

STANDING RIGGING

The mast was unstepped this spring for two reasons. (1) The boat is 6 years old and I thought that an examination of the mast head, sheaves, shackles, pins, etc., was in order. The second reason being a leak into the cabin under the mast. All the working parts on the mast appeared in good shape and there does not seem to be any opening on the mast where water could enter. Annapolis Boat Show experts suggested that the leak could be caused by the absence of a gasket at the mast base. Cos Cob supplied one for \$2.95. The gasket sets on top of the stainless plate, the mast sets on top of the gasket. And that fellow members is the sole purpose of the gasket. The mast sets on top of it. So save your money (not much) - every little bit helps.

Removal of the mast revealed a 2" diameter pipe opening for wiring, but little else. Wood support members consume 80% of the opening. The stainless plate provides the anchor for the mast, and is held in place by two 1 1/4" screws. Stainless lips on the plate prevent the mast from forward, aft, and sideways movement. A liberal application of GE Clear Silicon Rubber Marine Seal replaced the thimble amount of compound originally applied under the plate. The Boat Show experts also suggested that the two weep holes at the mast base were clogged. They did not appear clogged, but two additional weep holes were filed on each side for insurance.

The next rain proved the leak was still operating. So, back to square one and a process of elimination was begun. All the screws for cleats and winches appeared tight, so working up the mast, a liberal amount of seal was applied to the goose neck inside the sail track. The next two heavy rains showed that there was my problem! No leak! Now some interior stained teak can be refinished that became stained over the years. By the way, Arlyne uses Liquid Gold, a furniture cleaner, on the interior cabin and it does an outstanding job.

- Bill Carrico

I am getting rid of the divided back stay, which I find a nuisance. Had a local welder make a U belt, 2", SS, and will bring the two stays together on it amidships, with a SS plate on deck and below. Checked in Sweden and they see nothing wrong with this solution.

- Robert Shepard

Sid Rosen had problem replacing a split spreader. Cos Cob doesn't carry it since incidence of replacement is low. Proctor Masts (Annapolis) ultimately provided a replacement from England; however, they were unable to identify the product as theirs for a long time. They recommended either welding or obtaining aluminum pipe locally.

a. Welding: Most shops do not wish to do a small job like this, or do not like to weld aluminum. Prices quoted ranged from \$50 to \$75.

b. Pipe: Aluminum tubing of proper size is listed in all pipe specification listings; however, it is rarely stocked. You may have to buy 20 to 25 feet of expensive pipe to get the approximate 30 inches you require.

After wasting 3 months trying to either weld or secure replacement pipe, Sid went back to Proctor Masts. After extensive research, they admitted the spreader was theirs - but not stocked in this country. Cost was \$64 which included the cast aluminum shroud fitting at the outboard end, a cable to England, and air freight (including pickup and delivery).

I had an inboard spreader fracture. It may have been like that when I got it, but last spring I was inspecting the mast and found the spreader was fractured along the shaft where the pin is alongside the bracket. The girl at Holmes got on the phone and called Cos Cob and they had it within 2 days. The cost was about \$7 (1978). It is held on by a rivet, not a screw. I couldn't find a pin to replace it so I put in a stainless bolt.

Here is the sad part. While putting on the inboard end of the spreader I dropped the outboard end in the water. I made a new one of aluminum tubing, using an old dowel. It is standard aluminum. I took a piece of wood and fabricated it to fit inside the spreader and covered it with epoxy. It worked all last summer.

- Stuart Horn

I had a case where the spreader was not seized down on the shroud. Make sure the seizing on the outer ends of the spreaders is tight.

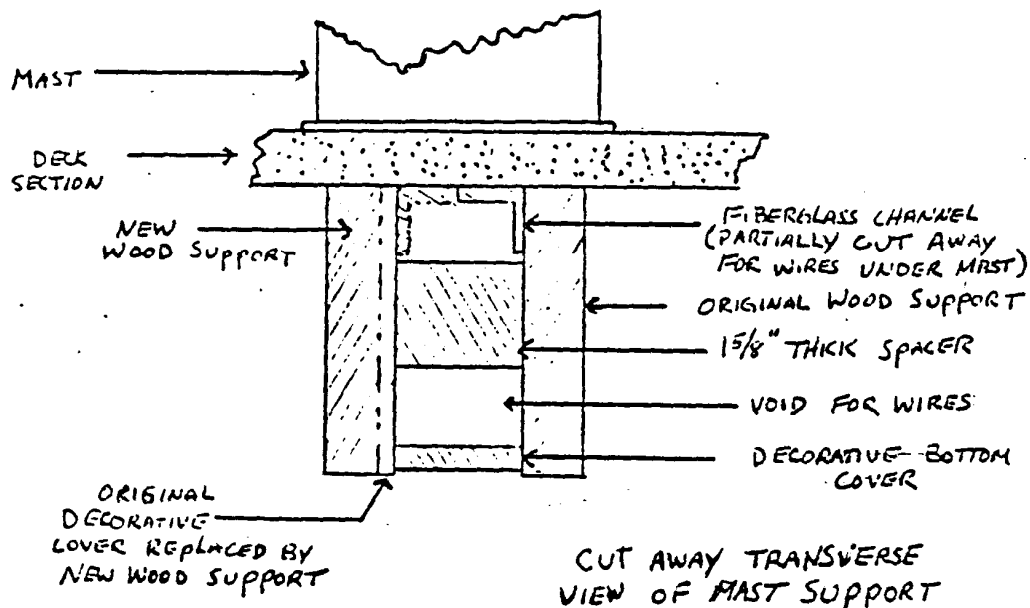
- Jim Hartzler

The lifelines should be lashed to the stern pulbit with dacron cord rather than anything metallic in order not to interfere with RDF bearings.

- Art Levin

When I purchased my Vega, I noticed that the main deck support beam under the mast was warped about $\frac{3}{8}$ th of an inch, and the head door did not close properly, probably due to too heavy halyard or standing rigging tension. To add additional mast support, I replaced the $\frac{1}{4}$ "-thick decorative wood facing forward of the mast support in the cabin with a 1"-thick piece of Honduras mahogany (1"x5"x5'), using the original facing as a template for cutting. I purposely did not add the air vent and wire access holes because I thought this would weaken the support, but I now regret the lack of easy access to the wiring terminal block.

With the aid of an automobile hydraulic jack, it was an easy job to place this support in place. The structure is fastened with $\frac{1}{4}$ "x $4\frac{1}{2}$ " bolts thru the original brace, a 1-5/8" spacer block, and the new brace. These bolts should be placed about 8 inches from the ends, with two bolts on each end about 3 inches apart. Additionally, 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ " #8 sheet metal screws should be placed every 6 inches to the fiberglass channel. I was able to raise the deck about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch, and I can now safely add a roller furling genoa this year.

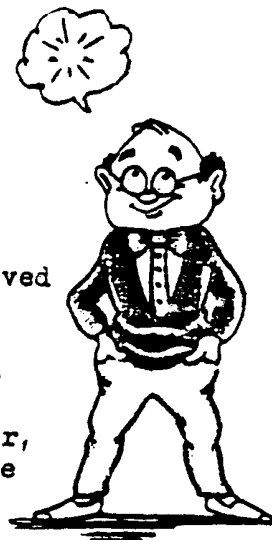


- William Edelstein

To silence the antenna wire inside the mast, I took six 4-ft. sections of $\frac{1}{2}$ " pipe insulation and fed it, one section at a time, along the antenna wire up into the mast. Tape it as you go every foot or so to close the split and where the sections join, but not too tight to prevent sliding. The insulation is cheap and available at any plumbing store.

- Dick Seed

The "final solution" to silencing the annoying clanking caused by the internal VHF antenna was "peanuts" -- the foam kind used to pack breakables for shipment. I figured I needed $3\frac{1}{2}$ cubic feet -- more than I could collect from packages received -- and I found an outfit that sold the things (15 cubic feet minimum). A number of attempts to get these into the mast by various mechanical means failed, and I finally bought a "Metro Vac 'N' Elo" which delivers air at over 100 knots. It filled the mast, which now remains silent despite choppy seas. However, can the "peanuts" be removed if necessary, and will we miss the mast's share of cabin ventilation?



- Douglas Damrosch, M.D.