

Fireball jib control by North Sails (Tim Rush)

Fairlead Height

When the wind is below 8 kts it can affect pointing if the fairleads are too low. I set the jib tack at 75mm above the deck (level with the top of the swage eye on the luff wire) then I start with the fairleads at max height (#1) and lower to maximum down (#4), once the crew is on the trapeze and can straighten their legs. I leave them in the max down position until the fairleads have been moved out to 270mm from the centreline. Then I move them up in 20mm increments.

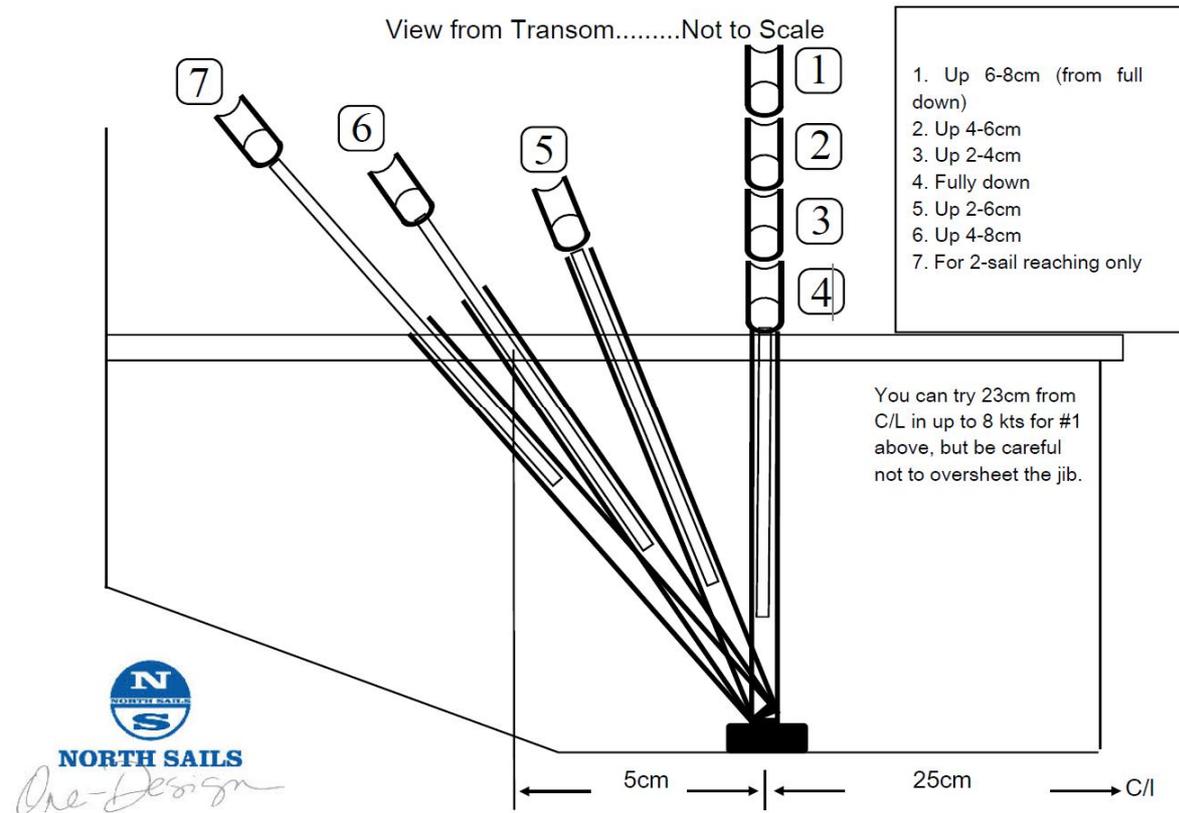
There are 4 increments and I use:

20-40mm up in 15kts, (#5 on fairlead setup guide) (for more info on #1-#7 see Fairlead setup guide)

40-60mm up in 20kts, (#5 or #6)

60-80mm up in 25kts, (#6)

80-100mm up in extreme conditions. (#6 or #7)



Fairlead In/Out

When the boom is on the centreline I set the fairleads at 230mm from the centreline.

When its between the centreline and halfway to the gunwhale I set them at 250mm.

Once the boom is working from halfway out to the gunwhale I set them at 270-280mm.

When the boom is working either side of the gunwhale and I'm using max rake/bend/kicker to keep it from going out further I set the fairleads at 300mm from the centreline.

Jib Sheet Tension

Once your crew is trapezing it is easy to under sheet the jib. The upper part of the slot should be kept as narrow as possible to maximise the power from the rig. The way I find the correct tension is to keep sheeting in until either the foot of the jib goes tight or the back winding of the main just below the spreaders becomes excessive. One reason for excessive back winding is that the main is setting too full, but if you follow the matrix and the notes on 'How it Feels' you should be OK.

Once the wind is in the 12-15kt range it is better to have the fairleads nearer to #5 with more sheet tension than #4 with less.

One other thing to look for once the wind is above 12-15kts and the boom is permanently off the centreline is the sensation of weather helm. If you think you have the mainsail set correctly and the centreboard at the correct height but there's still a bit of weather helm and the boat isn't really accelerating in the gusts, then sheet the jib in a bit harder and you may find the weather helm goes away and the boat wants to drive forward rather than luff up.