

Overpowered Genoa

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Moonbeam

Joined: 12 Jan 2005
Posts: 6
Location: Kentford, Suffolk

Posted: 07 Jun 2005 08:34 pm Post subject: B32 Genoa



We took delivery of our new B32 in November 2003, and during our first season with her, I came to the conclusion that Bavaria had been overgenerous with the sail area of the genoa. There had been a couple of messages on this board regarding "rounding up", and although we had the rig set for maximum pre-bend in an attempt to depower the main, something else was needed. Days when we could sail with a completely unforled genoa were few and far between, and although we had had a padded luff fitted when the boat was new, it was still an unsatisfactory arrangement. Being based at Woolverstone means we frequently have to tack up the river, and hauling all that 150% genoa round and winching it in is not always easy for a female crew, and in the narrower parts of the river was barely accomplished before we had to tack again.

At the Southampton Show last year we talked to Crusader Sails, and ordered a 100% number 3 genoa (220 sq ft), and in fact chose a high tech cloth, Max Pentax, for longevity. By the time we took delivery, the season was coming to an end, but in the last few sails of the season realised that the sail had transformed the boat. The old sail continually choked the slot, backwinding the main, despite our attempts to flatten it. When hit by a gust, say in 16 knots, the main had to be eased to avoid rounding up. This choked the slot and pinned the boat down on it's side.

With the new sail we get none of this. We rarely reef until 18 to 20 knots. With one reef in and the genoa slightly furled we're good up to about 26 knots. We can ease the main down going to windward without choking the slot and backwinding it. When hit by a gust we now accelerate, and rounding up is something we used to do last year. The genoa is quite flat and doesn't need a padded luff. We can furl it and sail effectively with a good shape without moving the fairleads forward. The clew of the sail is level with the shrouds when sheeted in going to windward, and the fairleads are about one third back along the track, instead of on the rear adjustment peg as before. We can still sail with just the genoa, on the wind in a blow.

Two other big advantages when coming up the river, are that we can see where we are going, as the clew and foot of the sail are much higher, and we can tack easily in a few seconds. In fact if I am on "crew" duty in a force three, I don't even need to winch the sail in! I can get it tight enough by hand. One thing you notice on the helm is that you have to steer the boat through the tack now, instead of initiating the tack, and then steering back up again to compensate for the bows being blown off as the sail filled.

The results are dramatic. We are quick up the river as we take no time to tack and get back to full speed. The boat handling is dramatically improved. But the really surprising thing is that we do not appear to have lost any speed in lighter conditions, and are faster in the breeze. Having said that we use our Crusader radial cut cruising shute in lighter conditions downwind, but always did anyway, so no real change..

The cost was around £1070 including some boat show discount. If anyone would like more info, (or a good secondhand 150% Elvstrom Genoa!) send an e-mail with your phone number and I will give you a call.

Robin Smith
Moonbeam

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Another Fantasy

Joined: 07 Dec 2004
Posts: 8

Posted: 10 Jun 2005 08:35 am Post subject:



Robin

I can endorse all your comments!! I found the same problem with my B32 'Another Fantasy', based at Chichester. Last year I bought a 110% genoa from Kemp Sails, also in a hi-tech fabric, and it has transformed windy sailing performance. Unfortunately, I too have a carefully used Elvstrom genny for sale but there doesn't seem to be much demand for it. I wonder why??

Best regards

Ian Culley

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