





{ Feasible freestyle for everyone! }

# FLUID PROGRESSIONS: FREESTYLE FOR EVERYONE

## PART 3: RIG 180S AND 360S

JIM COLLIS CONTINUES THIS MONTH with the third part in his "Freestyle for Everyone" series, a string of articles designed to help us consolidate our general windsurfing skills, whatever our ability level, through building and developing our rig and board confidence whilst having fun out on the water. Having looked at the first four freestyle skills from the series in the last couple of issues, namely lifting/dragging a foot, kneeling/sitting/lying down whilst sailing, switch stance sailing, and pirouettes, Jim is moving on this month to skills 5: rig 180s and 360s.

## A LITTLE REMINDER...

### "Freestyle for everyone"

This concept is not about learning the latest 'hoochy-kapoochy' manoeuvre, it's about getting on the water, whatever the conditions and our ability level, and getting better at handling a rig and moving around on a board in a fun and entertaining way... what freestyle is really all about! The end result is that, as well as having a good laugh, we will be learning and consolidating core skills so that we get better at our general sailing without even realising it. We will also be gaining key foundations in freestyle so that if we wanted to take it further, then we would be set up to do so.

### 10 simple skills

Rather than heading out on the water and randomly trying 'twirly things' on a board, we are going to work our way through a simple progression of 10 easy to achieve freestyle skills that get progressively harder and can be done in non-planing or planing conditions. These 10 skills, running from lifting/dragging a foot as the first through to a helicopter tack as the 10th, underpin the essential movements in windsurfing that help us as sailors to get better at all skills in windsurfing. We will find that certain skills work as great exercises for certain moves we are trying in our general sailing, and that as we get more confident with the 10 skills, we can start to link them together, create new skills and gain new and far-improved confidence with our rig and on our board, without even realising it!

### Kit and conditions

We should help ourselves from the start by jumping on a bigger board than perhaps we would usually go on and a smallish rig rather than some monster. Ideally, good kit to go out on is a board of around 130-200 litres (depending on our weight) and a sail between 4.5m-6.5m (depending on what we feel comfortable with). We should also start by going out in light to marginal winds (Force 1-3) rather than throwing ourselves into it during a typhoon and wondering why nothing seems to be working!

As we become more confident at throwing a smallish rig and ourselves around in marginal conditions and on a more stable platform, so we might then 'up the ante' a bit to improve our skill level by going down in board size slightly, going out in slightly stronger winds and maybe increasing the rig size a fraction (although not too big for the sake of manoeuvrability).

For those really light wind days, or perhaps when getting onto the water is just not feasible for that day, there is always the option of taking your fin off and doing some of the skills on land on a finless board and rig. Remember all time spent on your kit is time well spent!



{ Practicing skills on land on a finless board and rig is also invaluable }

## Keeping it stupidly simple!

As always with learning any skill, simplicity is the key. As such, each of the 10 skills will be broken down with the use of Jim's K.I.S.S. ("Keeping It Stupidly Simple") coaching methodology; 5 basic terms that help to simplify and strip skills down to their core working components to make them easily achievable and understandable.

### The 5 terms of K.I.S.S. are:

**HEAD** - Looking where we want to go and being aware of everything around us  
**ARMS** - Keeping a straight front arm thereby distancing ourselves from the rig and causing us to naturally counter balance against it, and using our back arm to 'sheet in' or draw power from the rig  
**LEGS** - Adjusting leg and foot positions on the board to keep it flat and us stable!

**BODY** - Changing our body's position/shape according to conditions and how we feel: if we feel over-powered or threatened we get lower and if we feel underpowered or inefficient we become more upright

**BREATHE** - Remembering to breathe so that we can be relaxed, alert and responsive when sailing which in turn helps us to flow and perform more naturally whatever the skill or conditions.

## FREESTYLE SKILLS 5

### Rig 180s & 360s (Ducking the Rig)

This is an old classic that is invaluable for our control and understanding of how a rig moves and rotates, and above all is fun and achievable!

The main benefits to our everyday sailing are huge:

- It gives us great rig confidence, which pays dividends to our sailing in a straight line and in the turns
- It heightens our level of rig control, which in turn makes us more rounded sailors over a wider range of conditions and techniques
- It is a very useful skill to practice for progression into more advanced skills such as duck gybes and clew-first sailing. Here is the sequence for doing some rig 180s & 360s:

Steer onto a broad reach



1) Once comfortable sailing across the wind (on a beam reach) steer slightly off the wind (onto a broad reach) by turning your head to look more downwind

Back hand as far down the boom as possible...



2) Move your back hand (hand nearest the back of the board) down the boom towards the clew as far as you can

Release your front hand...



3) Keeping your head looking where you are going, release your front hand (hand nearest the front of the board) from the boom allowing the mast to fall away just downwind of the nose of the board

Duck the rig



4) Grab the boom just behind your back hand with your front hand again and, releasing your back hand, pull the boom across and in front of your body with a straight front arm

Grab the new side of the boom...



5) Place your back hand on the new side of the boom, aiming to take hold of it as close to the harness lines/centre of effort as possible

Wide grip on the boom!



6) Move your front hand onto the new side of the boom maintaining a wide grip (necessary for control of the rig when clew-first)

Sailing clew-first!



7) Keep your head looking where you are going and your arms extended/rig away, you have just done a rig 180 and are now sailing clew-first!

# JIM COLLIS

## TECHNIQUE

To rotate the rig back to normal and complete a full rig 360:



Prepare for second 180 by sliding back hand up to head of boom

1) Still sailing on a broad reach, slide your back hand (still the hand nearest the back of the board, despite the rig being the wrong way around!) down the boom towards the head of the boom (where the clamp is)



Rig back, body forwards!

2) Keeping your head looking where you are going, release your front hand (still the hand nearest the front of the board although the rig is the wrong way around) and let the rig float around behind you – rig goes back and your body stays forwards!



Collect rig from behind you and bring forwards

3) Collect the rig from behind you with your front hand and, releasing your back hand, draw the rig across and in front of you with a straight front arm



Rig forwards, body back!

4) Place your back hand back on the boom and drop your body low – rig goes forwards and your body drops back!



Try the other direction... and then some variations!

5) Try doing one after another without a pause half way. How many can you do? For those feeling a little more adventurous, why not try putting a pirouette in at the end of the rig 360 as a combination move? Remember to try in the other direction as well.

This brings us to the end of this episode on rig 180s & 360s and clew-first sailing. Hopefully there are some useful bits for everyone to have a go at, the main focus being on having a good time out on the water and getting better at our general sailing without even realising! In the next issue we will be moving onto the next skill in this freestyle progression: the 7th out of the 10 freestyle skills in this Fluid Progressions: Freestyle for Everyone series... sailing backwards. In the meantime, get out there and enjoy!

“Freestyle for Everyone” is written by Jim Collis - Pro Coach, Instructor Trainer and Test Editor for Windsurf magazine. If you'd like any more information on coaching or training to be an instructor with Jim please contact him on [jimcollis@windsurfevolution.co.uk](mailto:jimcollis@windsurfevolution.co.uk) or visit [www.windsurfevolution.co.uk](http://www.windsurfevolution.co.uk) ●

### TOP TIPS FOR RIG 180S AND 360S:

Rotating a rig 180 and/or 360 is much easier and more achievable when sailing 'off the wind' on a broad reach. Always keep your head looking where you are going and NOT at the rig. Keep good counterbalance with the rig at all times by keeping your arms extended/rig away, and moving your body in opposition to the movement of the rig (rig back, body forwards & rig forward, body back!)