

## **Ulsters championships, Cultra (first national teams prep event)**

Coach : Thomas Chaix

Teams : Worlds<sup>1</sup>, Diana (Saturday & Sunday), Wesley & Jamie (Friday)  
Euros, Eoghan, Richie (Saturday & Sunday), Alex, Katie, Jane, Ali, Oliver  
Subs : Alan, Tara, Colm

Weather conditions: sunny and relatively warm. Sea breeze picking up late morning early afternoon from an Easterly direction. Fairly steady in direction (10 degrees shift max) and increasing at a maximum of 10-12 kts by 4 o'clock. Small chop growing throughout the day to provide small waves by mid afternoon. Very tidal (tide raising going from East to West and tide going out from West to East. Current very strong in the middle of the lough).

### **Topic covered**

Friday Morning : goal setting and self assessment of strength and weaknesses (see separate excel sheet).

Friday afternoon :

1. Speed testing with constant rig adjustment. Body position and kinetics. Tacking techniques.
2. Downwind techniques
3. Starting in tide (not very conclusive!)
4. mark rounding in tide (not very conclusive either!)

Weekend : racing in strong tide

1. starting in 80 boats fleet (size of euro or world fleet)
2. consolidating a leading position
3. recovering from a bad start
4. dealing with "a compulsory tack" (ability to go on port towards the right ASAP; tide)
5. clean air *versus* playing the "right" shift
6. clean air downwind (finding the clear lane)
7. pre race routines- interaction with the coach

### **overall debrief**

**Well done** to the group on several points

- excellent team bonding with great team work afloat before and in between the races
- after a hazy start (surely due to the fact you were all delighted and excited to see each other as a team and launched your "official" IODAI training campaign!), you showed great motivation and a real will to progress and give your best.
- The group result was good and you showed to the rest of IODAI membership why YOU were the team.
- You paid attention to details when rigging and kept adjusting your rig on Friday afternoon in research of the best setting (Katie, I think you found it so definitely write it down somewhere)

**Well done** to Richie for a great show on the water: clever and fast. And thanks to the rest of the group for making his life way harder than it looks on the result sheet!

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<sup>1</sup> World team travelled Sunday morning to Slovenia for a training camp with other international teams (Cian, Jamie, Wesley & Killian)

## Key areas to improve

- consistency on the start line (apart from Colm who was really good holding his nerves under black flag). Starting is going to be a key for success when abroad. You really need to take each start you are given (at training or at events) as seriously as possible. Go into the starts with a positive mental attitude knowing that you can get a good one, stay aggressive and push the line. Between the Connachts and Belgium, we have about 20-25 more chances to improve these starts in large fleet. Also use any little drills proposed at training.
- **Downwind.** Don't forget to ease the sprit in light air! Be looking for more breeze and avoid cover. Same as upwind, work a side, but don't bang a corner and make sure you anticipate your leeward mark early enough to allow yourself space to round properly.
- **Control!** Use wisely the "leeward mark double tack". It is a good tactical tool when in the leading bunch to maintain clean air and control over the boats rounding the mark behind you, BUT you have to make sure you have a good speed and clean air from the boat on the run coming to the gate. Thereafter, you need to use an aggressive control over someone seemingly faster or if you want to force your opponent to tack (for instance to go back towards a bunch of sailors getting to much lateral distance with you on the other side). When you are happy the way your opponent is going, use a loose cover.
- Clean air *versus* going the right way! Clean air is really important to optimise your speed. Now it is clear that on some of the races you had to go all the way away from the tide. This was being more important than the clean air! Like Tristan would say "play the percentages"! That said, a great start allowed you to go right in clean air securing you a top 10 without too much efforts.
- **Food and drink** were generally average and probably not enough for some of you. We will come back on that, but as a summary I suppose you need something you like providing good energy (carbohydrates (bars, a sandwich but without too much fat) and liquids (water is fine or an energy drink cut with water))
- **Don't tack too often** when you sail against the tide as it is slow. When getting to the vicinity of the finish line, go for a layline (towards the favoured side of the line) to avoid having to tack to often on the line.

Remember, the trials was only the first step towards the "big thing" and it is now that you have to give your best. This is YOUR campaign and your parents, your coaches are just there to help you to achieve your potential. Be pro-active, ask the questions and make sure that whatever happen in Greece or Sardinia, you have no regret because you gave your best shot at it!

You are doing the next training and event with Tristan. As there will be probably all 15 at it, please be on you best behaviour to kept Tristan's life easy, the weekend entertaining and you all learning. Remember the coaches are there for you!

Tom

15/06/2007