

Bill Masterman Champion Crew

*505 national and world
championship crewman Bill
Masterman reveals his top
tips for dinghy speed.*

Bridesmaid no more

At last I have won something! As a result I feel qualified to air some of my views on sailing. Jeremy Robinson (my 505 helmsman) and I, won the 505 national and world championship (Y & Y August 25 issue) for the following reasons:

Enhanced Boatspeed: We have an enormous power to weight ratio. Although I am on average 4in taller and 15-20 kilos (two and a half stone) heavier than most 505 crews, our combined weight is only 5 kilos (under one stone) heavier than the

The 505

Having sailed in the class for the last 11 or 12 years I am obviously biased, but the 505 is a superb boat. It is surprisingly stable, easy to sail and is fast, especially downwind.

The design does not look dated after 40 years, although there was an unsuccessful move to reduce the all-up weight and reintroduce carbonfibre spars. The changes were rejected by the majority of sailors, mainly to keep the costs down and because members felt the changes were not likely to improve the 505's overall performance.

There has been a lot of talk in recent months regarding the new designs flooding the performance dinghy market (Laser 4000 and 5000, Topper Buzz, Boss and RS400). The sailing



sacrifices with nothing to show for their efforts. The spin-off is the apprenticeship served in competing towards an Olympic place, which usually raises the game of those taking part. Four out of the top five helmsmen at the 505 worlds have been involved in serious Olympic campaigns.

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other teams. The problem is developing a rig which will utilise this extra righting moment. When I crewed for Paul Brotherton he reasoned that we needed a stiff, straight mast which would be raked as the windspeed increased. Jeremy has spent the last two years developing this rig and making it versatile enough to cope with all wind and sea conditions. The mast is a Superspar M2 and the sails which gives excellent all round performance in full and marginal conditions.

Tactics: Jeremy makes the majority of the tactical decisions. I never stop relaying information. I'm constantly keeping my helmsman informed on compass headings, what's happening to the other boats (especially our close rivals) and our speed against the rest of the fleet. In fact, anything that I feel is relevant. Nothing phases Jeremy and when he makes up his mind to tack, we tack!

world needed something new. The same thing happened to cycling with the introduction of the mountain bike. Some of the new dinghy classes may fail, but others will grow, hopefully introducing new people to our sport. I do not believe these new classes will be a threat to established dinghies, in fact, they may well encourage more people to sail more traditional designs. From now on the average dinghy racer may start in off-the-shelf 'new' boat but progress into a class in which you can tune the rig, experiment with different sails or try different masts.

505s vs Olympic sailing

Without doubt the pinnacle of competitive dinghy sailing is at Olympic level. Because the standard is so tough, the stakes are high; only a handful of gifted sailors achieved success. The rest have made all the

One of the attractions of the 505 is top international sailing without the commitment needed for an Olympic campaign. Should your aim be to win the world championship you can have a go every year... not every four years. I think it's a great shame that the Flying Dutchman dinghy has not been replaced by another two-man performance trapeze boat. I understand how the selection happened, but it's a poor reflection of competitive dinghy sailing when there is only one two-man trapeze boat at this, the top end of our sport. Let us hope for a better choice next time round.

On the British Olympic team selection. I am sure the Royal Yachting Association has done the right thing by holding the trials a year early (only the Star class selection is outstanding). Those selected can now concentrate 100 per cent on winning medals. All the management and coaching funds are being directed into the crews who'll be on the start line in Savannah in just nine months time.

Crewing

I took up crewing because I was never going to win anything helming! If you are serious about crewing and want to succeed, here are my top tips:

1. Learn how to crew – This takes dedication and staying power. The skills of crewing do not come overnight, success has taken me 25 years, but perhaps I'm just a slow learner! At first no helmsman will want you, but after a while the offers should come along.
2. Get the best ride you can – Find a helmsman who wants to win and has the ability to do so. If you can afford it, buy the boat with your partner and share costs. This will help ensure that you are both giving the campaign the same level of commitment. Beware of setting goals beyond your combined ability and experience.
3. Helm and race a dinghy yourself, preferably a singlehanded – Singlehanded sailing gives you a much better feel for sailing and the effect sail adjustments and crew movement have on the balance of the boat. It also sharpens up your racing awareness, helping you to 'read the game' better.
4. Read Andy Hemming's book on Crewing! (Crewing to Win published by Fernhurst and available through Y & Y's inside back cover bookshelf scheme) I think it's one of the best around!

Bill Masterman

Bill started out crewing for his father in an Enterprise, he then helmed OKs and also crewed Fireballs and Tempests. He spent the next six years sailing Finns 'with no success whatsoever'. Bill's main success' in crewing include a second place in the Flying Fifteen Worlds and third in the Flying Dutchman Olympic trials. Bill and Jeremy are reigning 505 world and national champions.



Jeremy and Bill in winning form – Photo: Peter Danby

Forthcoming Events

FRENCH NATIONAL 505 CHAMPIONSHIPS 1996

We are sending another invitation for the *French National 505* which will take place in Brittany region on the south coast, in the small seaside resort of Loctudy, near to the large port of Brest. Loctudy is also a fishing port renowned for its scampi fishing. Here, scampi is like choucroite in Strasbourg, the beer in Munich, smoked fish in Copenhagen or tea in London... They can be seen everywhere. The white Breton wine, Muscadet is also renowned, light and easy to drink, especially with seafood. Pancakes and cider are also a great speciality of Brittany. The landscapes are charming, the rocky coast is separated by adorable small beaches and one can find hotels every where, hidden in the woods. Sea outings are possible with Cinquo. Here the big outing (which can be used as a practice race) is to sail up the Quimper river: wide, lined by gentle hills, it is one of the most beautiful Tourist sites of France with its small woods, its small capes and its numerous mansions... An unforgettable and enchanting journey. The bay in which the boat races will take place is well protected from the Western winds (the strongest gusts reach gale force six in the summer). During this time the winds are more often from the East (50%) and the sun the strongest. The car park of Loctudy's "Cercle Nautique" is joined to 505's car park. Launching occurs on a hard white sandy beach (easy). The Last Nationals held in Loctudy saw 301 competitors... To be repeated!

Programme: Wednesday 10th July (Practice Race) and from Thursday 11th July to Sunday 14th July: 6 rounds. 1st start at 12h Thursday 11th July.

The 14th July is France's national day: those who like to enjoy themselves can go and dance on the 13th and 14th in the evening at the balls installed outside near to the small bistro. Announce your arrival beforehand to Loctudy... y's "Cercle Nautique". However you are welcome at any time. Registration fee: payable on arrival. For further information (races and accommodation) contact: LA 505 CLASS, 37 Avenue Lamartine, 78170 La Celle St. Cloud, France. Tel + 33 1.3969.2381 and fax: CVP for the attention of Marcel Buffet : +33 1.34.92.74.20.

THE SWISS 505 ASSOCIATION'S NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP. June 6 – 9 1996 La Neuveville.

THE NORTH AMERICAN CHAMPIONSHIP. AUGUST 7 – 10 1996 Kingston Yacht Club, Kingston, Ontario, Canada.

PACIFIC COAST CHAMPIONSHIP. AUGUST 30 – 1 SEPTEMBER 1996 Columbia River Gorge, WA. USA. (venue and date to be confirmed)

THE BRITISH 505 ASSOCIATION'S NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP. Are to held at Hayling Island Sailing Club, from the 7th to 13th September 1996 for more information contact Tim Scarisbrick Tel. 01442 255088

THE GERMAN 505 ASSOCIATION'S NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP. October 2 – 6 1996 Stambergersee, Bavaria.