

Thoughts On Tuning From the 2012 DN Western Regional Regatta

By Ron Sherry, DN US44

In the past, I've talked about how tuning an ice boat is not linear. In other words, you don't make the rig tighter and tighter as the wind builds.

I believe you need a looser rig when you are having a hard time getting the boat going. I mean so light and/or sticky that you might have to push more than once. After that, you need to tighten the rig as the breeze starts to build. Then when it is really windy, you need to loosen the rig again so that you have more control and do not spin out.

On Green Lake in Minnesota at the 2012 DN Western Regionals, we had excellent ice conditions with 4-9 kts of breeze. I think this is the condition when you want to have the rig set as stiff as you will ever need it. These conditions are when you want to get the boat to hike so that you can make sure you are pointing high enough upwind and low enough downwind.

Don't get me wrong, it is still possible to make the boat too stiff. When you get the boat set up the way you like it, try making small rig adjustments and see if you can feel the difference in how quickly the boat hikes.

Good luck and great sailing.