



Hydrofoiling's 360 Hand-to-Hand Spin

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Photography by Lynn Novakofski

In hydrofoil water skiing, there are many tricks that can be performed. It is not uncommon to see not only back rolls and front flips, but also combos – multiple tricks strung together with a landing and a re-launch to connect them – and full twisting inverts, or a mobius/mobe, as many athletes call them. All of these tricks are fun to watch, but one that stands out in my mind as impressive is the full 360-degree spin.

The 360 can be done in many ways, such as wrapped, handle pass, and even overhead, called the olé. You can do them outside the wake, both sides, and even off of the wake, although that is much harder.

The 360-degree spin is not an entry level trick, and it does have a reputation for causing hard falls when learning. My goal here is to help you avoid these hard crashes, and help you get to the next level. Start with the counter clock-wise turn (away from the boat) on the driver's side.

Have your boat driver pull you between 20 and 22 mph in a straight line, and cut out away from the wake. You want to be past the 45-degree mark prior to starting your incline, and you want to have some speed as well. The faster you cut out, the

tighter your line will be when you get in the air, and the higher your air will be.

When first starting, you don't want to try to ride away. Make an attempt to jump up and land backward. Believe it or not, it isn't that bad of a landing when you land perfectly straight in this way, and the slower speeds will help cushion any misjudgment. You don't need to go huge your first few times out; just try to get enough air to make it to 180, and spin slowly. Once you can do this easily, the next step is to make an attempt to go all the way around.

As I initiate and go into my jump, I always try to keep my eyes forward and resist turning until I feel I am close to the peak of it. When I get to the top, I will then let go with the hand that is closest to the boat, and pull the handle into my lower back with the other hand. Keeping my eyes on the horizon, I reach around with my free hand and grab or pass the handle, then reach around in front to grab the handle with both hands.

As I spin, I am looking over my shoulder that is away from the boat. Because I am doing a driver's-side spin, it is my left shoulder. When I get to the point where I can see the water coming at me, and I am

just about to land, I want to be sure to have the handle close to my body so I can control the angle of my landing. Going out the front? Push the handle down on the handle. Too far back? Lift your handle a bit.

The most important thing is that you keep the handle close to your body. A handle that is too far away from you makes it very difficult to control your altitude upon landing, and in most cases, will cause an out the front crash.

If you are consistently going out the front half way through the trick, you are most likely spinning too early, which causes the hydrofoil to catch the water sideways, pulling you out the front. If you are landing on your side, you are either pulling too hard on the start of the jump, or letting off. You want to go into your jump with a smooth, consistent jump, staying on the same edge you carried into the approach. Also, remember that the harder the cut into the jump, the higher the air will be, and the more the line tension will want to pull you out the front or side. On really big jumps, it is not uncommon to start out on a severe incline with your shoulders back, and then get pulled to upright at the peak. You also want to be mindful of your foot pressure.



When doing a 360-degree spin it is easy to push down on your feet in an attempt to get big air, similar to when you go for a big jump. This is the No. 1 reason why people go out the front on jumps and 360s. Keep your foot pressure neutral.

It is much easier to spin towards the wake. This is a more natural spin because the angle of the rope tends to pull you towards the wake when you are that far outside. You may notice this when doing a simple jump.

I wish you luck and success with this trick, and that you have a prosperous hydrofoiling summer. Hydrofoiling can be a healthy addiction, as so many have found out. I encourage you to look for other riders in your area so that you can enjoy this sport with others. If you don't have any experienced riders to ride with, teach one of your current buddies. It is much easier to excel at a sport when you have others to help push you.

Geno Yauchler also offers hydrofoiling lessons in Winter Haven, Fla., and sites around the world. Feel free to contact him at genoyauchler@aol.com. Sponsors such as Eagle Sports, MasterCraft, Bay Area Water Sports, foiltime.com, Air Sling, and H2O Clothing Co., have been a tremendous help to Geno through the years.



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