

# Folding Boom Support

By Keith Thatcher, Shrimper 144 (*Winkle*), (September 2010)

It started back in 2004 with a call from the Poole Yacht Club - the boatyard mooring check had found *Winkle's* boom swinging wildly, held only by the cockpit cover ties. Closer inspection revealed a broken mainsheet strop, a fatigue failure resulting, no doubt, from 20 years bouncing about on moorings. With a new wire fitted I set about investigating ways to hold the boom and prevent it swinging. It soon became clear that what I needed was a rigid support.

I found John Tanner's excellent design on the SOA website and although this obviously does the job, I felt that the rigid frame might prove difficult to stow, particularly bearing in mind the mountain of gear we seem to carry on board *Winkle*. I already had a traditional hinged cruciform boom crutch (left over from the wooden *Silhouette II* we owned about thirty years ago) so, using John's design as a guide, set about modifying this into a folding version. As often happens when developing Shrimper equipment, the prototype was made by the traditional "trim & fit" method using materials I had available. The drawings re-create the original as closely as possible, but I found it necessary to adjust the timber sizes of the main struts as these were originally made using non-standard imperial materials.

## Description

As can be seen from the Fig 1, the boom support is basically two hinged battens with a strut to hold them apart. The strut hooks onto a screw on the port side batten and can be lifted off to allow the support to fold (fig 5.)

In use the boom support sits astride the mainsheet track with a fork at the lower end of each batten just wide enough to fit snugly over the horse. Within each fork is a short 6 mm diameter pin that locates into the mainsheet track securing bolt-hole to prevent the support sliding (Fig 3). The top ends of the battens are cut away so that, when open, they form a square recess to fit the boom. On my version this is lined with leather to avoid damaging the varnish (Fig. 2). As a bonus, the recess is actually wide enough to fit the mast, which allows the support to be used to hold the mast clear of the cockpit when lowered.

As drawn, the length and position of the strut ensures that the 6 mm locating pins match the bolt centres on the RWO XT2 mainsheet track as fitted to Mk 1 boats. Mk 2 boats have a different track and it may be necessary to adjust the strut length to suit.

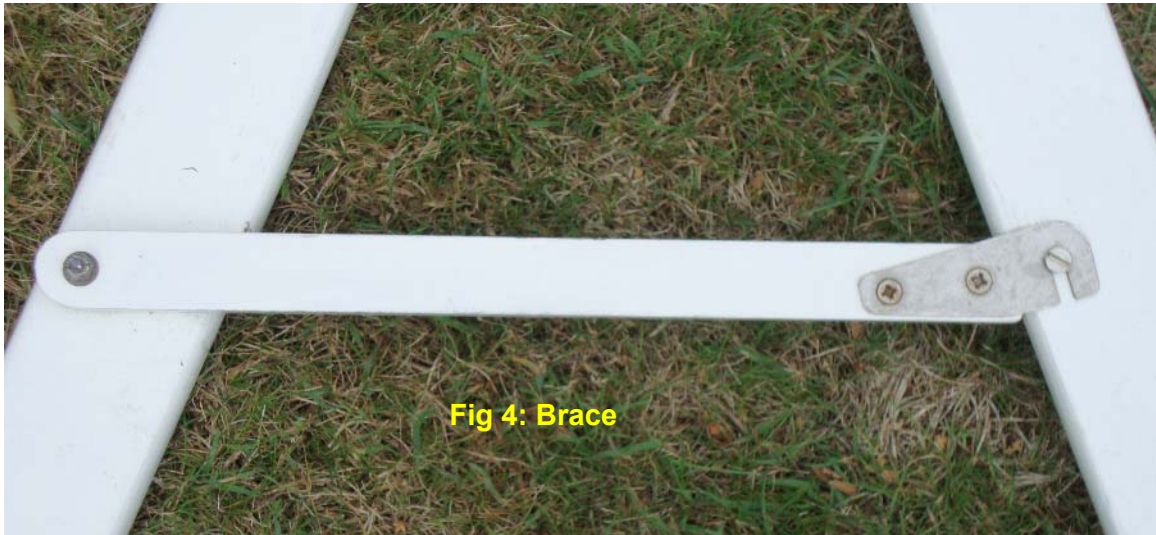




**Fig 2: Boom Recess**



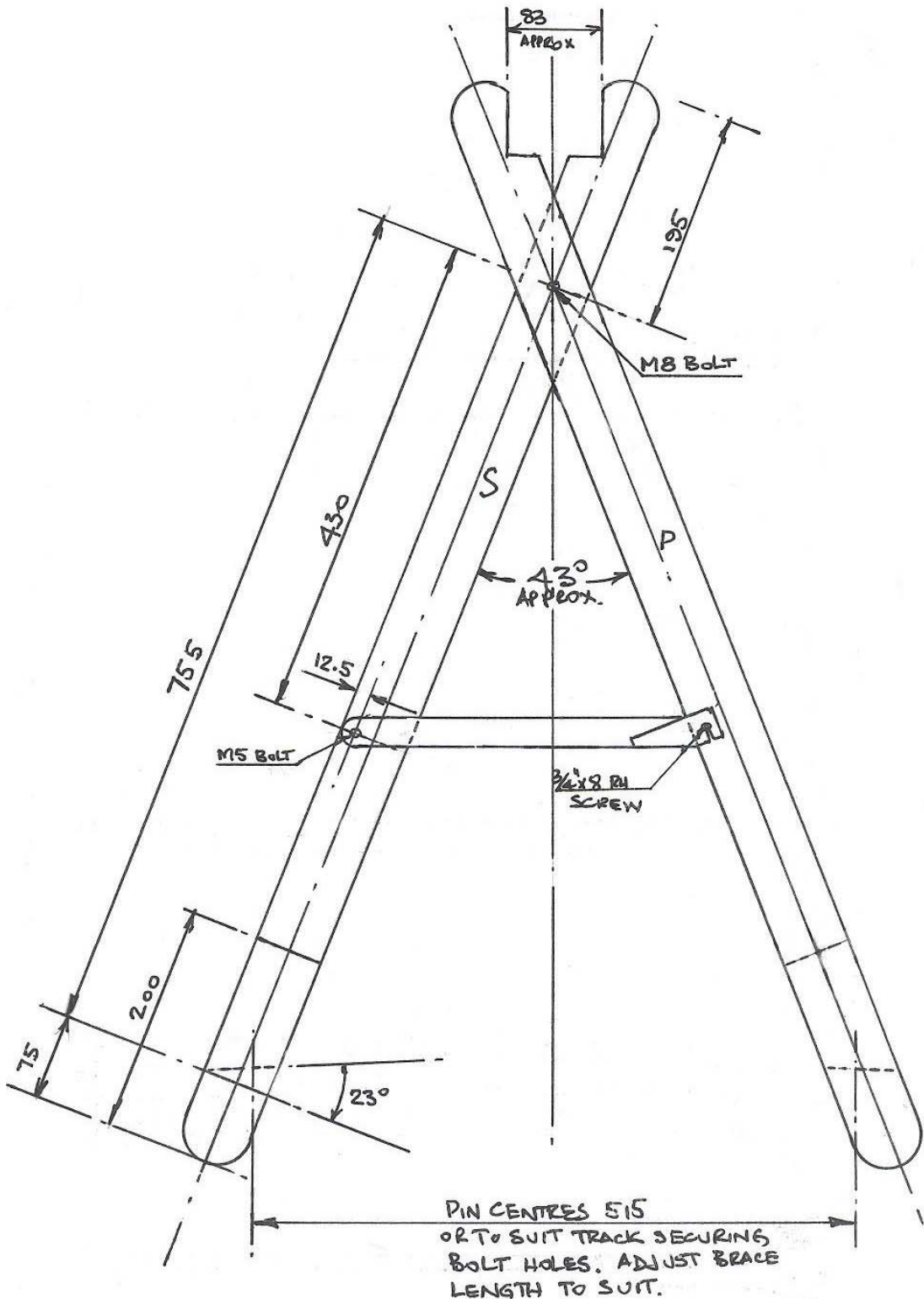
**Fig 3: fork end showing locating pin**



**Fig 4: Brace**

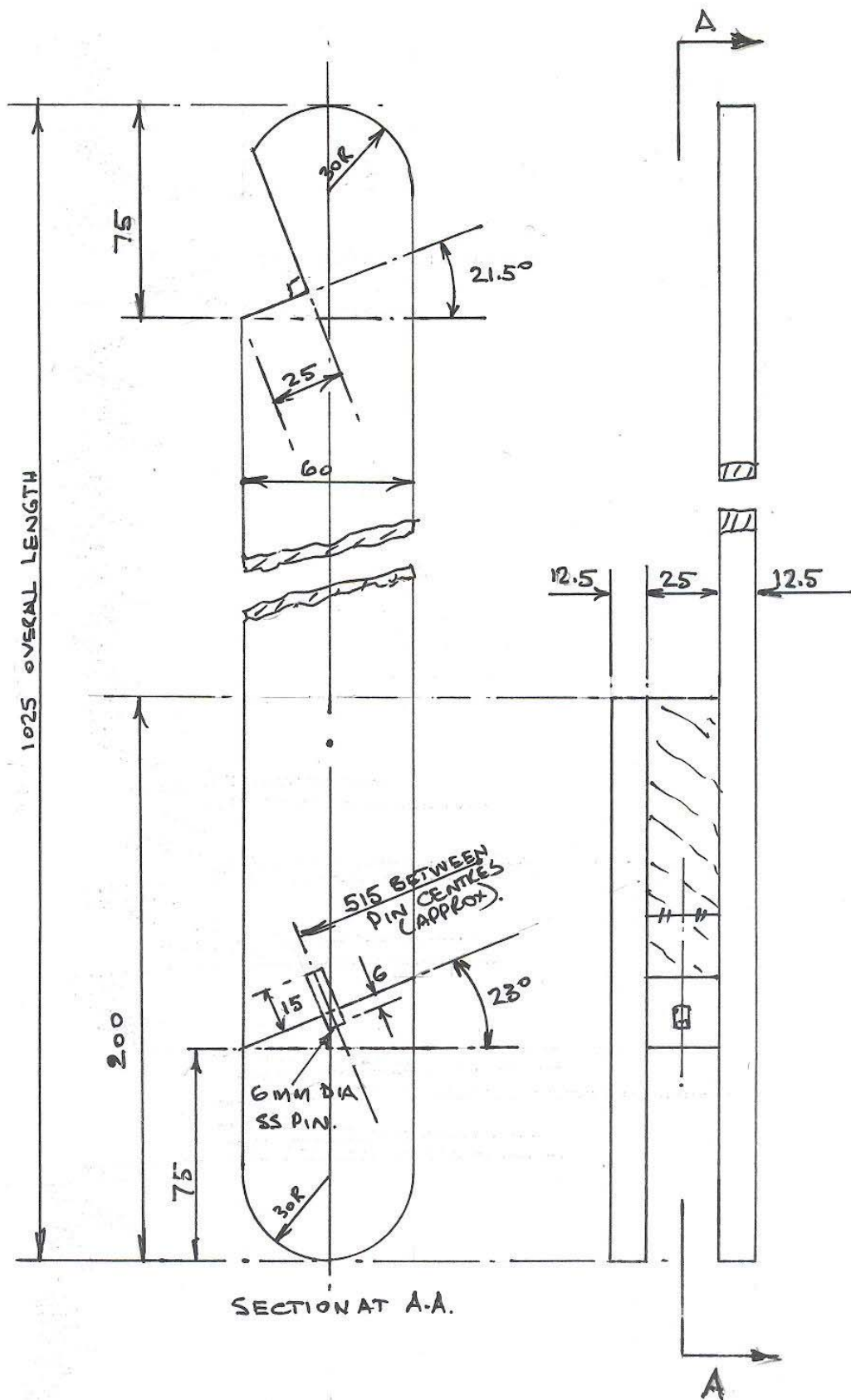


**Fig 5: Boom support folded**

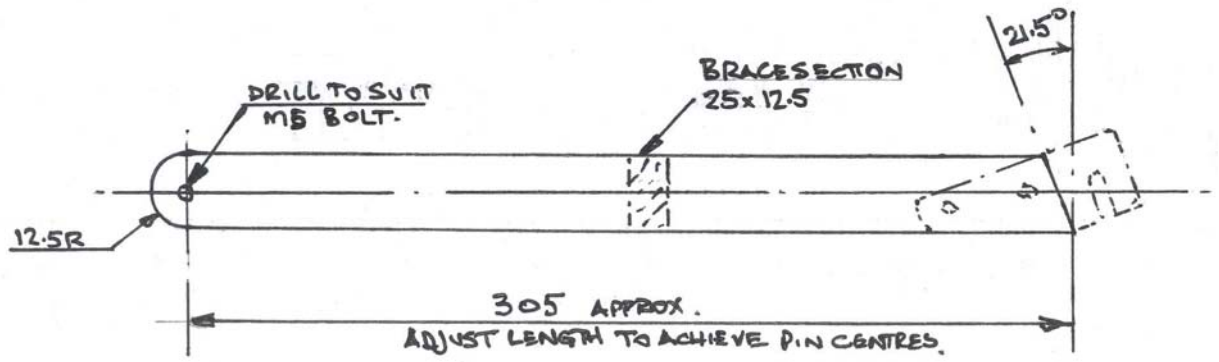


FOLDING BOOM CRUTCH  
LOOKING AFT.

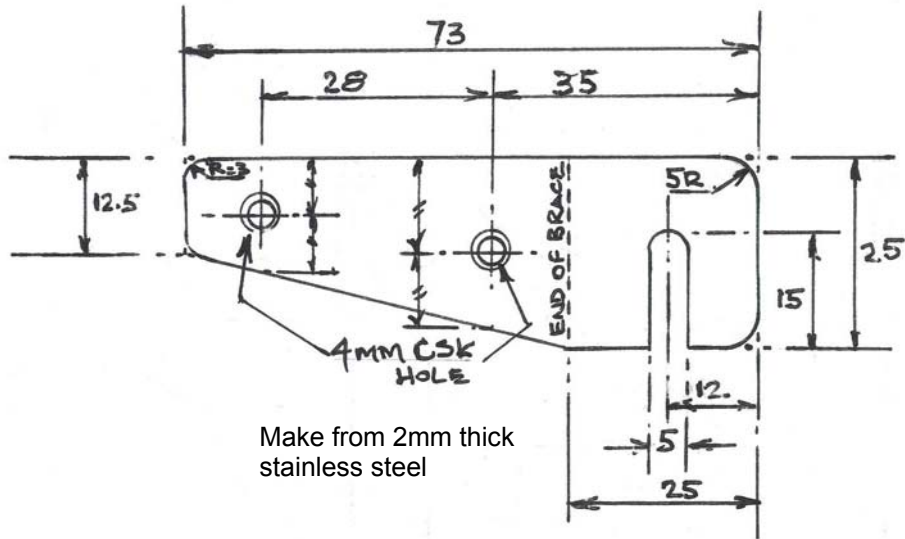
**Fig 6: Boom Support Assembly**  
**Note: Fork is on forward side on both battens**



**Fig 7: Main Batten End Detail**  
 Make 2 – Stbd side as drawn, Port side with  
 fork fitted on other side.



**Fig 7: Brace Detail**



**Fig 8: Brace Hook Detail**