

Top Tip #4

Thanks to Tim Hore for this month's top tip.

Keep it Flat

This is easy to say but hard to do. The reality is that sailing boats go fastest when upright and flat. This is due to the symmetrical waterline shape that any hull presents to the water when upright. Introducing a heeling action no matter how small, upsets this shape, making the leeward side of the waterline a longer water path than on the windward side. This upsets the laws of physics and so as not to create a vacuum on the leeward side, the water must travel faster around that side of the hull. The resulting action is lift, which to you and me makes the boat want to luff up into the wind. To correct this and keep you on your intended course means you have to pull on the rudder, which although is a great mechanism to steer, the rudder is an even more effective brake.

This is equally true on a reach. Your boat will plane earlier if it is flat. Keeping the boat flat means that the rudder is straight and therefore creates less drag. So what ever you do, pay more attention to keeping the boat flat, you will notice the difference, even if it means you get a wet bum hanging over the side!

Next month: Tim's related top tip for sailing faster on a run.

