

Wannabe a Wavesailor



PHOTO: ADAM THULIN

Drop your front hand and pull that trigger

LETTING GO Part 23

In this month's instalment of his comprehensive series examining every aspect of wavesailing, **Jem Hall** looks to ignite your forward loops with the one-handed variation...

You should all be revved up for some bigger, better and cleaner forwards now, but let's not stop there, for as a wise man once said: *"The only limits placed on you are the limits you place on yourself"*. The one-handed forward is the perfect way to step up your jumps and set a new standard. I still remember my first one. I was sailing off West Wittering back in the '90s and saw Sarf Coast legend Jon Brooks whipping out

one-handed forwards, so I thought *"Yeah - I'll give that a shot"*. Phew! The feeling was immense, as when you drop the front hand the rig goes way forward and you rotate fast. This is because you're not holding back the rotation with your front hand too far forward or your front arm bent.

Since then of course we've seen Vidar Jensen claim a few one-handed doubles and many stuntmasters whip out some huge one-handers. This move will also get

you concentrating on some of the finer aspects of the leg and arm work that take place as you look to induce a controlled rotation and landing.

One-handed jumps and moves in general just feel so free and provide us with some iconic images, such as Angulo's one-handed airs or Goya's one-handed backies, and, of course, Josh Stone's one hand off (from start to finish) forwards. You are equipped to do this as you have been doing lots of one-

handed jumps already! So feel the fear and do it anyway, and you will enjoy this amazing sensation. And yes, you will be needing those long lines to get away from your boom.

Let's use the formula to kick off and then get down to my pearls of wisdom later:

Who? The one-handed forward is for those of you who can loop off chop and small to big waves and control your rotation while having SOME temporal / spatial awareness as to what is happening. Basically if you're already forwarding then throw

presented later), but essentially it is a good old forward loop where you do the rotation with your front hand off and maybe even land one-handed. Some crazy mothers take the back hand (or both hands) off though. Your rig has to be guided forwards and across with the back arm to ensure you land without over rotating and in a position to sail away cleanly.

Where? In order to learn this move a medium sized ramp that's not too steep is best. This will give you enough height to get your hand off and rotate in enough time without having to change your wetsuit due

"If you don't go [one-handed] you won't know!" All wise surf dudes and chargers

some of these bad boys down - it's not a move for you pole vaulters.

Why? We must all look to consistently challenge ourselves, as by so doing our sessions will be more memorable and we will be placing ourselves in a learning state that will help us to master many moves. And it's fun! Yes, it is just that bit scary, but it will also improve your basic forwards, as you have to get that rig across you to avoid those vert pole vaults and land sweetly.

What? You have a few choices as to when to take your hand off (which will be

to over-rotation. Once you have them the sky's the limit and you can do it off big waves and small chop as well.

When? You can set up the rotation with both hands on, or do a big jump, drop the front hand and then rotate with both hands back on, but while you're learning it's best to get your front hand off as soon as you leave the wave - and, of course, do it early in your sailing session while mentally and physically fresh.

How? Let's take a closer look at one-handed rotational joy right now.

HALL'S HOMEWORK

Let's see some one-handers if you please, and of course some much improved regular forwards. Get your jumping high and vertical as we're going for the one-handed backie next, so once you're up there dangle, point and wave that front hand around. As the water warms up let those no / light wind wave days become waterperson sessions by embracing some surfing and SUPing.

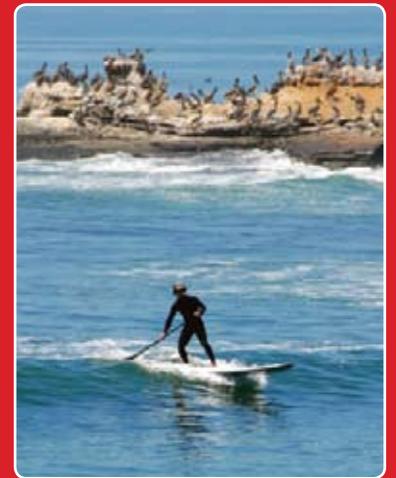


PHOTO: CLARK MERRITT

NEXT MONTH

We continue to go hands free and look at the one-handed backie.

SKYE HIGH & ONE-HANDED

Having taken on John's bigger and better forward tips from last month let's see what he has to say about going for the big one-hander.

"One-handed forwards are basically easy once you have forwards in the bag. All you need is a little more bottle!"

"I have two techniques, the first of which is stolen from Vidar Jensen. You rotate with two hands and land with one hand. This is definitely the best method for lower, faster forwards. Initiate the forward like normal, but obviously stay hooked in. Once the rotation is started, drop the front hand and keep it out and away from the board until landing. If you do it right you can land fully planing."

"The other method is better for higher forwards. Basically do a big one-handed jump, and at the top put the back hand way back down the boom and then initiate your forward like normal - except your front hand is off. You may even have time to unhook in the air, which will give you a better landing."

Thanks for that John. A major exponent of the latter version is Matt Pritchard. If you want even more style then go for dropping the front hand before you take off and keep it off all the way through the rotation and landing in a true Josh Stone style.

John Skye is sponsored by RRD Boards, Naish Sails, Xcel Wetsuits, and MFC Fins



Look back and drop that front arm

PHOTO: ADAM THULIN

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Check out an overview of the whole move



SEQUENCE: ADAM THULIN



The conditions in Jeri, Brazil, were medium powered with waist-high ramps on a 5.2 Ezzy Wave Panther and RRD Wave Twin 90. After a few runs I'd mapped out where the suitable ramps were and I'd come in, tack, get planing and absorb / pre-jump all the small stuff until I had full speed at the point I was ready to launch into a one-hander. Find your spot or peak, keep making quick runs through it, and keep a good lookout ahead so you're ready to have it!

1 Set up across the wind and ensure you have good speed into a suitable ramp. Start to move your sail across you in readiness for the correct rotational technique, and this will naturally open the sail slightly, which will lift the nose. Ensure both your hands are way back ready to initiate rotation as soon as you take off. Only when you are proficient do you go for the narrow hands / high jump and then forward take-off.

2 Pop the board off the wave, and then as you launch drop the front hand off the boom and extend it outwards and back. This will let the sail go forward and power up, and of course you will be working the legs hard by pulling your tail up and scissoring the board. You can see my long lines let the rig stretch right forward here, and this powers the sail up further.

3 Tip the rig forwards and across you with the back hand and then sheet in hard. Look behind you and work those legs hard, pulling the tail up and pushing the nose off with a straight front leg. When you take the front hand off your front harness line becomes your front hand, and this really powers the front of sail up and in fact makes you realise why you need your front hand way back for regular forwards.

4 At this point you will be feeling the rotation and either increasing or reducing it. Here I need to add some more rotation, so I put my front hand back on and push down on the front arm more, and I will also look to straighten my front leg more and push down through my toes. So come on Baldy and do just that. If it's all going sweet then you can or will keep your front hand off all the way. As Bruce Lee would say, "Don't think - feel..."

5 You are locked in now and ready for touchdown, so the more you keep up with the leg scissoring and moving the rig across you the sweeter your landing will be. If you feel like you're coming around very fast and already quite upright then you need to back off here and sheet out big time while dropping your arse to avoid a catapult.

6 My rotation was okay but could have been faster, so I land a bit wet and I'm quick to open the sail and thrust the rig up and forwards while pulling my back leg up my arse to bear the board away. On a good one you can land one-handed and quite upright - and sometimes more upright than you would for a regular forward. Having long lines here gets the rig further away for the landing, so if you're a bit wet the sail is already pulling you up and out the water.

7 Come up and get the sail more open with the rig forward and ready to power up. Flatten the board by pushing down on your toes and scissoring it off downwind. Now tell me that did not feel amazing! So go on and do some more and get them cleaner and faster. boards

Jem's Brand new wave technique movie *Winner to Wavesailor* is out NOW!

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