



LOOK MUM - ONE HAND!

wannabe a Wavesailor

This month **Jem Hall** fully engages in his frontside series once again as he invites you to rejoice in the joyous freedom of one-handed top turns.

Photos: **Dave White**

I'm just back from another great trip to Punta San Carlos (PSC), Baja, and as with all my coaching weeks I've learnt a great deal from my crew and my tutoring of them. The group comprised a mix of more experienced wavesailors wanting to step up their game and relative novices who were keen to join Waveriding Club – although we all know that doesn't exist, right?

What was amazing was that if I set them targets and they actually did them well then they moved their sailing forward. One of the targets was to get out there and do some one-handed top turns so that their hands were surfing the boom as much as they surfed the waves. Those that did a lot (more than 10) made more progress, and most importantly achieved that crucial feeling of being comfortable with being uncomfortable. In fact my main man Clive 'El Toro' Boden did so many that he was almost nonchalant about them, where at first he was somewhat tentative. As always the standards you set and the targets you aim to achieve will strongly affect how much you improve.

I have to say it – I love one-handed moves. I feel more free and they force me to counterbalance with more finesse while giving increased feedback from the board and rig. Over this series I have set you many challenges, so how about stepping up and doing this one?

One-handed moves get you to really counterbalance the pull of the rig using your body, and force you to consider

the position of your head, hips and hands. This is crucial to developing some style in your wavesailing, and particularly in your riding. When I get people sailing one-handed their stance transforms. If I get them going one-handed front-to-sail they truly understand sail control, and if you do tail-grab jumps... Well, you know what that does for you.

I will revert to my trusty formula for this move:

WHO? This move is for people who are happy making frontside bottom and top turns in cross-off to cross-on. You don't have to be ripping to do it.

WHAT? As you're going up for your top turn it's a dropping of the front hand as you drive through the wave to redirect.

WHERE? Off small to medium and relatively green waves – i.e. not too steep or critical and on an open face, and perhaps as a cut-back to the steeper section of the wave.

WHY? This is another trigger move that will boost your confidence, technique, hand positioning and style.

WHEN? As for all moves do it when you're fresh in your first hour of sailing after getting a couple of rides under your belt to warm up. Have a session of 30 minutes on it and no more – and do one on every waveride!

HOW? Just let that front hand drop and feel the joy.



CLIENT CORNER

Jeremy Selway is an East Coast ripper on his first clinic with me. He was out SUPing and sailing his heart out every day; he put in a huge amount and of course got a lot out. He was already an accomplished waverider and got better every day on the trip, so over to him for some top tips:

"The first couple of days in PSC I was struggling with feeling very overpowered in the top turns. The wind is pretty offshore, so although it's really easy to ride down-the-line I wasn't making very tight turns, and generally after two or three my arms were burning and I ended up crashing out of the wave for a rest. Jem pointed out that you need to sheet right out and throw the rig forward as well as look back at the beach to get a good top turn. This feels counterintuitive to the regular covershot image I've been looking at for 25 years, where it appears that the sailor is really pulling on the rig. To get the right feeling he suggested going for one-handed top turns, but initially I couldn't understand how this was going to work when I was already pulling as hard as I could with two hands. I pretended not to hear him for a couple of days and shrugged off the 'How many did you do?' inquisition each morning with 'A couple, but you must have missed them'. But as time went by and the PSC conditions kept firing, allowing hundreds of rides, I began to get more of a feeling for sheeting out as I carved back up the wave, dropping my weight to the inside, throwing out the back hand and bringing it forward on the boom as I redirected down the wave, making the turn tighter and the sail much lighter. Once I'd got to this point I suddenly realised that I could then let go with the front hand, so it's a great move for training a proper top turn. If you aren't doing it right it's impossible to drop your hand, but if you are then it feels easy."

ABOVE RIGHT: Improving waverider Joey from Solosports enjoying a hand off moment
BELOW: WindSUPing in lighter winds gives you more opportunities to work those hands



“Doubt is a thief that often makes us fear to tread where we might have won”

William Shakespeare

Or, as we say in Portsmouth:

“He who dares, wins!”

Del Boy in Only Fools and Horses





This sequence was shot in cross-off winds and head high sets at PSC, Baja on a 5.0 Ezzy Wave Panther 2 and my new rocking RRD Wave Cult Quad 92. I was well powered up.

1. Go into your bottom turn. Drop over your front foot and get that rig forward through the good old extended front arm as you carve hard with your back hand way down the boom. Increase the pressure through your toeside then begin to tighten your turn by moving more over the back foot.
2. Open the sail with your back arm and begin to shift your weight, through your hips, over to your heelside rail in readiness to go into your top turn and change your rails.
3. As we know, your head will play a big part in assisting the redirection in the top turn, so begin to look over your front shoulder. As for all good frontside turns slide your back hand up towards your front arm (next to back harness line) as your hips to continue to move over to your heelside rail.
4. Get your back hand up in front of your lines and continue to look out of the turn. You're now able to start driving more through your rear hip and heelside rail to make your top turn. Note how the dropping of my front hand brings my front shoulder and therefore whole body position lower.

5. Let the rig begin to come forward to open the sail, and counterbalance the rig's weight. Rig-huggers aren't welcome here, so get the rig away from you as you look forward and down!
6. Get lower and push harder through your back foot and hip to weight the rail, redirect and throw up some spray as you really enjoy the freedom of having only one hand on the boom.
7. The rig going forward and now coming across you weights the nose and flattens the board to drop down the wave with speed.
8. Oops! I was enjoying that so much I forgot to put my hand back on, so do just that, return to both hands on the boom and set up for another turn. Whitey didn't get the last pic as he was in too much of a rush to get out on the water and drop in on me.

Whoosh! And a huge well done. If the rig's too heavy in your hands then it's too far back. If the sail's sheeting in and off balance then you're not moving your back hand far enough forward. If you're going out the back of the wave then you need to start your top turn earlier. *When* you've connected and got it right you'll be rewarded for your hard work with slicker hands and more stylish riding.



ABOVE: Hands together in the top turn will help take a hand off

HALL'S HOMEWORK

Let go and release the handbrake. Sail one-handed (front hand off) both directions, drag your hand in the water and get down James Brown. When gybing ensure both your hands are way back down the boom so you do this automatically every time you bottom turn, as how you gybe is how you waveride. Sail upwind with your hands in very close proximity – this means that you will top turn with your hands together. All of the above will assist you in achieving the one-handed top turn, so go out and do lots as you will love them.

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 www.jemhall.com for more details.

If you seriously want to improve and have a fantastic holiday book on a 2011 coaching clinic **NOW!** Please book early for 2011 with **Marsa Alam** in Egypt kicking off proceedings and both **Moulay** in May and **Baja** in August are about to sell out.

next month

We will have a breather on the frontside action and get you all laid back in your jumping.

LEFT: Look back and get laid back

