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MARCH 13, 2012

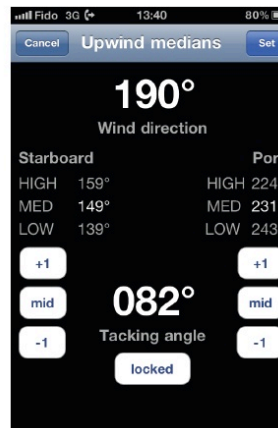
Headings at Hand

An appealingly simple iPhone app courtesy of North U. puts manual windshift recording in hand. As the saying goes, what you get out of it is only as good as what you put in. "Electronics" from our March 2012 issue.

By Dave Reed

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I don't know about you, but compass numbers drift from my memory faster than puffs come and go. I try my best to pencil wind readings on the deck before every race, but once we're underway, data collection tends to rely on my cranial WetNotes pad, which, as I mentioned, is not very reliable. Plus, math was never a strength of mine. I suspect I'm not alone, which is why North U. launched its cleverly simple Tactician App.



As with most free apps, the Tactician App is fairly simple: there are no advanced computations or streaming performance analysis using the iPhone's internal wizardry. There are no layline predictions or speed data, or current set and drift. The Tactician App essentially allows you to record and display wind readings. Think of it as an electronic WetNotes pad.

Here's how you use it: The landing page interface when you turn it on has the appearance of a calculator keypad (not shown). Observe your heading by taking a head-to-wind reading, for example, and key it in (three-digit numbers are required). As soon as you enter the third number, a page pops up allowing you to select whether it's a port or starboard heading, or wind reading, and whether you're sailing upwind or downwind. There are also "sliders" to input windspeed and your tacking angle (a more advanced feature allows you to lock in your boat's tacking angle). Return to the keypad and enter subsequent headings at will: it automatically creates a time stamp for each one.


Over time, as you input more headings, the app will start to do some basic computations for you: for example, reporting your essential tactical information in a pop-

up text message (left), showing graphical trends (middle), and determining your medians (right). Should you experience a major windshift during a race, the app allows you to manually input the new heading and establish it as your new "baseline." It's simple to go back and change any one of your data points. And finally, it allows you to enter a "mark" for referencing where you were on the racecourse.

According to its developers, we can expect improvements and updates, particularly with its downwind tactical capabilities, but in the meantime, download it, play with it, and provide feedback. And don't forget the protective case for your iPhone or iPad if you're going to be plugging in numbers on the rail. Douse your phone, and it'll be back to the old cranial crunch.

North U.'s simple Tactician App can display your manually recorded headings in a variety of ways.

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APRIL 25, 2012

[Beer, Meet iPhone \(/gear/beer-meet-iphone\)](/gear/beer-meet-iphone)

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Crack open some cold ones with the Opena iPhone case at your next regatta party.

Rating:

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APRIL 23, 2012

[Safety in Hand \(/gear/safety-in-hand\)](/gear/safety-in-hand)

by [\(/gear/safety-in-hand\) Tim Robinson](/gear/safety-in-hand) [\(/no-index/credit/tim-robinson\)](/no-index/credit/tim-robinson)

Some offshore races are now requiring knives on deck and worn by each crewmember, so if a personal safety knife isn't already in your sea bag, it's time to blade up. "Gear" from our May 2012 issue.

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APRIL 03, 2012

[A Drysuit for your iPhone \(/gear/a-drysuit-for-your-iphone\)](/gear/a-drysuit-for-your-iphone)

by [\(/gear/a-drysuit-for-your-iphone\) Stuart Streuli](/gear/a-drysuit-for-your-iphone) [\(/no-index/credit/stuart-streuli\)](/no-index/credit/stuart-streuli)

The racecourse hasn't been a friendly place for most smart phones. LifeProof's innovative case changes that. "Electronics" from our April 2012 issue.

Rating:

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