

Lucy Horwood and Dan Ellis

Our next case study is with Lucy Horwood and Dan Ellis. Both are at the top of their field in Formula racing but Dan weighs around 100 kg's (depending upon how many children he ate for breakfast) whereas Lucy is at least 30 Kg's lighter at around 62kg. Here is what they had to say:

LUCY HORWOOD



"I have recently been working on losing weight so I manage better in the light winds. I did register a 10m for my biggest sail but I soon decided to return to the 11m, so I had the advantage in the light winds. Its all about technique - I have done a lot of weight training over the winter so even though I am lighter I am strong. If you are small you have to lengthen your harness lines and put all your weight through your harness to keep the board down. It takes a bit of getting used to but it works miracles. As I am smaller I tend to have my mast track further forward so that I have the weight of the sail helping me to keep the board down. If you start lifting and getting out of control its one of the first things I think about changing. I have an 8.2m as my smallest sail so I have to be able to use this up to about 25 knots of wind.

I have recently found that as a smaller sailor a softer mast is working really well. The power from the stiff masts is too much and I find much more control and a higher wind range for my sails with softer masts. With regards to boom height, a general rule is as it gets windier the lower you put your boom, this works with harness lines too - if you are overpowered lengthening your lines is a safety net....also works well when bearing away downwind."