

## **My Engine**

### **John Jagger**

Where's the brake on my laser?

That's right, I haven't got one. That's because I always race my laser flat out, pedal to the metal, foot mashed to the floor, give it the beans, drive it like you stole it.

When do you ever not go as fast as you can?..... never. Well alright, maybe at a mark rounding, maybe if I'm about to stack into someone. But that's about it.

My engine has only got so much horsepower to drive me forward. My engine (sail) generates very little forward vector to move me .

What little power it can generate happens when there is maximum lift generated from optimal flow of air across the sail.

So what happens when the leeward telltales stall, or the windward telltales lift excessively? I've lifted my foot off the accelerator, dropped horsepower, I'm not pedal to the metal anymore.

Tell tales don't lie, they tell you what's happening with the air flow over your sail, tell you when your stalling, when you're dropping horsepower.

Part of your routine needs to be regular check ins with your tell tales, verify that you have optimal trim, whether from sail angle or boat heading. Lighter and medium conditions, I'm probably checking in every three seconds or so, longer as it gets windier. If I don't check in that often, I often find myself caught out sailing with a stalled or stalling sail.

Once you have lost flow, stalled you telltales, it can take longer than you think to get back optimal flow. As well as just going slower, you will probably find yourself slipping sideways, falling in on the boat to leeward or starting to get rolled.

When ever you get the following situations, there is a high probability that it will effect your trim, effect optimal flow.

A gust will make your apparent wind move back..... lose leeward telltale

Bad waves will slow your boat and move your apparent wind back..... lose leeward telltale

A lull and your boat momentum will will mean you sail into your apparent wind - apparent wind forward. .... lose windward telltale

Catching a wave will move your apparent wind forward.. .... lose windward telltale, front of sail may even start to flap

Falling off a wave, apparent wind back, massively leeward telltale stall

As you can see, there is always a lot happening and nothing is ever stationary or static so you shouldn't be either.

The good ones are constantly adjusting, constantly aware of of what is happening to their sails and boat speed and making adjustments to compensate for the changing circumstances. This might be moving weight / shoulders in or out, slight sail trim adjustments, slight angle changes but always smoothly and always anticipating, so smooth and automatic, you probably wouldn't notice they are doing it. But they are always checking in with their telltales because this is their feedback.

So keep your foot mashed own and drive it flat out.