

J-30 Crew Guide

Introduction

The following notes offer suggestions on how to organize crew mechanics on your J-30. This is simply one scheme. Just as pro golfers are able to achieve the same results with different swing mechanics, you will be able to get the job done with a variety of different techniques. Whatever works for you and your crew is right. No matter what methods you choose, the lesson is to have a plan outlined, so that members of the crew understand their responsibilities. When you break it down, there are only four basic evolutions that need definition: sets, jibes, douses, and tacks. You could probably also add upwind, downwind, and start as modes where specific responsibilities should be made clear. You and your crew must master boathandling before you move on to boatspeed. This is a subject we deal with extensively in our tuning and trim guides. With boatspeed and boathandling down, you'll be ready to move on to tactics and strategy.

The goal of a good crew is to always have their weight in the right place at the right time, reacting to puffs and lulls and flattening or heeling the boat as necessary. Proper weight placement has a huge impact on boatspeed. While you need to get your specific responsibilities taken care, remember that every time your weight is out of place you are slowing the boat down. Think through your tasks to try to accomplish them with the minimum amount of movement and wasted motion. Many times a job can be done from the rail. For example, in breezy conditions the pit person does not have to move into the pit, but can tail from the weather rail.

It is also important to recognize that any movement kills boat speed (particularly in light to medium air). Getting your job done and then freezing in the right spot for the conditions will help make the boat go fast. In a perfect world, the crew would be frozen in proper position, explode in one burst of concentrated action to perform the evolution, and then immediately settle down and freeze; again with their weight in the right place for the conditions. It is essential to settle the boat down after any evolution. Do not clean up until the boat is back up to speed.

Keep these principles in mind as you practice and work out your crew organization scheme.

TACKING

Helm

Make sure the crew is ready. (Key on the genoa release; you can't turn until they are ready). Steer slowly and smoothly, carrying as much speed as far upwind as possible, without stopping the boat. Switch sides with the jib, making sure that you are set on the new side before the boat heels over.

Mainsail Trimmer

Trim main as boat turns into the tack. Ease 4-6 inches from normal trim for acceleration out of the tack. Ease backstay in light to moderate air to aid acceleration. Gradually sheet-in and tighten backstay as boat gets back up to speed. Center the boom with the traveler for max power and pointing throughout, if conditions permit. In heavy air keep the boat on its feet out of tacks by dropping the traveler and/ or easing mainsheet as necessary.

Headsail Trimmer #1

Release the old genoa sheet and stay with it, making sure it runs. Take the tail from the new trimmer if they need help in moderate to heavy air.

Headsail Trimmer #2

Tail the new genoa sheet. If you need help, pass the tail to the release person on the weather side, and do your own grinding. Do not overtrim out of light to moderate air tacks. Trim gradually (communicate with helmsperson), as the boat accelerates.

Pit

Keep the weight in the right place (add heel in light air, hike in moderate to heavy). Make sure the old genoa sheet is running.

Midship

Keep the weight in the right place (add heel in light air, hike in moderate to heavy). Make sure the old genoa sheet is running.

Point

Clear the sail around the mast. Skirt genoa. Hike or create heel as necessary.

SPINNAKER SETS*

Driver

Bear off smoothly, making sure the sails get eased. Keep an eye on trailing boats, delaying the set to defend clear air if necessary. If the reach is tight you may need to bear off below the rhumb initially to help fill the sail. Work back up to course when crew is back in position and sail is under control.

Mainsail Trimmer

Ease main to turn. Don't be afraid to over ease, particularly in breezy conditions. (Keep boat from heeling too much). If you can use the power ease the backstay.

Headsail Trimmer #1

Set up the spinnaker sheet on cabin top winch with lots of slack. Make sure twing is off. Ease genoa sheet. Make sure it's trimmed correctly for the new course before worrying about the spinnaker sheet. Pick up spinnaker sheet; trim once the sail is fully hoisted.

Headsail Trimmer #2

Check to make sure twing is on or guy is in midships block. Pre-pull the afterguy in the last two boat lengths to the mark. Pull the sail to the pole and set the pole square to the wind during the hoist. Don't get the pole too far back until the sail fills. It is better to have the pole slightly under-squared. This will make it easier to fill the spinnaker initially. Make sure the foreguy is eased as you square, but don't let it off completely in heavy air sets.

Pit

Make sure the genoa halyard is flaked and ready to run. On the final approach tail the topping lift if your boat has the lift led aft. (On boats with topping lift at the base of the mast, the point person will take care of hoisting the pole). Hike out hard as the boat bears off during the rounding. Drop the genoa halyard at least 3/4 of the way down all at once, while the spinnaker is still being hoisted. In heavy air sets, (with the #3 up), you can delay the drop, or even leave the sail up. Ease the mainsail halyard if necessary.

Midship

Hike. Help out as necessary: gathering the genoa, pumping the spinnaker halyard at the mast if the point person has trouble getting the sail up, taking the sheet trim on a tight reach if the trimmer can't see the sail, etc. Release upwind sail controls (cunningham, outhaul, vang).

Point

Hook up spin sheets and halyard. (Try to do all work to windward on the penultimate tack). Lift pole into position on the final approach. Watch to make sure that spinnaker doesn't come out of the bag while guy is being pre-pulled. Hoist the spinnaker halyard. Gather genoa, flaking luff and reinserting head of the sail into the pre-feeder.

*This breakdown covers bear-away sets. Jibe sets are often appropriate for tactical considerations.

SPINNAKER JIBES

Driver

Steer slowly and smoothly (sound familiar?). Do not turn any faster than the trimmers rotate the spinnaker. Keep the boat under the spinnaker, but turn completely from broad reach to broad reach. Do not stop in the middle, or try to hold the boat dead downwind while the pole work is being completed. This is a sure way to get a wrap.

Mainsail Trimmer

Grab all the parts of the mainsheet and heave it across when it unloads.

Headsail Trimmer #1

Method #1: Take both spinnaker sheets. Trim back on the old guy, ease the old sheet, keeping the sail flying throughout the jibe. Pass off sheet or guy (whichever is appropriate given the side of the boat you are on) to the other trimmer after the jibe is complete. Method #2: Ease the old spinnaker sheet (approx. until the clew is within a foot of the headstay), keeping the sail flying the whole time. When the pole is "made", set the new guy appropriately.

Headsail Trimmer #2

Method #1: Pass the spinnaker sheet off to your fellow trimmer. Duck. Pick up the new sheet or guy (depending on which side you are on), as jibe is completed. Method #2: Grind back on old guy till pole is fully squared, keeping the sail full and flying as you do. As the boom comes across, look up on the new windward side and start trimming, you now have the sheet.

Pit

Ease foreguy as necessary to help the point person. Check the pole height as you come out of the jibe if the topping lift is led aft. In lighter air the pole may want to be slightly lower initially as the boat builds speed out of the jibe.

Midship

Release twing on old guy, tension twing on new guy. Help point with pole in heavier air jibes. (Twing down both sheets before a heavy air jibe).

Point

End for end spinnaker pole:

- 1) Disconnect pole from the mast.
- 2) Insert new guy into pole.
- 3) Release old guy from pole.
- 4) Push pole outboard and forward, reattach to mast. Yell "made"

SPINNAKER DOUSES*

Driver

Come in wide and go out close! You should be close hauled with the telltales streaming as you pass the mark. Steer slow and smooth, but make sure you stick it up hard and close to the mark, so that there is no room for the competition to get in.

Mainsail Trimmer

Set upwind sail controls well before you reach the mark. Trim the mainsheet smoothly and rapidly to turn the boat as the driver heads up. Remember, you are turning the boat.

Headsail Trimmer #1

Check jib leads, sheet and other upwind controls well before you reach the mark. Make sure the guy is ready to run. Release the guy once the gatherers have their hands on fabric. Help tail the jib sheet from the weather side if necessary (moderate to heavy air).

Headsail Trimmer #2

Check jib leads, sheet and upwind controls. Just before the halyard is blown, overtrim the spinnaker sheet. Tail/ Grind jib sheet as the boat turns- keep the telltales flowing throughout. Pass tail to your fellow trimmer if you need help in a breeze.

Pit

Upwind sail controls well before the mark (mainsail halyard). Hoist genoa to settings for previous beat (leave on winch). Help gather the chute, stuff the sail down the companionway. Do not detach any gear from the spinnaker!

Midship

Set outhaul, Cunningham, and vang for upwind. Gather spinnaker under main boom, pass to pit person in companionway. Be careful to keep the sail out of the genoa sheet and winch. Move weight to weather or leeward side as necessary as soon as possible.

Point

Jump genoa halyard at the mast. Blow the spinnaker halyard when the skipper gives the call. Skirt the genoa. Clear the pole away only if necessary to tack immediately, (check with tactician well before you get to the mark). Move weight to windward or leeward side as necessary.

*This breakdown covers leeward douses. Weather douses are often appropriate in order to keep the gear on the correct side of the boat for the next set, or when dousing on an open reach.