

GOOD & BAD POLE SETTING TECHNIQUE

Racing an Etchells is all about good teamwork and proper boat handling fundamentals. Get those right, and you often will finish in the top half of the fleet.

Setting the spinnaker pole is one of those boat handling activities that benefits from teamwork and fundamentals. Can you identify the good and bad techniques for setting the spinnaker pole exhibited by the crews on boats 44 and 13?



Crew remains hiking until windward mark.

Bow person faces forward to minimize steps and maintain a stable stance; stays aft of mast to keep weight aft; all the activity is in front of the bow person.

Crew ensures spinnaker guy is slacked before setting pole.



Crew off rail before windward mark (if you can, set the pole during offset leg when hiking is less important).

Bow person is facing aft in unstable posture and not facing task at hand—everything he should be focused on is behind him out of sight.

Spinnaker guy is tight further hindering setting the pole.



GOOD

Mid-crew hoists topping lift in sync with bow person setting pole on mast. (Note: this should be automatic—no communication should be needed. But the bow person can yell “topping lift” to queue the deadweight sitting in the cockpit.)

Crew pulls in topping lift with “full stroke” motion... no baby pulls.



BAD

Weight further forward than necessary; more steps than necessary.