

SAIL TRIMMING

A few tips from Roger Stollery

Assuming it is a two sail rig to be trimmed, set up the sails in the following order.

Sail fullness or flow



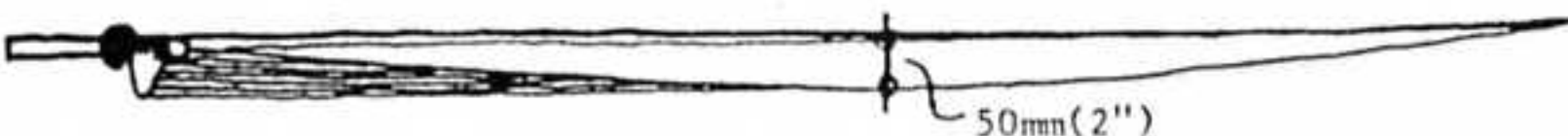
The flow in the jib should be slightly less than that in the main, which should vary between 1 in 6 and 1 in 12. If the sails have fullness cut into them, assess the flow in the area of maximum fullness and not just at the boom. Adjust the backstay to take out any luff curve fullness as the wind blows harder. This mast bend should not infringe class rules controlling curved luff area and if necessary make sure that the greatest extent of the curve is included as part of the measured area.

Boom angles

The angle of the jib relative to the main should be parallel or at a greater angle. For a swing rig on an 'M' the distance between the end of the jib boom and the mast should be about 6mm (2 1/4") or less; for a tall rig 45mm (1 3/4")

Mainsail twist

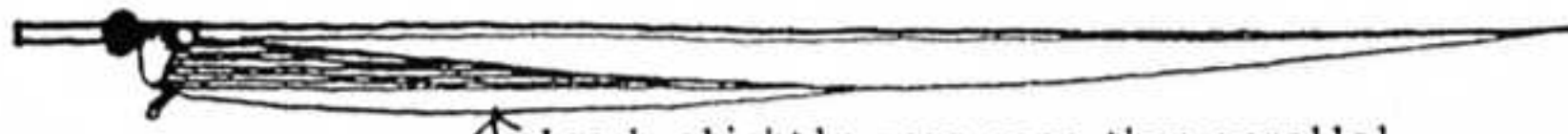
Set the twist in the mainsail first by adjusting the kicker (or jib halliard on a swing rig). The leech of the



main should twist about 5mm (2") from the straight line. No twist makes a boat slow and 'niggley'. Too much twist also slows by the drag of the sail flapping but is less serious than too little twist, particularly in very light and very strong winds or gusty winds, like North Westerlies.

Jib twist

Set the twist in the jib to match the main's twist. The leech should have just a little bit more twist than is sufficient to make the leeches parallel when viewed from aft.



cont'd

Sail Trimming

Jib twist cont'd

If the 'slot' is too small (parallel or less) the boat will appear 'dead'. The adjustment of the slot is most easily and readily achieved with a leech line. Fit one if your boat doesn't have one!

Trim testing



Test your trim by holding your boat into the wind as if it were sailing as close as possible to windward. Move the boat even closer to the wind and observe which sail luffs or flaps first. With an ideal trim both should flap together (see shaded area). If the front of the sails luff first then reduce the flows. If just the main luffs first, open the slot by jib sheet or leech line adjustment or flatten main. Remember, always check your trim before launching and adjust to suit the wind conditions.

A Champion's Performance

The importance of good sail trim cannot be emphasised enough. It is all important in vane racing and one of the key factors in radio yachting. At big events watch how the top skippers set their sails and don't be afraid to copy them.

For example, you will never see Chris Dicks racing with a poor sail trim, because his vane sailing experience has made him a master of this art. His sail setting has become automatic and his attention is therefore concentrated on all the other aspects that are required to make a champion's performance.



Model Yachting
more in it than meets the eye