



Melges 24 vs other small keelboats – Quick Notes

Overall:

Look at Melges Sailboats website Melges.com for boat handling tips and videos.

Look at sailmaker's website for tuning guide. One°15 Brooklyn Sail Club uses North sails on the Melges 24 – see <http://www.onedesign.com/Portals/106/docs/Tuning%20Guides/north-melges24-tuningguide.pdf>

Setup:

Tuning the rig for wind conditions: Stephen tells me that the rig tune is currently fixed. If you do have the opportunity to change the standing rig tune you need:

- a Loos Gauge,
- a wrench and
- the tuning guide.

If in doubt with windspeed less than 12 knots be soft on the rig; more than 18 knots be tight.

Make sure you put the Genoa on so it rolls clockwise; unrolls counter-clockwise.

Upwind:

The boat has a relatively small Genoa and a very thin keel, so sail fat and fast. Keep the main sheet very tight and traveler up to weather so the boom is almost up to centerline. Use the telltales on the leech of the main to tell you how tight the mainsheet is. Top telltale should backwind 50% of the time; the lower telltales should stream back.

Use the back stay to depower in puffs. If still not enough then drop the traveller but car not below centerline; then ease the main sheet. Keep the boat upright. It does not go fast heeled over and goes sideways quickly – due to that very thin keel!

Don't let the main go inside out when breezy. If it does you need more rig tension, and main sheet tension.

Downwind:

Getting the spinnaker up.

Trimmer pulls up the halyard.

Front person pulls the kite out of the bag, fifth person pulls the sprit out; front person then sets the tackline.

Tactician trims the Genoa and spin sheet until the trimmer has got the halyard all the way up.

Go below the course if on a tightish reach to get the kite flying then harden up.

If planing conditions are marginal it generally pays to go high to plane (unlike the J-24 and J-70 and PERHAPS the J-80, where you soak low).

Below planing conditions soak as low as you can while still keeping the kite with pressure in it. In light air the trimmer should be very vocal – “good pressure” (meaning the helm can soak lower), “losing pressure” (meaning the helm should head up).

If planing conditions generally leave the genoa out; below planing conditions roll the jib up once the kite is set.

Downwind if windy everyone except trimmer can get behind the helm. Tactician or Fifth person can pump the main. Front person can hold the Genoa.

If light then sit forward though generally not in front of the shrouds.

Ease back stay completely in light air.

In light air you can let the tackline up 12 inches from the sprit once the kite is flying well as long as the helm is soaking nicely. Windward side of kite should go to windward of the sprit.

When you get to the bottom mark, if windy, the helm, should sail (briefly) very low to take the pressure out of the kite while the trimmer pulls the kite into the boat and the front person stuffs the kite in the bag.

Best to take the kite down in plenty of time to be ready for a good mark rounding.

Leeward douse or Mexican are the easiest. Make sure you unfurl the Genoa BEFORE you douse the kite OR the kite will blow through the gap.

Get set up for the rounding before you get to the leeward mark - like any other boat - backstay on, traveler pulled up to the new windward side, help for the helm (if there are five of you) with the main sheet.

Any questions, just ask.

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