

# you hide, you lose

## How to get the most out of sparring partnerships



[Chris Rast](#) shares more go fast info with ya...

In our preparation for the forecasted light air conditions in China, Tim and I decided to hold two training camps in San Diego and Long Beach. We invited the Canadian and the Ukrainian Olympic representatives to join us. Rodion and George with some seals, picture taken in San Diego. They were super excited about these seals and made me take hundreds of pics of them... Well, one of the great attributes about San Diego (apart from pretty consistent light air conditions) is the high concentration of truly remarkable sailors.

I was looking for some advice for our upcoming partnerships and I found myself talking to Vince Brun and David Hughes at North Sails in Point Loma. In regards to how we should handle information sharing with our sparring partners (which would eventually be our competition at the Olympic Games), Vince's advice was simple. In his usual Brazilian accent he said: "You hide, you loose." The most precious resource you have while campaigning is time. It's not money or energy, it's time and thus we must use it as efficiently as possible. It doesn't matter if you're in it for an Olympic Medal or preparing for a National Championship, if you need to fast track your learning curve then one of the best ways doing this is by working together with other teams. The benefits of working with sparring partners are manifold.

Apart from being a speed benchmark, you get to share laughs and hard times, channel your competitive spirit on them (instead of yourself or your team mates) and sometimes it's just about sharing a beer with someone else than your skipper. So how do you get the most out of a sparring partnership? Who do you partner with?

- In an ideal world you find partners, which are faster/better than you in the conditions you're trying to improve in, but won't beat you in the regatta. You're looking for teams, which are practice kings, but can't deliver when the pressure is on.
- Next on the list is reliability. A team, which always shows up on time and is organized is way more valuable than hotshots which grace you with their appearance when it fits their schedule. • All of this goes down the drain if you can't generate trust. Going the extra mile to accommodate your partners will most likely result in reciprocal actions and you will build a relationship that will provide much more than just a benchmark.
- And obviously its an added plus if you like hanging out with them as well.

Apart from working with the Ukrainians and the Canadians, one of our most memorable and fulfilling partnerships was with the German 49er team, Jan and Hannes Peckolt. They were highly dedicated, reliable and very German (and I don't mean that in any negative way). Together we spent countless hours on the water making each other faster, pushing each other when one team was ready to throw the towel in, sharing mast bend measurements and tuning philosophies. Jan and Hannes sailed a great Olympic Regatta and their efforts were rewarded with a bronze medal. I'm proud to have been

part of the process in getting them there. Chris enjoying a cappuccino in the German team container during our training in Qingdao.

Their container was amazing.... And that's what campaigning for the Olympic Games ultimately is. It's about working on experiences, goals, challenges and partnerships that you can be proud of for a life time, most likely more proud of than winning a Gold Medal... So my advice to all of you who are seeking to work with sparring partners is to build a partnership that you can be proud of, no matter what the scoreboard ends up being. As Vince would say: "You share, you win"



05/10/10