



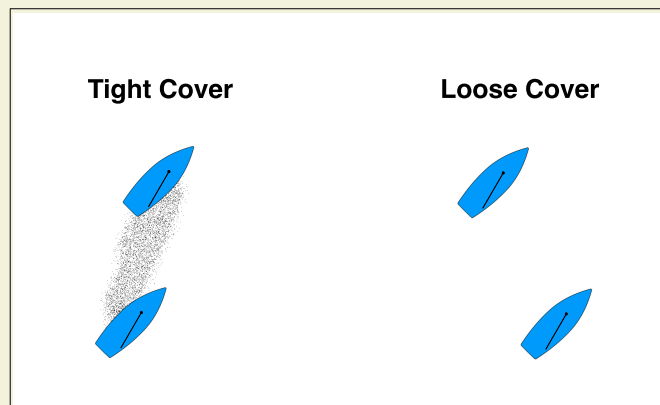
Covering

Covering is a race tactic where you position yourself to windward of one or more competitors and on the same tack, in order to limit their ability to attack and pass you.

Types of Cover

We talk about two types of cover:

- A tight cover is where the disturbed air off the windward boat falls onto the sails of the leeward boat. This will effect the leeward boat such that it cannot point as high, or sail as fast allowing Windward to keep the advantage.
- A loose cover is where the windward boat is not directly impacting the leeward boat, but sailing in the same direction to minimise lateral separation. Separation could give Leeward enough leverage to gain on, or pass Windward.

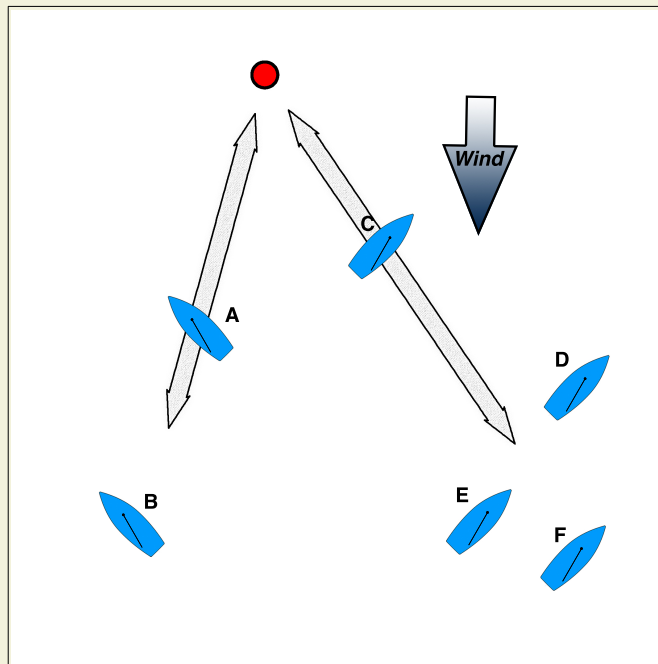


Types of cover

A successful tight cover is difficult to execute. With DF boats, the wind shadow is fairly narrow and the leeward boat can often wriggle free or live there.

By comparison, the loose cover is more easily achieved and can be a very successful tactic. The windward boat can comfortably match the leeward boat tack for tack up the course, staying close enough to ensure Leeward doesn't sail into a favourable wind shift without Windward getting it first.

Use a loose cover to position your boat between a competitor and the next mark, or finish line. You can also use a loose cover to protect yourself against a group of competitors. In the following diagram, A is covering B and has positioned herself between B and the windward mark. C is covering the group D,E and F.



Covering individuals or groups

When should you cover

Covering works best when the fleet is spread out a bit and you can focus on one or a few boats behind you. If you're stuck in the middle of a bunch of boats, forget about covering and concentrate on speed and strategy.

There are, however, certain situations when you might choose to cover no matter where you are in the race. These include:

- You have to beat one boat. If your only goal for the race or series is to finish ahead of one particular boat, you'd be foolish not to cover them when they're behind you.
- Most of the fleet behind you is going one way. Unless you are very confident about your strategy and willing to assume some risk, don't split from the boats behind you, especially when it's easy to put a loose cover on most of them.
- You are heading up the last beat with no chance of catching the boat ahead. Protect the finish position you have by covering those behind.

When you shouldn't cover

Covering is a defensive maneuver used to protect your position in the race. So if you aren't fairly happy with how you're doing, don't even think about covering as a potential tactic. Though many people portray covering as a "no-brainer" at almost any time, it doesn't always work. Here are some potential pitfalls:

- You need to catch up. When you're not happy with your position in the race, you should focus more on catching the boats ahead of you than beating the boats behind.
- You have shifty winds. One big danger is trying to cover a boat that is playing the shifts correctly. Since you are most likely in different wind (because you're ahead of them), you will lose if you simply react to

their moves. Sometimes the best option is simply to keep sailing your own race.

© 2020 FatSparrowRacing