windsurfing; nailing your first jumps and getting fully confident in the air are memorable indeed. Chop-hops and wave jumps can be done before you’ve gained proficiency in many other moves (such as gybes and tacks), as once you have good speed in the straps on smaller boards you’re fully ready for some aerial action. Many lighter or younger sailors nail some sweet jumps but aren’t yet strong enough for some of the more powerful moves like carve gybes and hard-hitting waveriding.

TUNING

First up, your tuning is very important so be sure to check out my Jem’s Gems section. Your board selection should be 111L and downwards, and freestyle-wave, freestyle or a waveboard, as their rockerlines are more eager to take off.

ANALYSE THIS... AND THAT

To get properly airborne a bit of a ramp is handy, so you’ll need to analyse the water for some juicy lumps and bumps. Just as wind awareness and really seeing gusts and lulls helps your stance and board speed, so too does seeking out the most suitable ramps. These observations are the first part of your journey into airtime action.

FASTEN SEATBELTS AND PREPARE FOR TAKE-OFF

Your take-off will be slightly into the wind and with board’s tail in the trough, which brings the nose up and feeds air under the board. However, speed is your friend here so your sailing line shouldn’t be upwind for too long. More speed means more height and the more you put into taking off the more you get out. The board will not jump for you, so you have to be the pilot not the passenger and give the kit the technique that is required to get it airborne.

The biggest tip to get you off the water is that your stance should be quite different pre-jump to ensure that the kit’s in the right position for taking-off. This is the most major change you’ll make in jumping well, so forget about being outboard and motoring – think more about getting over the board and be ready to ‘ollie’ as you would in other boardsports. Read on for the nitty gritty...





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HOW TO...

This sequence was shot in Jeri, Brazil, on a 5.2 Ezzy Wave Panther 2 and a RRD Wave Twin 90. I was well powered in cross / slightly onshore conditions and the good ramps were quite obvious. The better my early planing and speed through the break and up the wave the better and higher my jumps were. In beach breaks where the best waves are quite close to shore it's best to be well powered on bigger kit. This way you can plane more easily and do shorter reaches, and being overpowered out the back gets you upwind quicker, meaning you not only get more jumps but also more rides. Carving huge grooves in the ocean out to sea will not make you a better wavesailor – short runs and jumping every run mean more action and some investment in the fitness bank.

The actions you WANT to do are:

1. Spot the ramp and get set up with your body inboard and low after unhooking. Bend the back leg and get your head below boom height. Keep speed by pulling down on your front arm.
2. Face up the board and quarter turn your hips to face forward to weight the tail and bring the nose up, which also opens the sail. All this unsticks the nose ready to fly.
3. **Push** down aggressively through the toes of the back foot as you bring the rig back towards you. The more you do this the higher the nose and therefore the board will go. Begin to look up as where you look is where you go. Your arms should be medium width apart here.
4. **Pull** the front leg up and forward as you simultaneously **pull up** and forward on the boom. It's almost as if you're aiming to knee yourself on the chin with your front knee and then eventually your back knee. Many people are quite passive here. Don't be. Get active and get high, dude!
5. **Bend** your back leg to **pull** the tail up and begin pushing the nose off through a straightening front leg. Your leg scissoring skills from tacking will help here. Drop your hips and bend your arms to pull the rig back and turn it into a gliding wing. Really concentrate on a compact and efficient aerial stance here. Not only should you have popped the board through your core but now you should be really contracting your core (stomach muscle belt) to assist in keeping your shape. Hold the tuck and look forward to spot your landing. Your big straps will allow you to get your toes down and therefore the wind under the hull. Sail and hull are now working to propel you up and along and increase your hang-time.
6. Open the sail to drop the tail and come out of your stance by starting to extend the back leg for a tail-first landing. Land with your back leg flexed and front leg straight, but soft. This means you will scissor off the wind on touchdown and gain some much needed momentum.
7. Open the sail to keep speed and throw the rig forwards and upright. If you get all clingy on the sail here you'll lose power and speed. Many sailors love rig hugging after landing jumps (kind of like I am here), and if you find yourself getting too close up and personal then you're best advised to release the handbrake and straighten your arms. Drop your bodyweight down to get into a smooth early planing position, making full use of your BIG straps, which make it easier to weight your toes and keep the board laterally flat.



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7.

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“Pushing through the fear is less frightening than living with the underlying fear that comes from a feeling of helplessness”

Susan Jeffers, from her book *Feel The Fear And Do It Anyway*

Tell me that didn't feel amazing! Let's keep the technique simple: **push, pull, pull** and **pull** is now your mantra, then you do the hokey cokey and that's what it's all about – oyl!

Apart from thinking I've lost then plot with the hokey cokey skit, I can hear some of you asking for some fault analysis here, but now is the time to focus on the positives. Besides, you have my technique DVDs for 'live' coaching and diagnosing faults, and, of course, you have my coaching weeks for the whole package of tips and encouragement.

Jumping will help you become a better wavesailor, freestyler and even racer. So fasten your seatbelts and enjoy the journey, as the sky's the limit and the only limits placed on you are the limits you place on yourself.

next month...

We will look at backside waveriding to rip up those cross-onshore wave conditions.



JEM'S GEMS

STRAPS: You'll need generous sized straps to slip your feet all the way into so you can weight your toeside efficiently. Toes all the way in and instep of foot being hugged by the strap.

STRAP SPREAD: Ensure your straps are far enough apart to be able to 'ollie' the board. For me this means front holes for the front straps and third hole from front on the back strap.

FIN: Smaller fins work better as you can be better positioned over the board prior to take-off. Swap that 27cm fin in your freestyle-wave for a 23cm, for example.

MASTFOOT: If you want more pop from your board then bring the mastfoot back a few centimetres from a best set of 135cm from the tail.

KEEP AT IT: One or two per run. If you don't go you won't know!

HALL'S HOMEWORK

Get ahead and jump, jump, jump. Do it both ways coming in and going out and take it in turns to take pictures or video each other. Get a ShadowBox and employ Whitey to take the piss out of you for not jumping high enough.

JEM'S BRAND NEW WAVE TECHNIQUE MOVIE 'WINNER TO WAVESAILOR' IS READY TO PURCHASE NOW, AND FOR ALL YOUR FUNDAMENTALS THERE'S 'BEGINNER TO WINNER'

RRD boards, Ezzy Sails, Big Salty Weather, Flying Objects, Prosport Sunblock and Grasshopper Porridge sponsor Jem Hall. Check out jemhall.com for more details.

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