

From March, 1995

(This is the first of a series of exclusive tuning article on the Hobie 20 by Florida's own Bob Curry, 17 times United States National Champion – mostly on Hobies; 1983-85 World Champions on the Hobie 14, 1993 and still the current World Champion on the Mystere 6.0; the original crew for Randy Smyth in the 1992 Olympic campaign; and the 1994 Alter Cup Champion – held on Mystere 6.0s. Curry as been a weather forecaster for the USAF for the past 15 years. He currently lives in the Pensacola Area.)

Sailing the Hobie 20 in a Breeze

by  
Bob Curry

First, let define the word "breeze." For the 20 it is 18mph +.  
Second, the crew weight I will use for the tuning is 325 lbs. This weight is a proven winner and, from a lot of 20 drivers' comments, really works best for all wind conditions.  
Now, let's toddle off to the really good stuff.

#### 1. Mast Rake

Start by marking off in 1" increments from behind the rear beam 5 through 10 inches. We will want to set the rake at 7" behind the rear beam for starters. This will allow the sailplan to generate lots of lift in the lulls. This is a great setting because it doesn't hurt in puffs near 25 mph. If the sustained wind was in the mid-20 range, then we would want to begin our mast rake at 10" behind the rear beam. If the sustained winds are upper 20's with gust in the 30's, rake all the way back (Remember to set your rig tension to your racing setting before you check your mast rake.)

#### 2. Diamond Tension and Spreader Sweep

With the spreaders up to the max number on the Loose Gauge (48). This allows the mast to pre-bend about 3-4 inches. Your sweep should be 3 to 3 1/4 inches. The mainsail has a lot of luff curve already built into it, about 10 inches at the spreaders and 7 inches at the middle of the comtip. The only way to begin flattening the sail is to maximize the prebend.

#### 3. Downhaul

You will have already figured out that more is better here. Going beyond the black band is a common practice. Max downhaul is needed in the puffs, and an ease of about 1 inch is needed in the lulls to keep the boat on its feet.

#### 4. Mast Rotation

Rotate to the outside of the rear beam upwind.

#### 5. Jib Leads

Fore/Aft setting: 2-3 inches behind your setting for an even jib break.  
In/Out Setting: All the way out!

#### 6. Main Traveler

Pretty basic here. Keep it centered until the boat gets too wild. Only ease it until the boat settles somewhat. The 20 would rather sail headed up than too

settled.

## 7. Final Thoughts

Keep this thing moving! Let the boards take you upwind, no sawing the mainsheet and pinching. When sailing at the recent Tradewinds Regatta at Plantation Key, my crew, Brett Moss, and I couldn't help but be amazed on every upwind leg the differences between the pointers and footers. The footers were GONE, while every else pinched.

Because of the way the boat was set up, we did not have to saw the mainsheet or the jib sheet. We basically cleated everything off and Bret played the downhaul. Instead of being tired at the end of the each race, we couldn't wait for the next one to begin. The boat tuning allowed us to stay in the game physically as well as mentally.

This is a very challenging boat to sail. Rather than spill all my guts in one article, more will come on downwind settings, reaching and, my favorite, the Wild Thing. See y'all soon.

### ADDENDUM:

To check your mast rake: After you have marked off the increments, as I suggested, take the crew's trapeze ring. Detach it from the bungie cord. Tie a line to the ring and take the line forward to the top of the pin that connects the bridle wire to the hull. Pull the line/trapeze wire combination tight to that point and hold that point on the line tightly with your thumb and a finger. Now walk with the line to the back of the boat and again pull the line taut and mark on your hull behind the rear beam where your thumb hits, and see what number setting it is at.

From the May/June Issue, 1995

(This is the second of a series of exclusive tuning article on the Hobie 20 by Florida's own Bob Curry, 17 times United States National Champion – mostly on Hobies; 1983-85 World Champions on the Hobie 14, 1993 and still the current World Champion on the Mystere 6.0; the original crew for Randy Smyth in the 1992 Olympic campaign; and the 1994 Alter Cup Champion – held on Mystere 6.0s. Curry as been a weather forecaster for the USAF for the past 15 years. He currently lives in the Pensacola Area.)

## Sailing the Hobie 20 in Light/Moderate Wind

by  
Bob Curry

Definition: Light wind – 0-8 mph. Moderate – 9-17 mph.

### 1. Mast Rake

Start out at 5 inches behind the rear beam, increasing to 7 inches for moderate.

### 2. Diamond Tension

Begin with a Loos Gauge setting of 40 (300 lbs.). For moderate wind set the diamonds at 45(600 lbs.). At the higher end of moderate, set the diamond tension at 47 (800 lbs.).

### 3. Downhaul

Once the boat begins to fly a hull, it's better to use the trapeze(s) before you begin to yank on this control. The initial setting is to have a few wrinkles on the bottom of the sail.

### 4. Mast Rotation

Rotate to the shroud initially. At the higher end of moderate, rotate to the aft end of the daggerboard trunk.

### 5. Jib Leads

For the fore/aft setting, since all jibs are not alike, set it so your jib has an even break (so the top and bottom telltales on the jib both are doing the same thing). Set the in/out to halfway between the hiking strap and the inside hull shear.

### 6. Main Traveler

Centered.

### 7. Final Thoughts

Just as in a breeze (See March Issue), keep this boat moving! Be very careful on not oversheeting the main and jib. If you have to oversheet, make sure it is the main. (If the jib is oversheeted and main is undersheeted, you will be backwinding the main).

In the next article, I will explore the setting for downwind sailing in a breeze. Until then ...



From the July Issue, 1995

(This is the third of a series of exclusive tuning article on the Hobie 20 by Florida's own Bob Curry, 17 times United States National Champion – mostly on Hobies; 1983-85 World Champions on the Hobie 14, 1993 and still the current World Champion on the Mystere 6.0; the original crew for Randy Smyth in the 1992 Olympic campaign; and the 1994 Alter Cup Champion – held on Mystere 6.0s. Curry as been a weather forecaster for the USAF for the past 15 years. He currently lives in the Pensacola Area.)

Sailing the Hobie 20 in Light/Moderate Wind  
by  
Bob Curry

As with the first article, "Sailing to Weather in a Breeze" (March 1995 Issue), let's first define our basics: "Breeze," for the Hobie 20, is 18mph+. And the crew weight I use for these tuning purposes is 325lbs. This weight is a proven winner, and works best for all wind conditions. Mast rake and diamond tension are as described in the March 1995 Issue.

#### 1. Barberhaulers

Make sure these are all the way out! When it is windy, the slot has to remain open. Don't oversheet the jib, as this kills the slot and tries to submerge the leeward hull. The hull needs to stay out of waves in order to not crash into them, effectively acting as a brake!

#### 2. Crew Position

It's very important that you try to remain a little forward and not on the back of the bus. The boat must stay in trim and not drag the transoms. The place to be is just behind the shrouds in this wind condition.

#### 3. Mast Rotation

Again, it's real important to rotate as far as you possible can. The more rotation, the lower the course you can steer.

#### 4. Downhaul

Ease it up about 1". This will still allow the prebend in the mast to flatten the sail. Squeeze more on in the puffs and ease it in the lulls (same way upwind, isn't it?).

#### 5. Main Traveler

This is by far the most important adjustment downwind on the this boat. Placing it correctly can gain you lots of boat lengths, both in speed and in height. My testing has revealed that the fastest setting is two car lengths down from the hiking strap. This allows the mainsheet to be twisted (power) and also keeps the slot way open. It allows the boat to sail a wider groove than if the traveler was further down and the mainsheet tighter. It is definitely faster in a straight line, and , if you work the apparent wind just right, is lower on the course. To sum it up, this setting is lower and faster.

#### 6. Final Thoughts

It seems I say this every time at this point: Keep this thing moving!! Only in the big puffs and the apparent wind velocity headers do you want to really take

it deep. Don't be too greedy when going low, as the sails will stall out and it will take you about 5 boat lengths to get it going again. If you stall of 5 times on a downwind leg, that's 25 boat lengths closer the competition is going to be to you – or past you.

The next article will be on the "Wild Thing."

From the August Issue, 1995

(This is the fourth of a series of exclusive tuning article on the Hobie 20 by Florida's own Bob Curry, 17 times United States National Champion – mostly on Hobies; 1983-85 World Champions on the Hobie 14, 1993 and still the current World Champion on the Mystere 6.0; the original crew for Randy Smyth in the 1992 Olympic campaign; and the 1994 Alter Cup Champion – held on Mystere 6.0s. Curry as been a weather forecaster for the USAF for the past 15 years. He currently lives in the Pensacola Area.)

Doing the Wild Thing on the Hobie 20

by  
Bob Curry

Finally, here's the scoop on the fastest downwind technique in the world!!  
(except for spinnakers!)

First Things First: the Wild Thing will not work in winds less than 10mph or over 18mph

Here is the setup:

#### 1. Crew Position

The crew should be on the leeward side of the boat and just behind the shroud. The skipper should be in the center of the trampoline centered between the shroud and the rear beam. Both positions should move back as the wind comes up and/or the waves are steep enough to allow the leeward boat to submerge.

#### 2. Boards

The leeward board should be all the way down! This helps the boat to heel in the puffs, allowing the skipper to bear off for speed. The trick is to fly a hull and use that energy to bear away. If half-board was used, the boat would slide sideways, taking with it that precious hull-flying energy you need for maintaining the Wild Thing. The one thing the crew needs to do before jibing is to put that board back to the normal downwind position. Once jibed, the new leeward board goes full down.

#### 3. Barberhauler and Main Traveler

Set the barberhauler at your halfway point. The main traveler will be set no lower than the hiking strap and no higher than the "12" setting on the traveler-setting tape supplied with the boat. The idea is to promote twist in both sails, which equates to added power. A flat sail will not do the Wild Thing effectively.

#### 4. Downhaul and Outhaul

Maximum ease on both controls

#### 5. Steering

It is real easy to sail too low doing the Wild Thing. The ideal way to stay "hooked up" (stay in the Wild Thing mode) is to work very hard on maintaining the weather hull just kissing the water. Every time the hull comes out of the water, you are effectively decreasing wetted surface by approximately 40 percent, and the normal speed increase is around 2-4 mph, depending on the wind

strength. The angle will be higher some 3-5 degrees, but the increase in speed more than offsets the distance lost.

## 6. Final Thoughts

This a great technique to use when you are behind and want to get back in the race! Here is an example of how I have use it: Back at the Midwinters East on the last day of racing, during the last race, while rounding "A" mark in first place, we hit the anchor line, which dragged the mark into us. Pulling out of the pack to do our penalty turn, we lost 10 boats! The winds were up around 12 with occasional gust to 15. We initiated the Wild Thing, and by the time all the boats converged at the "C" mark, we were in first! So you can now see that learning this technique is a very powerful tool to have in your bag of tricks!! Good luck!

From the October Issue, 1995

(This is the fifth and last of a series of exclusive tuning article on the Hobie 20 by Florida's own Bob Curry, 17 times United States National Champion – mostly on Hobies; 1983-85 World Champions on the Hobie 14, 1993 and still the current World Champion on the Mystere 6.0; the original crew for Randy Smyth in the 1992 Olympic campaign; and the 1994 Alter Cup Champion – held on Mystere 6.0s. Curry as been a weather forecaster for the USAF for the past 15 years. He currently lives in the Pensacola Area.)

## Sailing the Hobie 20 Downwind in Light Air

by  
Bob Curry

### 1. Main Traveler

Techniques really vary at this point. I still prefer to have my setting around the hiking strap and the sail twisted off. However, I've seen boats with the traveler at the inboard hull shear and sheeted tight. Both seem to be successful. I still feel the twist look is a bit faster when a puff hits.

### 2. Downhaul

Slight wrinkles is the fast ticket. In very light conditions, add some downhaul to twist the leach.

### 3. Outhaul

Max ease is fast except in very light air when you do not want to release the outhaul.

### 4. Barberhaul

This depends on the system you use – stock rings, all the way out. One-to-one system, once you achieve the correct set on the jib, leave it alone.

### 5. Crew position

The skipper must be at the front beam and the crew should be just in front of the beam.

### 6. Mast rotation

Try for 110 degrees or as much as you can.

### 7. Jib luff

Go for a few wrinkles

### 8. Final thoughts

Remember to stay in the puffs as you work your way downwind. Keep the flow on the back of the main and jib flowing at all times. Without the flow, you won't go!

Good luck!!!!