

BROKEN CENTREPLATE CABLE?

By Trevor Thomas, Shrimper 768 (*Gentle Breeze*) (November 2009)

The easiest way to replace the cable is to run the boat ashore on a firm beach or, even better, a slipway where you can also lay alongside a wall to remain upright. This will enable you to remove the broken cable and stop from the hole in the top of the centreplate. You access the hole by removing the step, revealing the winch assembly and then removing the circular inspection hatch in the top of the centreboard casing.

Once the old cable is removed, thread the new cable up through the centreplate hole (a bit fiddly) after first wrapping a turn or two of insulating tape tightly around the end of the new cable to stop it 'splaying'. Proceed to run the new wire over the top pulley but make sure the pulley is still in good condition - sometimes one of the 'shoulders' wears away. If this is the case you will need to check the alignment of the winch assembly to the centreboard casing - they should be at exactly 90 degrees to each other. If not, as on my boat, you will have to pack out the winch support bracket with a number of penny washers on one side until it is all square. If not square the cable winds on top of itself, causing early fraying. When square the cable lays nicely alongside itself as it is wound up.

The end of the cable then goes into the hole in the centre shaft of the winch drum and feeds out through the starboard side. This needs to be secured to prevent 'slippage'. I secure mine with a tiny 'U bolt' cable clamp as the copper ferrule that comes with the kit is useless without high power crimpers. Wind up the slack cable onto the spindle until tight (make sure you wind it on the correct way round) then take up the slack on the centreplate rope and cleat off. The rope should have only a maximum of one turn on its drum or it will not all fit when the plate is fully lowered.

On the next tide float off into deep water, lower the plate and wind it up again while observing how wire lays. If all OK, replace inspection hatch and step - bingo - job done!