



## Looking after your Topper



- Toppers should be stored with the deck facing down. This will avoid the hull distorting where it rests on the trolley.
- Clearly label all your gear when it's stored at the Club.
- Look after your sails; store them rolled on a plastic drainpipe rather than stuffed into a bag. If you store yours rolled around the mast, make sure the sail is dry & not creased when you roll it. Don't store the sail for too long rolled on the mast – this will affect its shape over time.
- **ALWAYS** loosen the downhaul **completely** when rolling your sail around the mast for storage – you will crease and ruin the sail shape by storing it with the downhaul tightened.
- When you are not sailing – **REMOVE THE BUNG** from your Topper to avoid the hull distorting with changes in air pressure. This is particularly important in extreme weather conditions.
- Remember to put the bung back in when you go afloat!!!! Most Topper sailors carry a supply of Topper bungs in the pocket of their buoyancy aids!
- Sailors will find it helpful to keep water out of the mast top section so that they can right the Topper more easily after capsizing. Secondary silicone in bungs can improve the reliability of push-fitted ones.
- All ropes, cleats and blocks should be regularly and carefully inspected for wear and friction. They should be replaced or lubricated as required.
- Learn how to reef your Topper. You should be able to roll 2 turns of the sail around your mast & re-connect it to the outhaul. If your outhaul rope is too short to allow this your boat is illegal!
- Daggerboards should always be attached to the boat using shock-cord elastic. As well as making sure you don't lose the board during a capsize, the elastic also prevents the board from sliding up or down on its own while you are sailing. Check the condition of your daggerboard elastic from time to time.
- Split rings and shackles will come undone or fall out at the worst possible time. Wrap them in self-amalgamating or PVC tape to prevent this happening.
- Sloppy rudders are horrible to sail with. Tighten the pivot bolts for the rudder, tiller and tiller extension and wrap PVC tape around the top pintle so it's a tight fit and doesn't wobble.
- Check toe-straps for wear & tear, particularly around the attachment points. Use shock-cord to hold them up off the cockpit floor so you can find them easily after a tack or gybe – otherwise this happens.....
- Tighten all screws especially on the transom plate.
- Clean the hull with a bathroom cleaner and a plastic scouring pad.
- Deep scratches can be removed with 'wet and dry' glass paper. Pay attention to your daggerboard & rudder. These are "rough" when new and it pays to spend some time getting these as smooth as possible.



- Hose down with fresh water after each sail to slow down corrosion and maintain the performance of moving parts. Pay special attention to all that mud at the top of your mast!
- The rivets on the mast and boom are stainless steel or monel. Check and if necessary replace them regularly.
- If water is getting into the buoyancy compartment check the following:
  - **Self Bailer** - This is best removed and re-bedded with silicon sealant. There is a gasket between the deck and the hull in this area that can also be replaced with Sikaflex or sealant.
  - **Transom Plate** - The captive nut on the inside plate can become detached preventing the bolts being tightened. Replacement of this nut is difficult (but not impossible) because hatches are not allowed under Class Rules.
  - **Mast Cup** - At the foot of the mast the mast cup has a bolt that pulls the hull and deck together. This cup should be replaced occasionally to prevent damage to the deck as it wears away. Behind it is a seal that may need replacing.
  - **Bung** - Should seal but may need replacing
  - **Seal** - At the top of the plate case this seal can become weak. Sikaflex and the use of negative pressure in the hull using a vacuum cleaner will cure this!
- It is rarely the deck to hull seal that leaks. A check with positive pressure and washing up liquid will show any leaks that are missed.

**Insurance** - Remember to insure your Topper – most policies cover you for loss or damage to the dinghy, its fittings and equipment.