



FIGURE

Making Waves

Build endurance, stability and skills through sailing.



TRAINING A LEADER
As a skipper, Tan Wearn Haw must maintain his physical and mental fitness.

TAN WEARN HAW, CHIEF executive officer of the Singapore Sailing Federation and co-skipper of the 100-foot maxi-yacht *Audi Ultra Super Maxiare*, has been sailing since he was six. "I've always been passionate about both the racing and sailing aspects of the sport," he says.

His passion has also led him to promote sailing among Singaporeans through his club website (www.bigboatracing.com). "We wanted to close the gap between amateur and professional sailing, and make it a sport that is accessible to all Singaporeans," Tan says of his collaboration with the owners of the *Super Maxiare*: Thomas Zilliacus, Ron Creevey and former world record-holding skipper Ludde Ingvall, who is also co-skipper.

"While sailing has always been perceived as a rich man's sport, we have sailors of different ages, from all walks of life," says Tan. The different skills required in a sailing team also attract sailors from various industries and athletic capacity. "For example, I'm trained as an aeronautical engineer. So my knowledge in aero- and hydro-dynamics comes in handy."

Sailing is an "open" sport, adds Tan, which requires the sailor to be adaptable. "Unlike 'closed' sports such as archery or bowling, in sailing, you're dealing with variables that change all the time: the weather, the state of the

sea, your opponent, your equipment and even yourself. It's like a chess game on water. A sailor must be able to think on his feet."

In order to be a competent sailor, you must be able to "go hard enough for long enough", Tan says. His weekly programme consists of two days on, one day off, then three days on, one day off. Here's a look at how he trains.

ENDURANCE

Training for this helps a sailor to beat fatigue. "When you're drained, that's when there's a tendency to make mistakes," Tan says. "During training, I have to make sure that my fitness baseline is high enough to function under stressful situations."

Endurance training for Tan is divided into three parts: long-distance runs, rowing and interval training. "These kinds of cardiovascular training help to build endurance needed for sailing and races," he says.

Once or twice a week, he goes for a 10km to 15km run. He also rows on a machine at a good pace for an hour or more. For the intervals, he runs 500m for three minutes and the next 500m for one minute, 45 seconds.

STABILITY

With unpredictable water conditions, a sailor operates on unstable ground. Therefore, core training is essential. "You're not standing on a flat surface; the boat is always bobbing. Core work helps to prevent injuries," Tan says.

At the gym, he relies on balance boards and Bosu balls. "These equipment help train stability and power transfer," he says. He adds plyometric exercises to the mix and also throws medicine balls with a training partner while they're on a Bosu. "It improves coordination, and also makes the training fun."

SKILLS

Tan manages a 28-man team. "Communication is very important because everyone on board has to coordinate when the boat is executing a manoeuvre. It can be dangerous if there's no coordination," he says.

Sailing as a team is the best way to learn and teach the necessary skills. "The programme that we've designed helps to teach these technical skills to the sailors over the course of two to three months. It gives them the opportunity to practice them."

MASTER OF THE SEAS >>
Audi Ultra skipper Tan Wearn Haw tells us the qualities required for a competitive sailor.

HUNGER

"Having the desire to learn makes it easy for an individual to master sailing," Tan says. "There's a lot of information to take in. And if he's open to it, the learning process will become easier and enjoyable."

TEAMWORK

"It can be difficult for individuals to come together as a collective unit because everyone has his own needs," he says. "I have worked with different sailing teams, so that experience has helped me to understand group dynamics better."

COMMITMENT

"Even if a person has a good track record, if he's unable to show he's committed to the team, it makes things difficult," says Tan. "Commitment is simply the willingness to function within the team."

VITAL STATS	
Name	Tan Wearn Haw
Age	32
Weight	76kg
Height	1.72m
Club	Audi Ultra Racing Team

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