



THE COWBOY

by Guy Cribb

FROM THE INTUITION STYLEMASTER SERIES

Another cunning stunt that feels great in light or strong winds is the 'Cowboy'. The only reason I can think it's called the Cowboy is because when you're doing it at full speed, there's this one section where you just 'gotta get the heck outa there!' Other than that, it is better described as a tack then a helicopter tack, but without turning the board around, see sequence below.

It looks fantastic, especially if you're overtaking someone at the time, standing on the wrong side of your sail grinning at them, and it's easier than you might think, especially when learnt in light winds on a big floaty board and small rig. That way, you can master the INTuition Core Skills in slow motion first, before applying them at full speed in front of your mates.

To learn the Cowboy I've broken the move into three stages:

Stage 1- A basic tack...that's simple to master.

Stage 2- Sailing backwinded – a skill many of you have from the INTuition Stylemaster series.

Stage 3- A helicopter tack, the trickiest stage and therefore what I concentrate on mostly in this feature.

Mastering stage one will come quickly, but the trick to completing stage two and three is to get them over and done with before you can say "Clint Eastwood". In this respect, plenty of practise to develop your Muscle Memory before you even go out in light winds is priceless. Check out INTuition Muscle Memory and INTuition Threesome at guycribb.com/INTuition for more INfo.

Whatever happens, this is a cunning stunt because there's really zero risk of injury – you're out of both straps, not doing anything in mid-air and can only fall into the water, not onto your kit. So no excuses – get out after work on a summer's eve and try pulling one off!

Loads more INfo to help you with your Cowboys, Indians and all sorts of other INTuition Stylemaster stunts and INTuition technique can be downloaded for FREE at www.guycribb.com/technique including the vital further reading for this feature "Sailing Backwinded" and INTuition Core Skills "Boomshaka," "The Twist" and "INSight."



Stage 1. Keeping the board going in a straight line, you step from one side of the sail to the other, just like a tack.



Stage 2. Sailing backwinded – 99.9% of the power should be on your front hand.



Stage 3. Then to get the heck outa there, you do a heli-tack rig flip.



Add these two 180 degree tacks together and you have a 360 body and rig movement called the Cowboy, ideally still planing and still heading in your original direction. Yehaa!

COWBOY - LIGHT WINDS



Begin the Cowboy as for a tack with a 'Boomshaka!' (Sliding your front hand to very front of boom before rig flip) and wrapping the front foot around the mast foot.

Use 'The Twist' to step around the front of the board (correct footwork to stay on the centre line using minimum number of steps, see inserts).

Keep footwork close to the mast to prevent nose diving.



Use your back hand to tip the mast forwards. Shift 100% of the power from the rig to your back hand, even letting go with front hand.

Step your front foot back behind your back foot to turn your body literally 180 degrees. This naturally flips the rig. Hold on tight with your back hand (more info below.)

Boomshaka!

In non-planing conditions, it's best to first try the Cowboy with your board pointing a little upwind. This naturally keeps the sail closer to the board, giving you room to jump around to the opposite side, completing stage one.

In light winds you can hang around in stage two, sailing backwinded for as long as you like, but in strong winds you'll begin to grind to a halt so make sure you move to stage three before you've come off the plane.

Getting the first two stages of this trick over and done will come naturally if you already tack or sail backwinded. It's getting the heck outa there that looks foreign, but it is really very easy:

Let go with your front hand and step back simultaneously. That's all you've got to remember and the wind will do everything else for you.

Using these four photos below, get off your ass and copy my movements, noting how as you step back in the second pic, you naturally start tipping the mast forwards with your back hand.

Here's a side and front view to give you the clearest picture:

SIDE VIEW



Letting go with your front hand prevents you from pushing against the sail; the harder you push against it, the harder it pushes back, so just let go altogether.

Stepping your front foot back not only gets you back to the original side of the board ready for the exit, but also gets your body out of the way of the impending rig flip (naturally initiated by stepping back/tipping rig forwards.)

With no part of you in the way, the wind easily blows the mast downwind, beginning the flip. Pushing hard on your back hand makes it smoother.

Catch the rig in a clew first position and hold tight with the back hand pointing the clew into the eye of the wind. This prevents the wind from filling the sail so keeps it easy to control. Use your back hand to pull the mast back upright before flipping the rig the final stage.



Step back as far as you can. Look where you're going. At this stage 99.9% of the power of the rig is on your front hand.



Move back hand far back on the boom to prepare for rig flip.



Flip the rig by trying to throw mast forwards, looking forwards.



And John Wayne's your uncle.

FRONT VIEW



TOP TIP

As complex as it might look, all you really need to think about is stepping back, as the rest of your body will naturally follow, including the rig flip. That's only one thing to think about, so no excuses!

'Boomshaka!' and 'The Twist' are INTuition Core Skills. INfo at guycribb.com

COWBOY - HIGH WINDS



COWBOY - HIGH WINDS

The faster you're sailing, the more the rig is naturally 'sheeted in.' If the rig is literally sheeted right alongside the board by sailing at full speed, then when you step around to the new side it's easier to step back. If you slowed down for the Cowboy, the sail is naturally sheeted out and there's no room to step back.

So don't slow down! Try finding the flattest water possible and get on with it at full speed. Best of all is to sail onto a broad reach and make the rig go light by sailing faster than the wind.

Once you get around to the new side, rush through stage three faster than you can say Geronimo!

COMMON MISTAKES

Running off the front. As you step around the front, keep your feet right by the mast to prevent nose-diving.

Falling off the front. When you get round to the backwinded position, try to look where you're going and not at the rig. This will help you to push against the rig, instead of pulling on it and falling off backwards.

Being flattened by sail. When sailing backwinded you should only push with your front hand, otherwise you'll power up the sail too much and get flattened. Then to flip the rig, only push with the back hand.

Dropping rig downwind during flip. Look where you're going to help keep the rig upright during the flip, pull the mast upright with your back hand before flipping, and check out Boomshaka at guycribb.com/technique.



SUMMARY

I was teaching the Cowboy to a great crowd at Astbury Sailsports in Cheshire in light winds earlier this year, when Ali, the godmother of Astbury, shouted across the water to everyone "Eh, has anyone pulled off a cowboy?" Classic Freudian slip!

Move without hesitation through the first stages and zoom through the final stage of the Cowboy for best results. Master it in light winds first this summer.

GUY CRIBB INTUITION

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Join Guy on a dedicated windsurfing holiday at only the world's very best venues, with perfect conditions, latest kit and 24/7 Intensive coaching all year round. Or enjoy an INTuition INTensive Weekend in the UK and watch your sailing improve beyond measure, whatever level you're currently at.

If you want to become an INTuition Stylemaster, Cribby's running a special course alongside the PWA Freestyle and Super-X World Cup in Sotavento, Fuerteventura from July 21 - 28 at the world's biggest windsurfing centre stacked with JP's and Neil Prydes with extra INspiration and party factor with the world's best windsurfers!

Check out the all new www.guycribb.com for the all INTuition holiday and UK weekends course INfo, or phone INTuition on 01273 842 144 for holiday bookings.

Guy Cribb is twelve times British Champion, the INTuition Godfather, windsurfing travel and technique guru, likes Mojitos and is sponsored by JP, Neil Pryde, Animal, Adidas Eyewear and Ultra Sport Europe. INit!

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