



A look at what's happening in the Cobra camp during the "quiet" time of the year.

Here we are in the middle of the season with everyone working frantically on their boats and personal fitness, buying new gear, researching race tactics and experimenting with new production techniques for their advanced racing equipment.

Now that you're all feeling guilty, don't worry too much, because we still have a few weeks before the real season starts. We all know that winter is always a series of groundhog days that only end when it's too late to get anything done.

So to ease the winter blues we have extended our skills into other areas.

First, our highly successful Cobra bowling day produced some surprises – there are obviously a few Cobra sailors with hidden talents!!, with Derek streaking away with top placing after a grueling double header competition. (seems that Derek's misspent youth involved a lot of time spent in a bowling alley). The battle was equally intense on the junior's side with Ben triumphing over some tough competition. Great to see the turnout at the event with lots of novices using the Forest Hills bowl as a venue to release some of the winter tensions and develop their right arms (there was a bit of the latter at the prematch BBQ)

Our next social event was our annual "Mudpuddle Trophy" car navigation trial.

A dedicated and enthusiastic band of Cobra sailors, families and friends met at Westerfolds Park in Templestowe and for the next few hours toured every conceivable track/road/path/cul de sac between Tempy and Kinglake, stopping every few metres to pick up the clues and answer the quiz to lead them to the next clue and ultimately to the finish at Kangaroo Ground. It didn't take too long to realize what a devious mind, David Badrock has .

Everyone finished successfully, with the times varying from three to five hours (some people just can't drive past a pub without checking the décor). Eric and family were lost within five minutes of the start and were eventually put back on the rails by the salvage crew; Colin and Stan feigned illness as an excuse for their slow return, Chris and Alison showed the benefit of local knowledge; Rick, Sue and the boys came in with an inspired late run to finish second behind yours truly and my wonderful wife/navigator Kerry (that should be worth another jib!!), while Kim and Nick completed the entire course twice just to make sure they had answered all the questions before they read the small print about time penalties. And what happened to the Badrocks? Well, one of the downsides of winning this comp is that you get to organize the next one, so David, Lisa, Jason and Mandy spent many hours in the preceding weeks touring the course, writing the directions, double checking everything, paying the police lots of money and then having to sit at the Kangaroo Ground pony club while everyone else had fun- all this for a bottle of the famous Cobra red!!!!

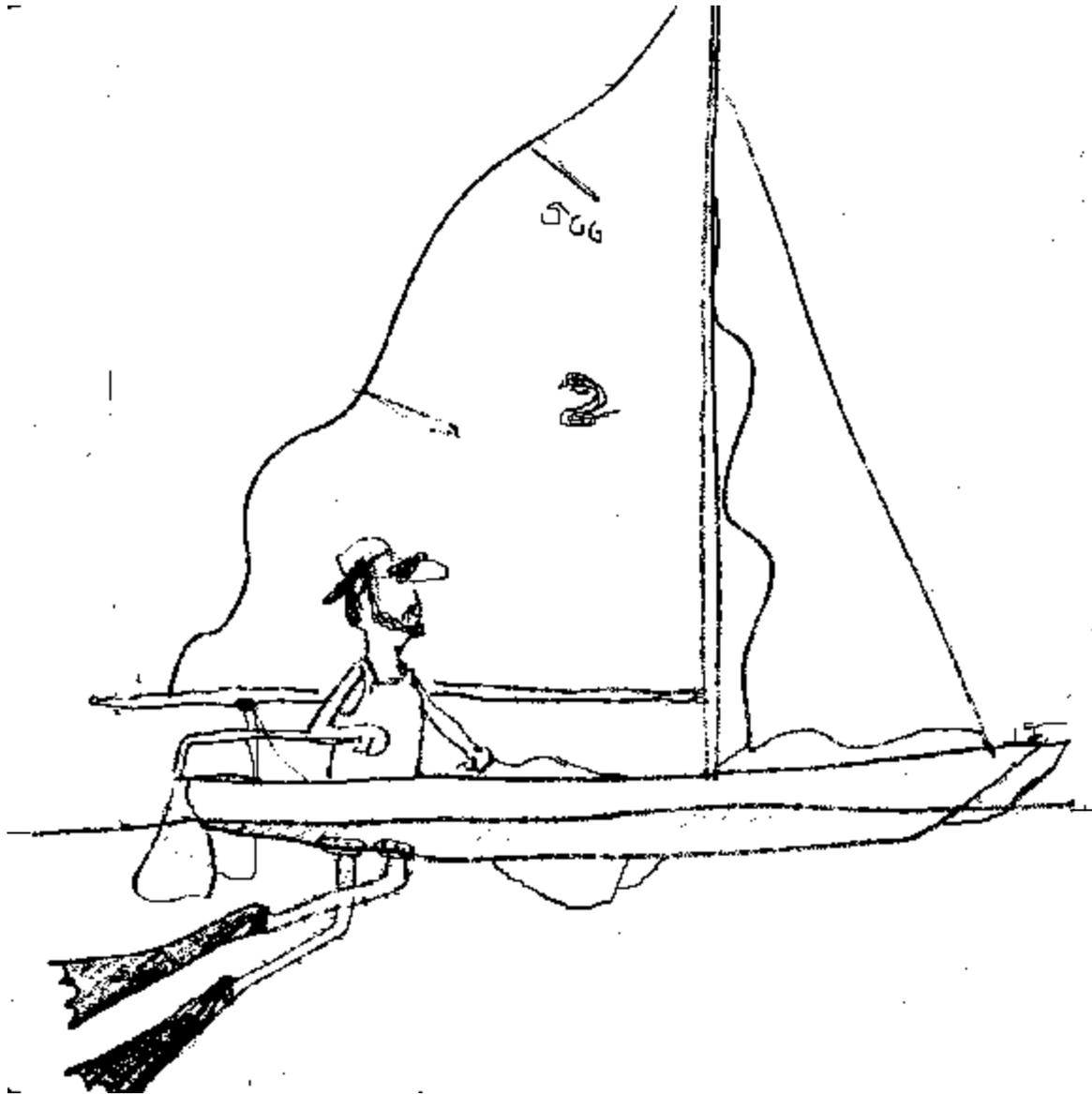
Many, many thanks to the Badrocks for the hard work they put into the organization. It was an excellent course, great fun and the debriefing session afterwards provided many laughs. If you missed it, you missed a great day – put it into next year's diary now.

So now it's time to reflect and prepare for the next race – on water this time. Remember that wetsuits can be stretched if you fill them with wet newspaper, and for Stan, they shrink if you iron them!

Enjoy the rest of Melbourne's winter everyone.

Laurie Bradford

PS If all else fails, try this next season.



Don't think anyone that this cartoon refers to Laurie's secret to success , because everyone knows that his legs aren't nearly attractive as the one's above.

AND NOW FOR SOME SAGE WORDS PROVIDED BY OUR DEVELOPMENT OFFICER.

I've threatened to dust this material off for some time, anyway thanks to the wonders of computers and OCR packages for what it's worth here it is. All we have to do is use it. Good Luck

Mike

Victorian Cobra Catamaran Association
GOING FASTER WITH STUART SCOTT

Spring 1991

Its time to think of all those little adjustments and repairs the boat might need in preparation for this season. With this in mind all you will need to do is wipe down the cobwebs and get it wet. We all know the best part of sailing is telling the yachtsman's "fishing" story, about the time we read the 90deg wind shift about to come, or the time you came into a crowded buoy rounding and passed four boats, or even just survived a race in 30 knot winds with tight shy reaches. Well how do we do this consistently?

The answer is not in your bath tub with your rubber duck, -or watching the fastest spider weave another cobweb on your boat. It's out on the water racing against other boats or one on one sailing.

We all know our weaknesses. They can be highlighted in race conditions by others passing you or just in fun sailing, or when you feel uncomfortable controlling the boat in one direction or feel the boat is more like a submarine than a piece of wood floating on top of the water. The pleasure of sailing, like anything else, is in improving and eventually winning, or being able to control the boat in certain conditions.

In order to improve there are four main areas which we can break sailing into; the first two of which are covered in this feature.

1. SETTING UP

Aligned hulls the bow is wider than the transoms at the centre point and that from the tip of the bow to the centre point of the opposite hull transom on both sides are even.

Aligned rudders - that they are square from leading edge to trailing edge. Misalignment is noticeable if you have a heavy tiller or a lot of turbulence coming from the rudders.

Smooth and efficient foil shapes - both rudders and centreboards should be smooth and free of defects.(a little filler goes a long way)

Quick and efficient sheeting systems - sheets that can be easily accessible and run quickly in both light and heavy airs. ie: I have 8mm mainsheet and 6mm Kevlar jib sheet, all other sheets are the minimum I can use without cutting my fingers off.

Rig tension -very individual character for each boat and sail, but as a guide you shouldn't need a 16 stone gorilla to pull the forestay on, but don't have it too loose to cause the jib to sag.

Diamond tension - that when the mast is rotated the windward stay doesn't flog - needs tightening; or if your leach from the top down to about batten 6 is hooking - you need to loosen the diamonds. As a very good guide, the spreader arms should be set square and the diamonds done up firm but not tight.

Minimum weight the boat should be at or below 80kg.

2. SAIL TRIM

Flowing telltails - the aim is to have all streamers flowing horizontally. If a) the windward streamer is not flowing say fluttering upwards, then you are pointing too high, or your sail is to

full pull your downhaul on, outhaul on or just pull the mainsheet on. b) your leeward streamer isn't flowing ~ fluttering upwards, then you are bearing away too much, or "bag up" your sail, let some downhaul off, outhaul off, or let out some mainsheet. These principles are for upwind performance.

For reaching you are trying to "belly-up" your sail, let out/loosen downhaul, outhaul, pull centre-boards up until tiller becomes heavy, rotate mast, loosen mainsheet & jib sheet. Now we've done these adjustments look at your telltails. The main telltails that need to be flowing are the leeward ones, and, in particular the telltails that are nearest to the mast or the luff of the jib. The ideal setting would be to have all telltails flowing but concentrate on the leeward ones first, you will then find that all of a sudden the leach telltails will flow and then the windward ones will. By making adjustments to your sheeting systems the above can be done.

Crew weight ~ the ideal weight is below 20 stone for most conditions, however if you are regularly sailing in heavy conditions a crew weight over this will make the boat easier to handle.

Crew weight & boat trim - the aim in any conditions is to have the windward hull just bouncing on top of the water with only the bigger waves breaking over the bow and riding up to the front beam. To do this both skipper and crew must move together and keep close to each other. It is no use having the skipper sitting at the transom and the crew sitting/trapezing past the front beam, when trapezing both skipper and crew should be rubbing shoulders.

Sheet tension - sheets should be pulled on until most or all creases are out of your sails, keeping in mind "flowing tell tails".

Steering - steering should be an even, smooth and gentle action, reading the gust and steering appropriately. This comes with practice. It would be wise to go out with an experienced skipper and see how they steer and prepare for gusts.

Smooth ride through/over waves the riding up and over waves, or off the wind, riding the waves but not running up the back of the next wave is linked with "crew weight & boat trim". Your ability in achieving a smooth ride will add valuable minutes to your sailing around the course, and may even be part of your tactics around the course if one side of the course has flatter seas than the other side.

Victorian Cobra Catamaran Association

Summer 1991

GOING FASTER WITH STUART SCOTT - Part 2

3. TACTICS

Starting - There are many chapters in sailing books devoted just to starting, however for this paper we will only be concerned with three golden rules. (1) clear air - once the gun has gone, and I don't mean clear air 50 metres back from the line. (2) be moving or preferably fully powered up when the gun goes, you should be trapezing, systems set and eyes looking forward (crew looking out for other boats). (3) and most importantly be an time, it is no use sitting back and saying those guys will be too early, get up and join them because you will find in most cases it's only in title races that recalls occur, and if you're not up with them you'll find that they will automatically have a 100 metre head start - end of the boat race.

Upwind - The main tactic here is to pick the right side of the course and have clear wind. With our boats putting in extra tactics can cost anywhere from minimum 30 metres upwards to 100 - 200 metres, but lacking away to the other side of the course may cost more than sitting in behind a boat going to the right side of the course. So what determines the right or wrong side of a course?

The main criteria are; is there a shoreline lift or permanent lift, this can determined by the coastline of the area. One side of the course has more wind than the other; heavier seas; tidal currents; and in large fleets approaching the buoy *so as to* Set a clear line and air around that buoy ie: being an starboard tack. Determination of some of these criteria can only be gained from sailing in that area or talking to the local champ.

Reaching - Your main tactic here *is to* keep clear upwind but not to venture above the rum line (straight line between the two buoys). Some boats are better set up for reaches than others *so assess* this. Those that are slower than you can slow you up dramatically, so it approaching them give them a clear berth - go well below if approaching from directly astern when close, aggressively point up high and quickly. If you are the slower boat you must anticipate the faster boat and aggressively point upwind indicating to him your intentions, therefore forcing him below you.

Downwind - Very similar to reaching but must incorporate the upwind tactics of going to the right side of the course. As a guide you should go down the same way you came up to the buoy that is if you made ground on your competitors. When going downwind it's critical that you choose the line that is forcing you down towards the buoy, as close to the rum line as possible. Quite often if you turn around and look at your competitors coming down, you can assess if you are on the side nearest the rum line. In heavy seas riding with the waves can run you down towards the buoy as well.

Buoy Rounding - Your aim/tactic here is to have full speed on the exit of the rounding, therefore wide sweeping arcs, with the exit being the closest you get to the buoy and definitely not on the entry. The only time you want to force yourself on the inside of a buoy is in real close racing, but you must make sure that you can get enough height on the exit to stop the outside boat coming over the top of you. If the role is reversed make your entry wide and aggressively hit the exit apex with speed, as the close entry boat will run wide. Timing is essential here.

Collisions - My one rule which I try very hard to observe is that at nearly all costs avoid collisions whether you are in the right or wrong at nearly all costs bar bottling. The responsibility for this rule can be given solely to the crew. It's their job to call the positions of all boats both far and near. It might be a good idea to tell your crew each time you start a leg "we're now on port, keep your eye out for starboard boats". By doing this you will also find

that the crew will also pick if your competitors are closing, on a lift/knock, which is a very very important part of your tactics.

4. PRACTICE

Practice, Practice, Practice. - Where can we practice with benefit? On most Saturdays there is good 16Ft racing at Altona against a strong couple of Mosquito sailors and myself. On Sundays at Parkdale Yacht Club or Safety Beach Sailing Club.

THANKYOU MIKE - NONE OF US HAVE ANY EXCUSES ANY MORE – EXCEPT FOR CHRIS.

Did you know that Mal has bought another boat? He brought it down to the working bee last Sunday and its looking very swish. Now it's a sister boat to Rick's but the previous owners assured him that it doesn't leak. Has anyone been able to contact them recently? Mal hasn't. Any way, Mal isn't worried as he is going to insert bungs so that he can leave them open during the race to let the water out. By the way, he's renamed it and the middle word is very Mal.

After that little dig, doesn't it inspire the rest of you to front up for the first race? However I may have to stay absent for a while.

During the cleanout of the committee room, a box of coins was found which had either been for the use of the telephone or fines for swearing. It was quite full which tends to suggest the latter and that it probably came from Dave and Lisa's boat.

Eric brought Undercover down but decided not to sail because he didn't want to hit the palm tree that was floating in the water. Yes a palm tree. Mal used the binoculars after a couple of bourbon and cokes to check it out so it must be true!

Robert turned up for a while and this year is giving us a maybe in relation to sailing Reddy, which is sounding positively hopeful compared to last years definite no.

I spoke to Daniel V. about sailing Wildcat and asked if he was going to come down and whip everyone's arse. He said yes and that he would also win the sailing.

One of the potential one up Cobra sailors was over heard to say that there should be a few other cat rigged boats to sail against ; you, Stan, and that fair weather sailor when he turns up. You know who I mean he says, um Oh Chris I replied. Yes ! that's the one.

Well I seem to have run out of people to smear, so get down to the club, do or say something unfortunate and your name can appear in the next issue. And remember, I am always happy to accept dirt, even anonymously. Especially anonymously, then I can attribute it to "a close friend" or "a source close to the Commodore" .

And remember if you are receiving this and you don't sail at Parkdale, send an Email – colin.orchard@bigpond.com or a letter Colin Orchard 19 –21 Gums ave Tecoma 3160 or ring (03) 9754 4855 and let us know what you are up to .