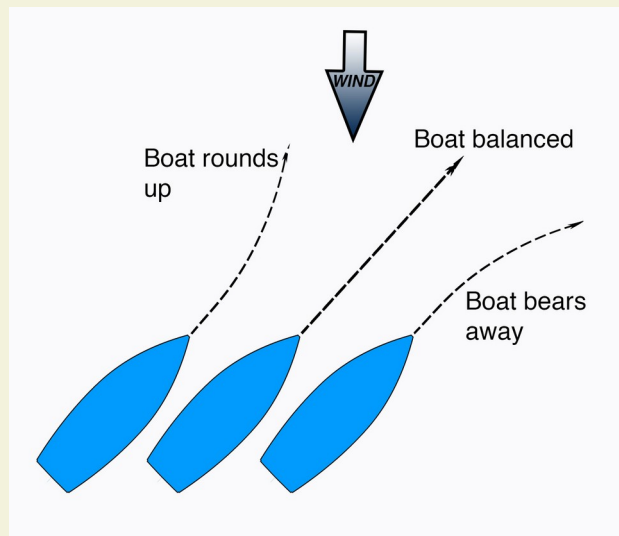




## ***Tuning for Balance***

Step 2 in the tuning process is to get the boat sailing in balance, but what does this mean? A boat is balanced when it will sail close hauled at a consistent angle to the wind without rudder input from the skipper.

So to get the boat balanced, we first need to observe how the boat sails close hauled with no rudder input. Does it want to round up, bear away, or continue in a straight line?



*Sailing balanced*

Once we see how the boat behaves with standard settings the adjustments to balance it are simple:

- If the boat rounds up the CE needs to go forward, so ease the vang to put more twist in the mainsail (end of boom lifts to increase curve in the leach).
- If the boat bears away the CE needs to go aft, so harden the vang to reduce twist in the mainsail (end of boom drops to reduce curve in the leach).

The changes you make here should be small – maybe an eighth of a turn on the vang control wheel. Be prepared to make multiple small changes, observing how the boat responds to each small adjustment.

## **Hunting**

When balanced, the boat should substantially sail by itself without rudder input and make its own small changes in course to match wind shifts – pointing higher when the apparent wind angle moves aft and lower when the wind angle moves forward. It does this because the position of CE is not constant. If the apparent wind angle moves aft (a lift), CE also moves aft causing the boat to round up. As the boat rounds up, the apparent wind angle is restored and the boat continues sailing, balanced, on the new course. The reverse process takes

place if the apparent wind angle moves forward. This mode is known as hunting.

## **Check the Competition**

We now need to look at how the boat is performing against the competition. During the pre-race period, you will see the top skippers lining up against each other and seeing how their boat is sailing relative to other boats. Join in, or ask another skipper to sail with you. The questions you ask yourself are simple: Am I pointing as high? Am I going as fast? A couple of beats alongside another boat will quickly tell you whether or not your boat is in the groove.