



Gold Medal Coach, Emmett Lazich, offers these sailing tips

Emmett Lazich has had enormous success in the 49er both as a sailor and as a coach. He first offered these tips to 49er.org three years ago, but they are just as relevant today.

Heavy air downwind sailing in difficult waves:

Focus on leaning outwards and not aft.
Focus on sailing high and fast. Eg. Ease jib. Raise board.
Crew be careful not to bump skipper off stern.
Ensure foot straps are perfect.
Ensure main+jibsheet systems are functional & comfortable.
Ensure 14 to 14.5 m spin sheet.
Trim mainsail to balance helm and control hull trim.
Sail high and ease sheets across nasty steep waves.
Sail low + slow and oversheet down nasty full waves.

Very heavy air bear aways:

Keep boat flat and maximise speed on approach.
Ease jib to stopper knot so only clew is pressured.
Skippers foot in rear strap but not wedged in there.
Ease about 50% of cunningham and vang.
Bear away down the back of any wave. Need not be a perfect wave. Keep boat flat.
Trim mainsail on/off during exit to keep mast upright and minimise steering adjustments.
Pull mainsheet back on hard if bow wants to submerge thru wave during exit. IE. Sudden push through back of wave.
Crew sense initial pressure drop and move inboard smoothly and at required speed.
Crew avoid going forward to hoist until sail pressure fully drops.
Smile.

Light/mod strategical downwind sailing:

Appreciate 49er boat speed versus true wind speed.
Typically ignore wind which is anywhere upwind.
Focus on your wind, which is to either side or ahead.

Upwind sailing:

Experiment and agree on who shall do what and stick to it.
Subtle jib trimming before excessive mainsail trimming.
Steer smooth and anticipate. Rather than jerky reactions.

Tacking and gybing:

Slower in, faster out. No jerky movements.
Crew mainly monitors: skippers rate of turn, waves and sails.
Skipper mainly monitors: crews weight, waves and sails.
Speak up early when things go wrong and improvise and assist.

Emmett Lazich

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