

Rigging your Star

Over years I've had the opportunity to sail in Star boats from every manufacturer, and I have seen numerous different rigging setups out there. While there have been some short lived ideas, and some great innovations too, my feeling toward rigging has been to first make sure everything works easily, then to keep it as simple as I can.

Many people have their own personal preferences so setups are going to differ, and I even change mine depending on who I sail with. When I sail with Magnus we have the windward backstay line control the windward backstay but with Hal I switch them so the windward backstay line controls the leeward backstay. The point is there are a lot of ways to rig your boat that work well but I thought that in this article I would let you know a few of the basic things I look for when rigging my boats.

The Purchases

The first thing to make sure is that everything works well. You should have the correct purchase and reduce friction as much as you can. Too much purchase is bad because you may have to pull too much line and it can be slower to ease off. Purchases should be cascaded when possible. Instead of having 8-1 using a fixed set of blocks you can multiply the purchase and end up with fewer pulleys. An 8-1 system can use 7 pulleys normally or if you cascade it only 3. A 2-1 followed by a 2-1 followed by a 2-1 makes 8-1. Even with our ball bearing blocks, fewer pulleys and less turns means less friction and makes it easier to pull and release. This is very important on the outhaul for instance where you need to pull it on in 25 knots and then let it off when running when there is very little load. I also like to use a line size that is large enough that is easy to get a good grip on but small enough to run free in the blocks. By using gloves you can use smaller diameter line.

No Tangles

Make sure you keep everything organized to reduce tangles. If your lines are exactly the right length you will reduce wet weight, but more importantly you will cut down on tangles in the boat. Next time you are sailing tie knots in the position that allows you to let everything off just far enough. When you figure out just how much you need, tie a second knot so when released you have a short part to grab and then cut off the rest. Every time I get a new boat I end up with a big pile of extra line on the ground. Your outhaul should just go out enough to hook up the outhaul but no more. Another advantage is when you do let off a line all the way it will not go too far. My jib tack downhaul is just long enough that the shackle can just reach the headstay connection fitting but can go past it where it might get caught. For the controls that go through the side deck you might want shock cord to retract them to keep them out of the way. On controls that go to both sides you may be able to take the tail across to the other tail and sew them together in a loop so you never run out of line. This works great for the cunningham.

Placement

Everything should be placed so that it's easy to get to and so you can make an adjustment without interrupting your concentration. The things that are important and are used more often should be in easy reach. You don't want to make your boat too complex either. You should be able to quickly reach your cunningham while you are hiked out so you can not only stay hiked but so you don't have to move and perhaps interrupt your steering as well. Controls that are used when running like the forward puller or vang can be placed in the center of the boat. Something that is used very little such as the rake can be put more out of the way. The advantage of the control on the center is that since they are not double ended you can also mark them with some reference marks. I mark my jib downhaul and outhaul so it's easy to find the right place when setting up for the leeward mark rounding.

Steering

Now everything works well and is easy to get too, there is still some improvement that can be made when you make adjustments. If you decide to change a sail control, often people will look into the boat for the line, make the adjustment and then look back again to steer. By this time the boat can be radically off course. I prefer to grab the control line, then look back to concentrate on steering the boat to stay on course, and then make the adjustment. Using these simple techniques you will find that you are losing less ground as you make your adjustments to go faster.

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