Sail to Win!
Racing tactics and tips for the Newport to Ensenada Race

The ever popular evening of racing advice for anyone who is racing the Annual Newport to Ensenada Yacht Race or other coastal races. Seminars include pre-race preparation and tactical tips learned about this 125 mile race course. Also new logistical information on racing to Mexico and returning to the US. Seminars start at 7pm.
It Only Takes 1 Second to Lose a Race

This seminar is aimed at helping you save many seconds

Horizon won 4 Perpetual Trophies in 2015 – including Overall PHRF by 27 seconds and 10 boats in class within two minutes of them!
The Challenge

✓ 125 miles
✓ Varying Winds
✓ Unfamiliar surroundings
✓ 1-2 nights at sea
✓ Not your typical “club race”
GET A RATING
To get a rating for your boat, you need to be a member of the Performance Handicap Racing Fleet (PHRF) or of the Ocean Catamaran Racing Association (ORCA). This applies to all racers, (except for One-Design and Unlimited classes). PHRF issues the Rating for all of the PHRF boats that participate in the Race. ORCA provides NOSA with an Official Ratings List for ORCA boats.

GET A SAIL NUMBER
You need to have a sail number for your boat. If your boat doesn’t have a sail number, contact Southern California Yachting Association (SCYA) to get one. If you are from out-of- state or out-of-country, you can obtain your sail number from your local or National Authority.

ENTER
On-line registration is provided on the NOSA website. View the Registration Form in advance to be sure you have all of the requested information available when you enter. Fees are detailed in the Notice of Race. They include a Yellow Brick tracker for each boat.

HOTEL & MARINA
Don’t wait to make your hotel and marina arrangements. Make sure you mention that you are racing in the N2E. Hotel Coral is Race HQ and the site for Awards.

EQUIPMENT
Make sure your boat and crew are equipped for the race by following the Notice of Race and US Sailing Safety Equipment Requirements.

Make sure you’ve got the key permits.

MEXICO CUSTOMS
Required documentation to visit Mexico by sea:
– Certificate of Documentation or current vessel registration
– Current vessel insurance
– Current passport for owner and crew
– Current vessel Temporary Import Permit (TIP)

US PASSPORT & CUSTOMS
You and your crew will need a Passport to re-enter the United States from Mexico. Also, you will need to obtain a customs decal for your boat.

RACE ENTRANT REPORT
You also need to fill out a Race Entrant Report after registering for the race. This is a requirement from US Customs. The Form is available below. NOTICE: Give the completed form to the inspecting officer upon arrival at the CBP dock.

A boat entering Mexico for the first time goes thru the official check-in process with both Mexican Customs and Immigration. By participating in the N2E race, these are expedited for you and usually handled at the marina you are staying, or at Race Headquarters at the Hotel Coral. Similarly, the boat exiting Mexico check-out procedure is handled by N2E Race management for you. You will not need to do the typical visiting of multiple downtown Ensenada offices when arriving and departing. One of the fees involved in sailing into Ensenada is a per boat fee to the Harbor Master. This is included in your entry fee and handled by N2E Race Management for you. The other significant fee is the tourist visa fee for each person going ashore. Each year NOSA lobbies local authorities to have this fee waived for racers, and in many past years has succeeded. In 2018 the Mexican government insisted it be collected and gave NOSA 48-hour notice of this decision. We do not have a final decision for 2019. In 2018 and 2019 NOSA has supported local groups lobbying their government officials to change this law. We don’t know if they will succeed. We will keep you informed of our progress. This tourist visa can be prepaid on the internet or paid in Ensenada at Hotel Coral. The current amount is $306 Mexican Pesos, about $16 USD. Mexican law also requires all passengers on a boat with fishing gear to have a Mexican fishing license.
Pre-Race Checklist - Be Prepared

- CREW
- RACE PLAN
- EQUIPMENT
- PRACTICE
Tips - Crew

Divide your crew….to have equal skills on each watch

- Sailing and Navigation
  - More than one helmsman (at least three)

- Drive, trim, motivate, access

Many types of watch schedules

Assign “Most Committed” to 12-6 AM Watches

- When most concentration is needed
Too many crew in the cockpit will cause the stern to drag (SLOW)

Balance fore and aft weight

Where is crew sleeping?

Too many crew on the foredeck will cause the bow to dip (SLOW)

Balance fore and aft weight

Where is crew sleeping?

1000 lbs of crew weight
Tips - Race Plan

Decide on which course you will take
- Based on anticipated wind conditions, your boat’s speed potential, your crew’s experience, etc.
- Inside, rhumb line, outside

Share the Plan with all members of the crew
- Watch Captains agree not to deviate unless the skipper approves.

Establish your “Targets”
Tips – Equipment & Storage

All equipment required by your Fleet and by the US Coast Guard

Show every member of your crew where every item of equipment is kept
  – Safety while underway

Each watch must know how to use the GPS
Tip - Program your GPS

Enter Multiple Waypoints

Use It to Track Progress
- SOG
- COG
- VMG
- Target times
Waypoints

START

CORONADO ISLANDS

FINISH

Enter Multiple Waypoints
Race Waypoint to Waypoint

= Waypoint
Finish Line off Hotel Coral
GPS coordinates in SI
Practice At Night

Sail once or twice at night…for at least 4 hours

Change sails 2-3 times at night

Find bell buoys at night via GPS

Have more than one person steer
  ✓ to a compass heading/GPS at night
  ✓ by moonlight

Crew Overboard Drill
A Few More Tips

Spinnaker can get set sideways
  – Mark the “TOP” (laundry pen or tape)

Most boats are over-weight
  – Remove all but the essentials and required equipment

Move anchors/rode to center-line – over the keel
  – Get weight out of the ends

There is no such thing as “normal” winds
  …only “average”
How do I know which course to take?
Sail Where the Wind Is

For a few days and nights before the start, study what the wind is doing. Visit “weather” sites on the Internet.

Racing Area

7pm tonight

5 am tomorrow
Windytv.com vs. Sailflow.com

Long Beach to Newport Beach

San Diego
Thursday - Clear. High: 66° F. / 19° C. Wind WNW 15 mph

Thursday Night - Clear. Low: 57° F. / 14° C. Wind NNE 8 mph

Friday - Clear. High: 68° F. / 20° C. Wind WNW 15 mph

Friday Night - Clear. Low: 57° F. / 14° C. Wind NNW 6 mph

Saturday - Clear. High: 68° F. / 20° C. Wind WNW 13 mph

Saturday Night - Clear. Low: 57° F. / 14° C. Wind NW 8 mph

Sunday - Scattered Clouds. High: 68° F. / 20° C. Wind WNW 13 mph

Sunday Night - Clear. Low: 57° F. / 14° C. Wind NW 8 mph

Monday - Clear. High: 68° F. / 20° C. Wind WNW 15 mph

Wind & Course Inside or Out?
• RHUMB-LINE is faster than INSIDE
  • most of the time (90%)!

• OUTSIDE THE RHUMB-LINE (within reasonable limits) is often FASTER than on the rhumb-line

• Optimum boat speed is more important than sailing the exact course (within reasonable limits).
It’s Called VMG (Velocity Made Good)

How fast am I going towards my destination?

Freeway or side streets?

Wind Direction

Rhumbline Course

Angle

Jibe Point

Course Sailed
| ✔ Crew Plan          | done                      |
| ✔ Weather           | have studied              |
| ✔ Race Plan         | done                      |
| ✔ Equipment         | ready… *including sails* |
| ✔ GPS               | multiple waypoints in     |
Push away from the dock early

Check In early - 10am  First Start 11am
Last Start noon

Go to the Starting Area and find your Start Line early

Settle down!
2-3 knot current may drive you over the line

What is the favored end of the line?

- Line skew
- Wind direction and strength
- Clearest air
- Least amount of congestion

Do not get caught in an “over-early” situation
- It is **VERY** difficult to return and re-cross the line

**HINT**
Line may be skewed to give inshore end an advantage
Moments Before the Start!

NOTICE – “bargen”, spinnaker pole ready, boat middle of line, OCS, boat going back
Boom...And We’re Off (Now What ?)

Concentrate on getting into clean air
  – Boats in front, to side, and coming from behind
  – Lift out of the traffic jam
  – Avoid “sight-seeing” – pay attention

Follow the leaders (for a while)

Pick your course (your Race Plan) and trim to it
Remember...

This is a long race (marathon versus a 5K)

Concentration is easily lost in the excitement…and in the early morning hours

Race from waypoint to waypoint

125 miles of constant trimming
3 PM

- Wind clocking more
- Is spinnaker ready to go
- Genoa halyard clear for take-down
- What’s the competition doing
- Bearing to next waypoint
- Impact on VMG
Hint...

Genoa/spinnaker may get “wet” during the night and “droop” in the light air
   – Tell tails might “stick” to sail

Consider changing to #2 or a “light air” spinnaker

Change to lighter sheets too
Spinnaker Trim

CLOSE REACH
Pole forward

OFFWIND
Pole back
An “A+” for Trimming

NOTICE – poles level, parallel with boom, boats at good angle of heel
Correct Trim Adjustment?

Use your boat’s knot meter …or the GPS

Check before adjustment

Check after adjustment

Did Adjustment increase or decrease boat speed?

REMEMBER - At night, you can’t see the tell tails!
Time for Dinner

• Serve a **hot meal before dark**. Crew needs fuel!

• Every boat should also have hot water, coffee, soup, etc.

• Remember crew position during dinner
Sunset Starts Watch Schedule

Easy to say, but hard to do

Crew needs to rest before it gets dark

Save energy for the big push at night!
The Race Is Won At Night

• Concentrate!
  – Rotate Helm and Crew
  – Keep trimming
  – Use the GPS (VMG)
  – Use the Knotmeter

It’s dark out there!
  – You may become a little disoriented
  – Keep the land to the left
  – Perpendicular is bad
Watch For Running Lights
25% of the Fleet are new racers...they may not know the Rules

Cruising boat motoring?
Navy ship?
Racing boat on port tack?
Something else?
YOU
Going Too Slow? Not “On Target”? 

The **#1 reason** is the sails are trimmed **in** too much…

– Particularly true in light air
– Remember the wind usually clocks aft
– Trim at Midnight is different than at 10 PM

“When In Doubt…Ease It **Out**”
– Check the knot meter & GPS
Donuts Are Bad
(Particularly At Night)

• In “zero” wind, don’t get fooled by waves causing “apparent” wind

• You can generate apparent wind by steering in circles

• BUT…you aren’t moving down the course
Remember VMG

Are you **moving** the boat **toward** your destination

Are you focused on where the wind is and how you will take advantage of it

“Race” your best between 2-6 AM
  – Gain distance on the competition
  – This is when the race is won
  – Display course to next waypoint
If boat speed is 2.0 knots or more, don’t motor

The Engine Use Penalty will eat away any gains you might achieve

1 hr motor = >2 hrs penalty
Good Morning, Rosarito Beach

Great Effort by 2-6 Watch - No Donuts - Passed 5 Boats
Breakfast Is Now Being Served

Sunrise was glorious!

Breeze building

Still not many boats around

Time for “hot” coffee and……..

How far to Punta San Miguel

Course decision
COURSE DECISION

If you “go left” after Punta San Miguel, you may be sailing “dead-downwind” which is a slow point of sail.

It’s often better to keep heading toward Todos Santos and jibe later.

Remember VMG!
Finishing at Night

Ensenada is a BIG CITY. Don’t be fooled into heading for the lights of El Sauzal.

The wind often drains down the cliffs at night to give a bit of an offshore breeze, but there are rocks and kelp near shore.

Shine a light on your Sail Numbers.
Aerial view of Hotel Coral Marina, Ensenada, 2019 N2E proposed finish line position near rock jetty.
Aerial view of Hotel Coral Marina, Ensenada, 2019 N2E, proposed finish line crew position on the rock jetty.

Inside the rock jetty = marina harbor.

Outside the rock jetty = Ocean.
A Few Seconds Before Finishing
You’re Not Done Yet!

Record your Finish Time on the “Finish Card” – use GPS time

Note the boats in front and behind

Turn the Card in at HQ

And then……*PARTY!*
Sunday - Trophy Presentation
Remember to Dress Nice!

Hi Mom!
Sail to Win