

Hansa 303 Tuning Guide - October 2022

I have sailed the Hansa 303 since 2014 at Sailability, Club, State, National and International level, in both one and two person categories. I would like to provide some personal tips to sailors that may help get the best performance from their 303 at all levels.

It must be noted that I am 60 kgs with limited strength throughout my entire body. As a result, this tuning guide may not be suitable to every sailor.

The Hansa 303 is regarded as a “non-technical” boat by World Sailing, which is perfect to ensure the athlete is key to performance, not the equipment. This keeps the tuning guide simple.

Topics

- **Sails:** I recommend a jib window in big fleets to avoid collisions. I keep the foremast luff tension to a minimum in all conditions.
- **Mainsail outhaul:** A tight outhaul is required for maximum performance in strong winds. Easing the outhaul to a maximum of 100mm off the boom in mid-range winds with waves. I don't adjust the outhaul downwind as I find maximum sail area more important.
- **Sail Sheeting:** Sheeting tension is key to performance. Over sheeting can stop a 303 quickly, particularly in waves. Tacking and acceleration out of a tack is critical, particularly in short waves and light winds, in these situations always trim gradually, then pull to required setting when at maximum speed. I use tape around mainsheet and jib sheets to provide a guide to set. Always be prepared to ease or tighten during gusts. I use the rear hole in the jib track upwind across all conditions. Be careful not to have the mainsail too far out downwind in medium to strong winds by watching the top third of the sail as not to spill the wind.
- **Steering:** Feel is key to performance. The joystick should be easy to move without slop. Not too tight, not too loose. I switch standard lines to pure spectra to give ultimate feel. I steer high in stronger winds ensuring the angle of heel is kept constant.
- **Seating position:** Revised rules now provide clarity. Weight forward is good in light winds but not past the joystick. Heavy winds you can get in the back corner upwind for stability without effecting performance.
- **Rear bridal:** Have a high bridal (Traveller) in all conditions to bring boom to centre line when required. I have the bridal horizontally extend to rear seat bar as a guide to length.
- **Angle of heel:** Again, key to performance. Ensure not to have too much heel. Heel should vary on wind strength and sea state. Flat is fast in light winds and flat waters. I do not heel past 15 degrees. Upwind in waves, heel can keep a dry boat.
- **Reefing:** I find I can carry a full main to 20 knots with my weight.
- **Downwind:** Always goosewing the jib. You can hold it out wide with your arm in light to medium winds to provide maximum effect. In strong winds sit back in the seat and

have a flat boat. Neck and shoulder rotation is key to watch gusts and competitors approaching from behind.

- **Preparation:** Key to any successful day, is ensuring equipment is in good order. Take the time to double check all components. Get involved in rigging your boat, remember the crew takes responsibility. Tape the halyard shackles on the clew and rear bridle so they don't shake undone. Keep the hull clean by the occasional polish, checking centreboard carpet so no wobble in foils. Ensure that you can fully open the furled sails before setting sail. Devise a system to stop the boom becoming disconnected from the mast.

I hope this guide provides sailors the opportunity for improvement for sailors no matter the level you compete in.

Chris Symonds.