

Match Racing Quiz – Black Diamond

ANSWERS

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- 1) You are Yellow. The Pin End is favored. It is Light Air (4-6). What opening move do you expect Blue to try; and what will you be doing, beginning with your Entry, in anticipation of Blue's possible opening move?

Blue may try to tack and sail upwind on starboard tack. Yellow needs to keep her speed and watch for Blue not slowing down. Once the boats begin sailing upwind, it is likely you will be setting your spinnaker (tack sets) to get back to the line.

- 2) You are Blue. The starting line is pretty square. It is Medium Air (7-9). What are your best opening move options going into the initial Dial-Up? What will you be looking for about Yellow that will influence your decision on which opening move to use?

Once Blue gets down to a close-hauled course on starboard tack, she should quickly luff back up to head to wind while holding her boom out on the port side and backing her jib to starboard. If Yellow overruns Blue, Blue should watch Yellow carefully. If Yellow tacks away onto port tack, Blue should follow her. If Yellow puts her bow down to sail on starboard tack, Blue should do the same. Then when Yellow tacks to port tack, Blue can follow her. Or Blue can tack first and pass astern of Yellow (called "Steel Balls").

- 3) You are Yellow. After the initial Dial-Up, both boats begin sailing backwards. What are some of the factors in your mind that will influence what you do next? What are the critical pieces of information the driver needs to be hearing from the Middle and Forward crew?

The Middle crew should be looking at the water and reporting whether the boat is moving forwards, stopped or moving backwards, so the driver knows which way to push the tiller or turn the wheel. The Forward crew should report what tack the boat is on, or whether it is "tacking", depending on whether the bow passed head to wind or not. Typically, if Blue starts to sail backwards, Yellow should tack onto port tack, go four or so lengths, and gybe back for another Dial Up.

- 4) Both boats are broad reaching on port tack past the Race Committee Boat with 2:30 minutes left to start. It is Medium Air (7-9). You are between a quarter and a half a length behind the other boat. It is close whether they can get their gybe in. What are your opponent's possible next moves, and what will you do in response to each one?

The leading boat may try to force the gybe in. The trailing boat should ALWAYS luff and pass astern of the gybing boat, and throw the protest flag if close. The leading boat may try to slow down and get the trailing boat overlapped to leeward. The trailing boat should also slow down and stay clear astern. Or the leading boat may try a sudden stop ("Houdini") by turning suddenly up to head to wind. The trailing boat should turn directly downwind for a couple of lengths and then turn up and stop about a length to the right, and well clear astern, of the leading boat.

- 5) Both boats are headed back towards the starting line on their Final Approach. It is Heavy Air (above 10). You are leading, you have about 20 seconds to kill, and you want to start to the Right of your opponent. How will you accomplish this? What are the critical pieces of information the driver needs to be hearing from the Middle and Forward crew? Which of the four starting positions (Close to Leeward, Windward with a Gap, Split Start, Crush) would be your likely best outcome?

The leading boat needs to know where they are relative to the Boat Lay (close-hauled line on starboard tack to the RC Boat) and the Port Lay (close-hauled line on port tack to the RC Boat). Once the leading boat has passed the Port Lay, it needs to have the trailing boat right behind them by about one foot. Then the leading boat turns up sharply to head to wind and stops (backing the mainsail on the port side). If the trailing boat overlaps the leading boat to leeward, the leading boat drifts passed head to wind by about ten degrees and stays there (called "Shifting Right"). At the appropriate time, the leading boat bears away on port tack and starts (Split Start).

- 6) It is Light Air (4-6) and shifty, with the breeze moving down the course from the edges in waves of pressure. It is not an obvious "one sided" beat; in other words, you could win from either side if you played the beat well. At the start you are the leeward boat in a Close to Leeward start. Your opponent tacks away shortly after the start. What are the factors going through your mind in deciding whether to extend on starboard tack, or to tack with, or shortly after your opponent? What are the critical pieces of information the team needs to be hearing from the Middle and Forward crew? Who on your boat will make the actual decision to extend or tack?

You need to know from what side is the next puff (line of pressure) coming from. If from the left, then hold on until you get into the pressure and tack. If from the right, then go two-three lengths and tack onto port. Usually the Forward crew talks about pressure coming down unless they are the jib trimmer; then it's the next person forward that calls the pressure. Usually the driver makes the decision to extend or tack based on the input they are getting, but often it's the main trimmer who is also the "tactician."

- 7) You are on starboard tack, converging with your opponent about halfway up the beat. You are pretty much in the center of the leg. It is Medium Air (7-9). You will cross your opponent by about two lengths. You want to defend the right. Where is the best place to tack relative to your opponent?

Tack just before you get to the port-tack boat's line. This will make the port-tacker have to tack away in the most pressure (as opposed to tacking on their wind and letting them tack through your disturbed air). Also the port-tacker may think they can live on your hip, giving you time to build speed and then go into high mode forcing them to tack away, at which time you can match their tack and control them.

- 8) You are on starboard tack, converging with your opponent near the top of the beat. You are about four lengths down from the starboard layline (in "No Man's Land"), and about ten lengths from the port layline. It is Heavy Air (over 10), and you don't anticipate any shift before the mark. You will cross your opponent by less than one length. What are your options in this situation? What are their likely responses to your possible moves? What are your responses to their responses to your move? How will you play this to be sure you round ahead of them?

Do a Soft Slam. When the port-tack boat's bow is at your transom, count to 2 and tack. You will end up safely to windward of them. If they tack out and duck you, go about one length from the starboard layline and tack. If they stay to leeward of you, pin them until you are about two lengths past the starboard layline and tack.

- 9) You round the windward mark about a length behind your opponent. It is Light Air (4-6). The run is pretty square, and there is not an obvious “one side favored”. What are your likely moves and tactics if they:
- a) stay on port tack initially?

You will try to have a better spinnaker set, and will try to sail to a position about half a length or so to leeward of their line. It is OK if you lose a little fore and aft distance on them to get there.

- b) gybe almost immediately?

You will NOT match their gybe. Stay on port tack (cross over) and go about two to three lengths past their line and gybe. IF you are two-three lengths behind them, then you will match their gybe (“Simo Gybe”), and just before you are about to be pinned on their right, you GYBE BACK onto port tack, cross over, go two to three lengths past their line (be sure you are up to speed) and gybe back.

- 10) You are about a length ahead of your opponent going down the first run on port tack. It is Medium Air (7-9). It is about 40:60 from where you are (40% of the leg is port tack; 60% starboard). What are four of your options/moves (one being to continue on port, defending your left side but soaking as much as possible to get your opponent above your centerline)? For each of the three remaining moves, what are the factors that will lead you to try each one? Who on your boat will make the actual decision about which move to try, and when?

You will make your move when you get to the “first layline” which on the first run is the layline to the leeward mark or center of the gate, and on the second run to the Pin.

- a) *Gybe Hot – gybe quickly to a beam reach angle (massive rotation on the chute and the bow person just clips the pole on the guy and then grabs the guy and holds it down (don’t waste a second trying to get the pole on the mast). Try to get your wind ahead of the trailing boat if they match the gybe, or at least push the boats well above the layline.*
- b) *Fake Gybe (tell your crew it may be a fake, so the bow person does not unclip the guy from the pole). Slowly bear away and give the main a flick to start it coming across. If the trailing boat rolls into a gybe, heel the boat to leeward and slowly head back up still on port tack, build speed (sail for a couple lengths) and gybe. Do this a couple lengths *before* the layline.*
- c) *Two Quick Gybes – gybe onto starboard, and if the trailer matches your gybe, gybe back onto port, sail a couple lengths to build speed and gybe.*

- 11) Both boats are on starboard tack, sailing pretty much directly downwind, and overlapped. You are nearing the port layline to the mark, which is about 10 lengths away. It is Medium Air (7-9). You are the leeward boat. What is your gameplan? What are some of the moves the windward boat might make, and what are your responses?

The windward boat is in “Downwind Jail”. You own them! Because there is no rule 17 (proper course rule) in match racing, you do not need to gybe on the port layline, even if you got the leeward overlap from clear astern.

12) Halfway up the second beat, you have a penalty and are about four lengths ahead of the other boat. What are three possible options for dealing with your penalty? For each, what will you do to set yourself up for the best chance of being successful?

- a) *Sail to the starboard layline and do your gybe penalty.*
- b) *Round the windward mark, count to 10 and do your tack penalty (outside the zone)*
- c) *Sail to the finish line and do your tack penalty there, preferably in the zone of the Pin*

13) You are the other boat in Quiz Question 12. For each of the three options described in QQ12, what will you do in response? In general, what are you trying to accomplish in each?

- a) *Stay close enough so the other boat can't get their turn in without fouling you. Otherwise, sail on starboard and overstand the port layline by about a length.*
- b) *Round the windward mark and set and be ready to gybe and sail past the leader who is spinning...or cross over, go two lengths and gybe to starboard to the left of your opponent (looking downwind).*
- c) *Follow the leader in on starboard tack and try to intersect with them before they get down past 90 degrees when taking their penalty.*

14) Halfway up the second beat, you have a penalty and are about two lengths ahead of the other boat. What is your gameplan?

You need to engage the trailer and try to get a penalty on them, or get them in a weak position so you can take your penalty. Slow down and draw them in so they are right behind you as you enter the zone of the windward mark, then stop and get the locked to windward. Play from there.

15) You are the other boat in Quiz Question 14. What is your gameplan?

Stay behind them with two lengths of water between the boats ("Play 2"). No closer; no farther back. Make the leading boat do all the work. Be patient.