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WHITECAP

RIGGING AND HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS

Now that you have your Whitecap, let's introduce you to her various parts and tell you how to rig and sail her for your greatest safety and enjoyment.

The basic parts of your Whitecap consist of the hull, mast and rigging, centerboard, rudder, tiller, boom, sheets, mainsail, and jib.

Your centerboard has already been installed at the factory. This is raised and lowered by a winch with a line coming back to a cleat on the port side of the centerboard trunk. The Whitecap has a heavy centerboard. If the centerboard is allowed to drop without being controlled by keeping tension on the hoisting line, you could damage the centerboard trunk. Be sure to keep fingers away from the centerboard winch. Particularly be careful not to let children handle this piece of equipment.

When sailing, your centerboard will normally be kept in the fully lowered position except that it can be raised almost all the way when you are running with the wind, and should be raised about half way when sailing across the wind (reaching).

The centerboard is pivoted around a bolt under the inspection ports in the centerboard trunk.

The Whitecap mast has a simple rigging layout for easy stepping and unstepping. The mast can be stepped either with the boat afloat or on the trailer. To do this, first place the mast on the boat with the foot of the mast located on the foredeck and the top of the mast extended out over the transom. Attach the side stays to the chainplates on the side decks. This attachment is made using the clevis pins and rings located on the stay adjusters on the mast. The first time you raise your mast, set the stays to be as loose as possible to be certain the mast goes up easily. Next, make sure that the forestay is free and clear and that its turnbuckle is loosened almost all the way. Also check the halyards to make sure that both ends are secured near the foot of the mast so that you can reach them when the mast is up. Check all cotter pins or rings - be certain they are secure.

The first time you raise your mast, you will have to attach the inboard ends of the spreaders to the fittings on the mast. This is a simple clevis pin - cotter pin connection. (Spread the cotter pins.)

CAUTION: BEFORE STEPPING THE MAST, CHECK FOR OVERHEAD POWER LINES.

Raise the mast as follows: Remove the forward pin from the mast step in the boat. With the side stays attached, move to the stern and walk the mast up into a vertical position, pushing the foot of the mast against the mast step. (If the boat is on a trailer, be sure the bow is tied down and the trailer is prevented from tipping up before you move to the stern.)

Once the mast is up, fasten the forestay to the top hole in the bow chainplate, using the clevis pin in the turnbuckle. Since the mast does not have any support other than the three stays, it is important when you are attaching the forestay (or if you are ever adjusting any of the stays) to hold the mast firmly by hand so that it will not topple over. Once your mast is up, we suggest adjusting the various stays so that the mast has a slight aft rake (tilt) and so that the stays are just snug with the mast leaning neither to starboard or port. Then install the forward pin back into the mast step.

Before launching, be sure the centerboard is all the way up and the hull drain in the transom is tightly closed. If you are launching from a ramp, leave a line on the bow to control the movement of the boat and be careful as the boat is launched to keep it centered on the trailer. If you will be launching from a hoist or crane, we suggest you obtain the Whitecap lifting sling. This is a 3-part stainless steel bridle which connects to the side stay chainplates, and to the eyes on the transom corners.

Before launching, drain any accumulated water from the hull by raising the bow and loosening the hull drain plug in the transom. Even a perfectly tight hull will pick up a surprising amount of water through condensation. Any water which has collected in the cockpit can be drained by raising the bow and opening the cockpit drain plug.

With the boat in the water, fit the rudder and tiller. The rudder is installed by merely slipping the rudder pintles into the gudgeons in the transom. Be sure that the pivoting rudder lock is rotated so that the rudder cannot accidentally become unshipped from the transom in the event of a capsize. The tiller is then slipped into the rudder and the cotter pin on the rudder inserted into the tiller through the hole in the top of the rudder cap to prevent the tiller from slipping out of the rudder cap when you are sailing.

Next, rig the boom by sliding the gooseneck into the mast groove. Reeve the mainsheet by passing the sheet through the mainsheet cleat on the centerboard trunk, then up to the block mounted midway along the boom, then aft to the block mounted on the end of the boom, then down to one of the blocks on the deck, across the deck to the other block, then up to the tang on the block on the end of the boom where you should make it fast with a bowline. Tie a figure 8 knot or an overhand knot in the other end of the mainsheet to prevent the sheet from accidentally unreeving.

If you have purchased the vang, this is attached by shackles to bails on the boom and on the mast near its foot. Locate the larger block with its built-in cleat in the mast end of the assembly. The vang is normally tightened down according to the wind velocity. Use little tension in light airs and greater tension when the wind is stronger.

Next, attach the jib. The jib tack (lower forward corner) is secured by a shackle to a hole in the bow chainplate. Then the sail snaps are put on the forestay. The halyard is attached to the head of the sail by its shackle and the jib sheet is attached to the clew cringle by means of a ring hitch made at the middle of the sheet. One half of the jib sheet will lead through the port fairlead on the seat - the other half through the starboard fairlead. Keep jib sheets inside the stays as you put them through the fairleads. Tie overhand knots or figure 8 knots in each end of the sheet to keep them from pulling through the fairlead accidentally. Before raising the jib, glance aloft to make sure the halyard is not fouled.

To fit the mainsail, install battens into the batten pockets. There are three battens in the mainsail. The upper and lower battens are approximately 24" long and the middle batten is 30" long. When the battens are inserted into their pockets an elastic in the inner end of the pockets will hold the battens in place against the roach of the sail. Run the mainsail out along the boom by pulling the bolt-rope of the main through the boom slot. Attach the corners of the sail to the boom.

The tack is attached to the gooseneck by a pin on the gooseneck and the clew is attached by an outhaul line. Attach the outhaul line to the sail using a bowline, then pass the line through the eye in the end of the boom and secure it to the jam cleat located on the side of the boom. Pull the outhaul line so that the foot of the sail is just snug. Next, attach the halyard to the headboard of the mainsail and insert the boltrope at the head board into the mast groove making sure the sail itself is not twisted. Before hoisting any sails, be sure that the boat is headed into the wind. After examining the halyard to make sure it is not fouled, and releasing the mainsheet, boom vang (if you have one), and downhaul, hoist the main to the top of the mast. Hoist the jib in a similar manner and cleat the jib halyard to the cleat on the port side of the mast. You will find it convenient to store the halyard tails by coiling them and stuffing them in the forward stowage compartment.

The final operation in setting the mainsail is to secure the downhaul line to the gooseneck and to cleat it with moderate tension on the cleat mounted below the gooseneck on the mast.

You are now ready to sail your Whitecap. Releasing the mainsheet in strong gusts should prevent capsizes in strong winds. If you find the wind so strong that you seem to be overpowered lower your jib and sail the boat under mainsail alone. When this is done you will find the Whitecap balances better with the centerboard raised 3 or 4 inches. You can further reduce sail area in very strong winds by rolling a reef in your mainsail. To do this, remove the sheet from the midboom mainsheet block, then slack off the main halyard about a foot. Pull aft on the boom to disengage the lock on the gooseneck and rotate the boom, thus rolling up the sail around the boom like a window shade. When the sail has been rolled enough to take up the slack along the luff of the sail, let the boom move forward so it will lock itself. To reduce sail still further, you can repeat the operation. To sail with a roller reefed main trim the main directly from the end of the boom.

The jib sheets can be cleated while sailing. Always trim only the leeward sheet, leaving the windward sheet completely slack. We advise holding the leeward sheet on the windward side so it can be easily released without having to reach for it.

SAFETY

Whitecap, with its sealed hull and deck providing both air and foam flotation, is about as safe as a boat of this type can be. Nevertheless, proper seamanship and safety precautions should always be followed to avoid accidents.

Wearable life jackets should always be aboard, and should be worn whenever winds are brisk and while single-handing the boat under ANY conditions.

By far the most common accident in small sailboats is the capsize. In the Whitecap this is not serious most of the time and we suggest that every owner practice capsizing and righting his boat on purpose in moderate breezes at first so that he or she will develop confidence to handle this situation if and when it should occur during a race or in strong winds.

If during a capsize you do not fall out of the boat into the water, righting is very simple and is accomplished easily by climbing out over the upper side of the capsized boat, putting your feet on the protruding centerboard, and levering the hull up, crawling into the cockpit as she comes upright. If you fall into the water, swim around to the bottom side of the boat, reach up, grab the centerboard, and pull down on it. As she rights, grab the rubrail to steady her, then climb aboard. Be sure to release the mainsheet and jibsheet before righting if these have been cleated. If you are sailing with a crew, righting the capsized Whitecap is easier and the crew may provide added weight on the centerboard or aid by pushing the masthead up from the water for a quicker rescue.

Occasionally the Whitecap, like other boats, may turn completely "turtle" (with its mast pointing straight down). If this happens, the boat can still be righted although it will take a little longer. Climb up on the overturned hull, using a free line from the opposite side or grab the protruding centerboard, and lean as far back as possible on the leeward side. She will right herself, first very slowly, then gradually faster. As she assumes a normal capsized position on the way up, continue the normal righting procedure.

Once Whitecap is righted, any accumulated water in the cockpit will bail itself through the rear stowage compartment.

When sailing in strong winds, always hold the mainsheet in your hand so it can be eased instantly in strong puffs.

To jibe (turn so that the stern passes through the eye of the wind) in strong winds, make sure the centerboard is not down more than 1/3. Shift your weight as the boom comes over and start and end the jibe with your mainsheet out so that the boom makes a 60° angle with the centerline of the hull. Keep crew weight aft and duck when the boom flies over. Push the tiller firmly and continue to turn the boat so that at the completion of the jibe you are headed with the wind directly across your beam. Practice jibing in light airs. Avoid jibing in strong winds, but come about (turn with the bow into the wind) whenever possible.

TRAILERING

When trailering your Whitecap, we strongly advise releasing the centerboard line slightly so there is no strain on the line, winch, wire or other parts of the hoisting mechanism. Let the weight of the centerboard be carried on the trailer rollers. Otherwise the severe jolting loads and vibration which can occur during travel, particularly over rough roads, could cause breakage of the wire or other parts of the hoisting mechanism.

LIST OF SUGGESTED BOOKS

- THIS IS SAILING.....Richard Creigh Osbourne
- RACING DINGHY HANDLING.....Ian Proctor
- SCIENTIFIC SAILBOAT RACING.....Ted Wells
- THE SCIENCE OF SAILING.....Bill Robinson
- BILL ROBINSON'S BOOK OF EXPERT SAILING.....Bill Robinson
- RACE YOUR BOAT RIGHT.....Aurthur Knapp
- TECHNIQUES OF SMALL BOAT RACING.....Stuart Walker
- SAILING TO WIN.....Bob Bavier
- TACTICS OF SMALL BOAT RACING.....Stuart Walker