

# Preparing a Shrimper For Trailing

By Ian Fisher, Shrimper 435 (*Black Sheep*)

## Introduction

These tips assume that the boat is out of the water and sitting on the trailer (either break-back or combination) on reasonable level ground. The trailer should be attached to the car or supported at the rear to prevent it tipping back when you are moving about on board.



If you have this routine committed to memory and do not need to keep stopping to refer to this list, then it shouldn't take more than 30 -45 minutes to complete. Rushing and having untrained helpers only makes things slower!

## List of Parts

- 3 x 1m cords for lashing lines to Mast
- Long lashing to wind around sheet/mast
- Single bed sized sheet or similar
- 1 x Bowsprit Padding - see picture on the right
- 1 x 2m cord for lashing Mast to Tabernacle
- Sail Cover
- Mast/Boom support
- 30cm x 30cm square of carpet to protect Mast from Tabernacle
- Elastic shock cord to secure mast to support



## Procedure

Fit padding to bowsprit before getting up on the boat.

Separate bottom of forestay from bowsprit fitting – I use a quick release shackle laced to the Forestay here – and let it swing back along the side of the boat.

Place the boom support onboard in the vicinity of the stern area and box of straps, lashings, shackle key etc. on the front of the port cockpit seat ready for use when needed. These actions, if remembered now, will save a lot of climbing up and down later.



Get on-board. Much work from now on will be done from the port side of the cockpit as the boom and gaff will be taking up room on the starboard side.

Bring down and stow any burgees or courtesy flags.

Finish off anything that requires access to the cabin and fit washboards.

Loosen clew outhaul an inch – if this is left tight it will push the boom part of the gooseneck hard against the mast part, making it difficult to remove the bolt later.

Reposition sail ties so that they go around both the gaff and the boom, and help hold them together.

Lash tiller centrally.

Fit the mast/boom support to the mainsheet track/ horse, moving the position of the mainsheet on the track if necessary. Let the boom down onto the support and extend the topping lift to maximum.

Fit sail cover to hold the sail together and the gaff to the boom – leave the forward part open to give access for later

Untie one end of the parrell bead harness from the gaff throat. Make sure there is a stopper knot to prevent the beads running off.

Pull the gaff back slightly and let it lie on the starboard side of the boom.

Separate the Mainsail Tack Shackle from the loop on top of the Gooseneck fitting

Remove the Gooseneck bolt and stow it somewhere where it can be found again, pull the Boom back and let it fall to the Starboard side of the mast.

While you're in this part of the boat, separate any electrical connectors at the Mast foot.

Place the sheet over the Cockpit locker area to catch all the loose lines that will be all over the place when the mast is brought down.

Standing on the Cockpit floor, free off the Jib Halyard from the Horn Cleat and start to let the Mast down. If it doesn't move you can pull back on one of the shrouds to get it moving. Its descent can be controlled by the Halyard until around 45degrees where it can just about be reached by an arm above the head and supported the rest of the way down to Mast/Boom support.

There will now be a number of lines hanging over the stern of the boat. Pull the slack into the boat forward of the Mast/Boom support and let fall onto the sheet. Temporarily lash the lines to the end of the mast that's hanging over the stern.

Remove the Mast bolt from the Tabernacle, lift the Mast up and out of the Tabernacle, replace the bolt into the Tabernacle, put the carpet padding on top, rotate the mast 45 degrees so that the Vee of the Mast foot can rest in the carpet between the cheeks of the Tabernacle.

The Mast can now be slid forwards sliding on the Tabernacle carpet and on the Mast/Boom support until the Hounds pass over the top of the Mast/Boom support. It will need some manhandling as the Gooseneck passes over the Tabernacle. The bottom end of the Mast will now be over the bow roller. If there are any cables and plugs coming from the bottom of the mast, these always seem to get caught on the bow roller as the mast is moved forwards.

Lash the mast, Gaff and Boom and jib foil to the tabernacle, closing off any flapping end of the sail cover. If you're clever with the lashing you can raise the Gaff/ Boom and Jib Foil away from the coach roof and allow the hatch to open.



Lash the mass of ropes lying in the forward part of the cockpit to the mast and scoop up the ones lying in the rear with the sheet, wrapping it around the mast and starting with the stern end. Pick up the front ends of the sheet; hold them on top of the mast with one hand whilst stuffing the ropes into the belly. When they are all in (easier done than described) lash the whole mess closed. The cockpit is then clear and tidy, and access to the cabin is possible.



Fasten the Boom, Gaff and Mast to the support with an elastic shock cord over the top from cleat to cleat.



Pull the jib sheets in tight, close up the cabin, fasten lighting board and cable, and strap the boat down to the trailer.

## **Checks before Towing**

- Towing hitch secure on ball
- Safety wire on
- Handbrake off
- Jockey wheel wound up and secure
- Anti-snake device pre-loaded
- Extra lashings to secure boat bow eye to trailer
- Check tyre pressures - important for the trailer to help with stability and to prevent overheating from low pressure causing a blowout, but the car tyre pressures also have an effect on towing stability.
- Test lights
- Check over lashings