

Rigging the Interlake ...MARKING CONTROLS

Bob Sagan...Quantum Interlake Sailor, IL #628 – 1442.

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It's sailing time. This rigging article does not involve moving or changing hardware, it's about things you can do in minutes to maximize your time on the water as well as make the most of those precious outings...

First: two quotes for racers & the corollary for cruisers...

“More sailboat races are lost than won.”

...anonymous, often quoted.

“The best sailors have won before the racing has begun.”

...Paul Elvestrom, 4x Olympic Gold medalist, 20 World titles

“The best cruising hosts have the outings well planned and appropriately dialed down expectations for guest performance before leaving the dock.” (ya, I just made that up...but you see how it's all connected.)

It might seem that the first two are opposites. They aren't. True, mother nature can be fickle and change her mind, perhaps multiple times in an outing. However, as Terry Hutchinson says, “80% of a race in is your (team's) control. Max out that 80%.” This is what Paul Elvstrom is referring to. The best sailors are prepared, racing then is a repeat of prior preparation. Minimal mistakes. Less losses. Marking controls aids towards these ends and more!

It's summer time. Time for sailing. Whether you cruise or race “time on the boat” is the best way to improve. Yes, improving is good for cruisers too. I didn't give the best experience to some guests I took out in my early days. My improved boat handling, sail trim, weather reading, and control markings permit me to now provide a better experience to my cruising day sailors & racing crew.

Experienced local sailors are your best resource. Talking at the club is good. Going sailing with them is better. All ya gotta do is ask. Interlakers are the friendliest people. Find out what they like to eat/drink and bring it with you. Youtube has some good clips. Here are a couple starter ideas.

1). **Label controls.** “Furl jib (remember to include “please” to guests)” happens more quickly and is better remembered when the control is labeled compared to, “pull that line under the deck.” Reduced confusion. Quicker response. More fun for everyone, crew, skipper, cruiser, racer. Note: use of colored lines IS recommended and a great addition to labels.

Another labeling method is to use a “scale.” This helps for repeatable settings. Scales are often found on booms for the outhauls.



2). **Mark jib sheets for beating.** (It boggles my mind how few sailors do this.) Place marks (marker or thread) to reference max trim in 10 mph. Any novice crew can trim to this mark. BAM you are immediately in the ballpark. Quick reference for trim out of a tack for acceleration mode then the shift into point mode. Adjustments are also easier to ask for accurately and more confidently done. (see pics)

The normal full trim mark depends on Wind strength. Lighter air is 1st mark, Stronger wind or change of jib position is the 2nd mark on my boat.



Position of marks for accelerating out of a tac. Then, once the boat is flat and at full speed I ask crew to Go to “full trim” or “trim to mark.”



Big power up setting for after slamming into a wave during a tac or just a casual cruise. Note: I use a “friction ring” (actually, low friction) in place of blocks on a tail for my 2:1 jib lead.



Also notice that I have colored marks (could use a scale here) for jib car location. My two most common settings are “Go Green” & “Go White” (I can’t ever remember saying “Go Blue”, but Hey, I’m a Spartan fan!). Crew can communicate easily the car position and quickly adjust as requested. (Tip: if the wave angle to bow is different on each tac, consider lead forward a hole on the tac for direct waves.)

These tidbits aren’t even the tip of the ice-berg. The good news is that Interlakes respond best to “textbook” practices. Read. Watch. Talk with other sailors. Interlakes feel great when you do it right and become similarly cranky when you do it wrong. Time in the boat is where it all starts and why most of us started sailing in the first place.

See ya out there!