



NEWSFLASH!

- Swap Meet March 28th 10am-2pm – Same rules apply
- Pre-check in Required Wed, Thurs and Friday. Friday open till 7pm for checkins
- Mariner will provide Hot Dog fixin's and soft drinks for NTWR Volunteers to offer at the NTWR Table
- Volunteers needed for NTWR Table and "Windsurfing Equipment Advisors" for the Swap
- Huge Chinook Sale from now till the Swap Meet. All "in stock" Chinook items are 20% off! Shop early for the best selection, this pricing is good for in stock items only! Call 972-241-1498 or come visit Mariner for details.
- TSC is the 25 & 26th of April
- NTWR Meeting is March 17th at 7:00 pm at Mariner Sails – ALL CHINOOK GEAR WILL BE 20% OFF – Be sure to join us!

Membership

Howdy NTWR Members! How does everyone like their new club rash guard? If you haven't gotten yours yet all you have to do is get us your 2009 dues. We've got every size available except XL and XXL. Those went so fast we're making another run for members who still need them. We are including a Free Rash Guard for every membership this year as a thank you for supporting your local windsurfing club!

Other reasons to join for '09.....

1. Member discounts at our 2 major regattas
2. Summer solstice Party and BBQ
3. Community service and volunteer opportunities
4. NTWR.org - a great source of info for new local windsurfers
5. Intro to Windsurfing Days – a great way to give your friends and family the sport of Windsurfing
6. Sailing and friendship in too many other ways to mention here!
7. Oh Yeah – and my personal gratitude (other members too I imagine!)

If you've got any questions about the North Texas Windriders, membership or anything else windsurfing related please feel free to call me at 972-241-1498. I am happy to help in any way that I can. I have found my participation in NTWR to be gratifying every time I have an opportunity to participate and I hope you will too! You can download a current membership form at www.ntwr.org or come by Mariner and we will be happy to take care of you here.

See ya soon!
Aris



Beach and Water Starts

By Ken Merten

While trying to come up with something new that may help a few folks become better windsurfers, I recalled a couple of the key elements from my own learning curve many years ago.

Uphauling is never fun. It may sound unusual but many sailors today rarely uphaul their sail. They are beach starting and water starting, or they sail well enough so that they don't drop their sails in the water very often. The first step in avoiding the uphaul (back strainer) is learning a beach start. First, you need water deep enough to keep the fin from sticking in the mud/rocks when you step up and put your body weight on the board. About 24-30 inches is good if you have a floaty board with an intermediate sized fin (30-40 cm). Second, is positioning the board in relation to the wind. Uphauling normally requires you to have the board 90 degrees (perpendicular) to the wind. Beach starts work better if the board is more than 90 degrees (100-110). The reason for this is to keep the board from "rounding up" or turning into the wind when you step on the board. When you step up, your foot will most likely be on the back half of the board. The closer to the tail, the more likely the board will round up, so try to get as far forward as possible. The next critical element is placing your foot on the center line of the board. It takes a big step to get to the center, but if you don't, the windward rail will sink and you will fall.

Remember that you have a sail to help give you balance, plus if there is any wind, it will help lift you up onto the board. If there is a lot of wind, the power in the sail may pull you up and over the board, so be certain to pay attention to the power in the sail and if necessary, sheet out as you rise up on top of the board. Don't be in too much of a hurry to get your second foot up on the board. If your first foot is in the right place you should be pretty well balanced with only the one foot. Finally, bring the second foot up onto the board and place it on the center line as well. Now you are ready to go.

Although a little more advanced, water starting is another skill that will help reduce uphauling. Water starting requires a trial and error type of process, meaning that it will take several attempts before you get the feel of how it is suppose to work. As with beach starts, aligning the board to the wind is very important. You must do the same thing as above (100-110 degrees) off the wind for the same reasons. If the board is perpendicular to the wind, it will round up into the wind when you step on the board. Don't forget, it takes some wind to water start. In the beginning, you need to see moderate white caps (20 mph) in order to have enough wind to lift you and your sail out of the water. Of course there are a few variables here including body weight, sail size and wind speed, so consider all the possibilities before you go out.

Next is flying the sail (getting it out of the water). Not everyone follows the same process, so eventually you will find what works best for you. I will give you the two things that I do to achieve this. The first deals with a sail that is downwind of the board. The most common option is to drag the sail across the tail of the board (mast first) so that the boom rests across the tail, which will "fly the sail" lifting it out of the water. Many boards today are pretty short and the boom may extend beyond the tail of the board, making it a little more difficult to fly the sail. Nevertheless, you still have to lift the mast up while kicking as best you can, letting the wind flow under the sail, raising it out of the water. On

my short tailed boards I use my back arm to hold on to the rear foot strap, pulling the boom and mast over my arm using it as if it were an extension of the board, providing leverage to force the sail out of the water.

If the sail is upwind of the board, you have two choices. One is to uphaul the sail and yank it over to the downwind side and then do what was suggested above. The other option is to swim to the tip of the mast and with one hand, push / lift the mast out of the water. The other hand is paddling and the legs are kicking like crazy providing the lift and leverage to raise the tip of the sail out of the water. While doing this, your head will likely go under water, so the more flotation you have the easier it is to do. If you have a life jacket, use it while learning to water start. Once the tip of the mast is out of the water 12 inches or more, you begin sliding your hand along the mast towards the board, which will allow more and more of the sail to fly. Eventually, the sail is totally out of the water and you are at the boom ready to water start. The quicker you get to the tip of the mast, the easier it will be to lift the sail because less water will get into the mast sleeve or on top of the sail.

What follows next is not the standard procedure, but it is what I do and I have found that it works very well. First position the board at 110 degrees and place BOTH feet (heels) on the board keeping the sail as high as possible. If your upper body sinks and your head goes under water, you don't have enough wind to water start. I put both feet on the board because it does two things for me. In light wind, it allows me to pull my body (butt) as close to the board as possible, allowing the sail to fly high off the water. In light winds, the sail has to be pretty high to catch enough force from the wind to lift you up. The other advantage it gives me is the added strength from both legs to stand up from a full squat position. In stronger winds, both legs can be fully extended and on the board. In moderate winds, the legs are partially bent.

Once you have enough wind to lift you up and on the board, your next problem will be controlling the force so that you don't get pulled over the board and into the water. It's a bummer to have to go through the whole process again. The trick is to gauge your momentum and sheet out as you approach the top so that you don't get pulled over. It takes a few mistakes to figure this out.

Another important thing to remember is to practice water starting on a board that is large enough to uphaul. If you have a problem or the wind dies, you can still get home. I learned to water start on my first long board, before I purchased my "transition sized" second board.

There are more advanced techniques for "light wind" water starting, but I will save that for another time. The key for all of the above is practice, practice, practice, and have fun, fun, fun. And of course – SAVE YOUR BACK!

