Laser Tuning Tips

by Jon Elmaleh

Because of the simplicity of the RC Laser rigging, there is a relatively small range of possible adjustments. Because there are so few, they are fairly critical, and proper tuning can considerably improve the boat's performance.

The two major sail adjustments are **foot curve** and **leach twist**. In light wind, adjust for *substantial foot curve* and a *light twist*. In a heavier wind, aim for a *small foot curve* and *less twist*.

Determining the proper amount of foot curve for a given wind condition:

A good indicator is that the boat should be able to sail itself going to windward (neutral helm). Too much weather helm (the boat rotating into the wind) indicates that you need to flatten the foot curve. A leeward helm (the boat falling off the wind) shows the need for an increased foot curve.

If the water is choppy:

Increase twist so you don't stall the sail. A little windward helm is acceptable in these conditions, since it helps you find the wind.

Knowing when to switch rigs:

While sailing downwind, if the bow begins to dive, switch to a smaller sail. Sometimes, a drop in rig size right before diving becomes a problem can make the boat a bit easier to sail. Experience will help you determine when to change rig size.

Setting boom position:

I like to sail upwind with the boom just inside the aft corner of the stern. However, I set the fine control on the controller so I can centerline the boom just in case I need to pinch for a buoy. Pinching allows the boat to go upwind at a close angle to the wind, but it severely limits boat speed and should not be attempted for any distance. With the boom just inside the aft corner of the boat, you will find that the Laser moves well to windward.

These tips should give you a good start on fine-tuning your RC Laser's performance.