

Wannabe a Wavesailor



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Hands right back and rig forward will drive you through the bottom turn

PART 18:

TICKET TO RIDE

In this month's instalment of his comprehensive series examining every aspect of wavesailing, Jem Hall has a bit of a recap and proffers some tips on bottom and top turns.

Summer is almost over and we are now licking our lips in anticipation of what might be on offer this autumn. Over the last few issues I have covered some basics in the hope of inspiring you to perform simple moves with consistency and efficiency, and we will now look at how you can continue to improve and polish your waveriding skills. This will act as a kind of half-term report, so I do urge you to look back at relevant articles – or you can now even download some of them from my blog on www.ezzyblog.com/jem

Now, when I said 'tips', this doesn't mean that I'll be going on and on about how to do this and how to do that, but I will empower you to take charge of your own learning, and I do this by asking questions. I have presented many simple tips including gear setup, sailing fundamentals, how to get out, how to ride and so on – but are you actually putting these into practise? Are you embracing the change? Are you coming out of your comfort zone and being comfortable with being uncomfortable? And you know what I am going to say here... *In order for things to change **you** must change!*

ADVANCING & ENHANCING

When I'm coaching I help people to keep improving on their return from my clinics, and this is done by making them better self-coaches and asking them lots of questions so they can find the answers. Firstly, they must be honest about where they are at, and be able to self-analyse, diagnose and then set targets.

Okay, let's give you a little reminder by asking you some key questions:

Kit

- Is your kit set up right with the boom height, sail trim, harness lines, footstrap size and mastfoot positions best tuned to allow YOU to rip through some turns?
- Have you chosen the right board to allow you to get out the back and catch some waves?
- What have you learnt about your kit selection? Now record these answers and really think. (Or, as Bruce [that's Mr Lee to you, Jem. Ed.] would say, "feel".)

Game Plan

- Has your ability to get out the back improved? Why? If not, what will you do about it?
- Standing up hooked in and hoping to get planing and get over waves does not cut it here – and neither will not getting yourself fitter.
- How is your wave selection now? Are you getting the right waves in the right spot?
- Do you even have a plan?
- Do you have some short-term targets to work on for each session?

Execution

Time to get down to the nitty gritty as we reflect on getting your riding smoother.

- When sailing, is your front hand quite far back and in proximity to the harness lines? If it isn't, then you will not slide it back to gybe or bottom turn, so please get your front hand back – it will TRANSFORM all your sailing!
- Are you getting some speed down the line?



Bottom turn in the right way in the right place

PHOTO: ADAM THULIN

Or choosing the right sections to go for a waveride on?

- Do you put the rig forwards to the inside of the bottom turn and really extend your front arm? Do it – it's simple and will radically improve your bottom turn, and, yep – you can indeed practise this in your gybes.
- As you're bottom turning does your back hand go right back down the boom to tip the rig forwards and flatten the board?
- Are you feeling the benefit of a flat board and do you understand the feeling of a front foot turn?
- Can you really feel the rail bite and then increase the carving pressure through firstly your front foot and then your back foot?

The Transition

- As you open the sail to come up and go vertical do you stay low beneath the boom?
- Do you look up at the lip as you open the sail? →

LEARNING HOW TO LEARN

A good environment with the right people and on the right kit will put you in a good position to learn more. But in order to move forward you must set yourself homework... And then do it!

After a session I ask people what they have learnt and then why. If they do not know why then I will probe further. On my coaching courses people are waiting for this question all the time, so they are always reflecting on what they learnt, why it was better, and what they can do to make it better.

So, after Sergeant Hall's line of enquiry we can then go about setting targets for the next sesh, or even for when they return home. If they maintain this target setting, reflection and self-analysis, then they will get **RADICALLY BETTER** – and fast. The really cool thing is it that it's all down to their own hard work – I have just equipped them with the skills to do it. I basically empower people to take ownership of their improvement. So guess what you should be doing?

I say it again and again (and probably about as much as I say, "Straighten your front arm and get your back hand further down the boom") – you may need to improve your riding, but until you want to improve it you will not. Take action and start the self-interrogation.

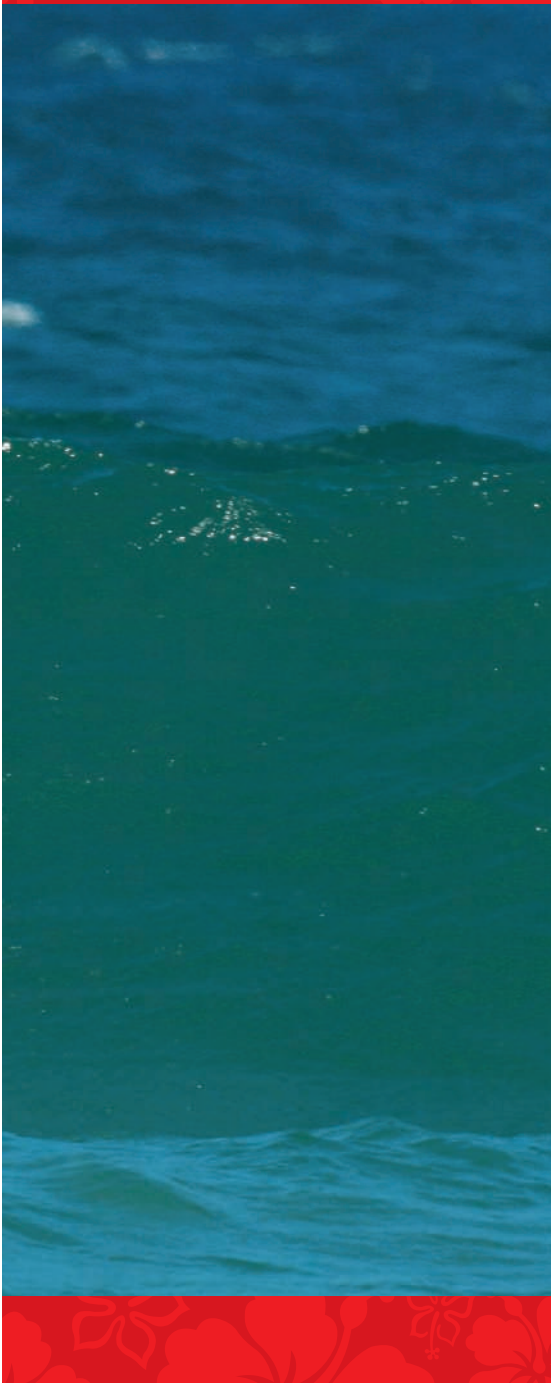


PHOTO: ADAM THULIN

Get more vertical and aim to hit that lip

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Get low ready to redirect through the heels

PHOTO: CAPESESSIONS.COM

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Throw some spray and then ready yourself for the next turn

- Are you trying to go vertical?
- Do you swing the rig to the outside of your bottom turn so you can swing your hips to the inside and carve harder?
- How is your timing, and what have you learnt from this?
- Do you go out the back of the wave? And therefore might you try and make the top turn earlier?
- Do you turn too early and not get back up the wave?
- Could you therefore go later and make your top turn later?

The Top Turn

- Are you keeping over your front foot in the top turn so you don't go out the back of the wave?
- Are you turning your head to help you open the sail and drive through your heels?
- Are you low and trying to throw some spray?
- Do you bring your hands together and get the rig forward to allow you to drive hard in the top turn?

- Have you tried some one-handed top turns to make your hands work faster and get your sailing more dynamic?
- Have you gone late on the wave and got pummelled while trying to get your turns more rad?
- Are you really low and outboard in your top turn so you can really drive down on the rail through your heels?
- Have you tried to lip slide / spin out on the top of the wave?
- Have you recovered from this?
- Are you flattening the board to go down the wave in readiness for the next turn?

Mix It Up

- Are you trying to go frontside in cross-onshore winds?
- Are you working hard on your backside riding so you can link back and frontside turns in a waveride?
- Do you honestly look to make as many waverides as possible in a sailing session?
- Do you tack halfway out because you have

seen a good wave to ride?

- Can you tack?

Now take a few of these questions, ask them of yourself, and reflect on the results.

Next Month

Well that would be telling, but whatever it is you can guarantee it will get you ripping! **C**

Jem Hall is sponsored by RRD boards, Ezzy Sails, Flying Objects, Proport Sunblock, and Grasshopper Porridge... His website www.jemhall.com is sponsored by Oceansource.net

Jem's new technique movie *Beginner to Winner* is out now. If you seriously want to improve and have a fantastic holiday book one of his '09 coaching clinics now – or consider Ireland, 4-11 October!



Hall's Homework

Work towards being a better self-coach, though there is no substitute for a nice big bald coach to be at your service. Start taking some notes on your tuning, what you learnt in your sessions, and what your next targets are. Set yourself some targets – and I have one for you now.

7 / 11

By 7 November those of you who WANT to loop will be! This is your D-day, so put it in your diaries, get popping, get those wymaroos, get videoed, find some like-minded people – but for f*ck's sake just pull the trigger and let's get it done. Those of you already doing it should set the targets of higher, cleaner and faster – or just good old sailing away from them happily. I'm calling this 7 / 11 not just because of the date, but because these are the hours in a day you can be working on it, from gym time, to visualisation, to a splash and dash after work, to practising the move in your back garden. Let's get into it.