

boardshorts: jimbo's gems ↘

EPISODE 1: KIT IN A MUDDLE ON THE BEACH?

Jim Collis, recently appointed tester for Windsurf Magazine, is a professional coach and instructor trainer when he is not putting kit through its paces, so what better source to plug for a few pearls of wisdom and top tips. Commencing a new regular feature, Jim starts off by offering some simple advice on how to leave your kit safely by the water's edge. He also helps to dispel some of the 'urban myths' that surround, and so often cause confusion, on this topic!

The Holy Trinity

Three top tips – no more, no less – for leaving your kit on the beach...

1. Board across the wind (with rig attached)
2. Rig attached to the board with the mast downwind of the board, and pointing where the wind is going
3. "Points together" – have the clew and the nose of the board on the same side (this is just a sneaky tip to help when we want to launch – just walk to tail of board, grab boom and front footstrap, lift and you're away!)

"Urban Myths" and common mistakes to watch out for!

a. When a rig is attached to a board, it should always be placed downwind of the board (for obvious reasons) and with the mast pointing where the wind is going. There is a popular misconception that the mast should be placed across the board (shown below). The problem with this is that the rig powers up in a gust and makes its way downwind anyway...so you might as well save yourself the trouble by placing it downwind in the first place!

It is always advisable to have board and rig attached when on the beach...but sometimes this isn't always possible

b. If you have to leave a board unattended on a beach it is best to leave it fin down, with the nose pointing directly into the wind. Never leave it across the wind. The windier it is, the worse idea it is at all to leave a board on its own, as they are very prone to disappearing down the beach in a big gust. Not ideal for passers by, nor for your precious board!

c. Avoid, if possible, leaving your rig unattached on a beach. Even if it's not attached to your board, attach it to a post or similar, or even get a friend or random passer-by to hold it for you. If you have no choice and there is nothing to attach the rig to, then the last resort is to bury the head of the rig in sand, shingle etc pointing into the wind (seen below). Alternatively, if there is a group of you with rigs, then you can 'stack' them; place the first rig with the mast across the wind and then place consecutive rigs upwind, their booms holding down the masts of the rigs downwind.

Fin down or fin up? Ideally it's good to have the board placed upside-down, with the fin up so that the wind hits the bottom of the board and pins down both board and rig effectively. However, fins sticking up prove to be hazardous around other sails and having your fin down can be just as effective. So it's really location specific – for soft surfaces such as sand, mud etc put the fin down with the fin firmly stuck in the ground and for hard surfaces like rock, pebbles or even hard sand (like in the piccies!) put the fin up. Easy!

Above all keep it simple, and remember the three easy top tips – board across the wind, rig attached with mast pointing where the wind is going, and "points together".

Keep your eyes peeled for more Golden Gems from Jimbo and in the meantime have a great time on, (or off), the water!

