

BOAT CARE

— Spars and Fittings

SPARS

The mast and boom requires very little maintenance. Salt water is the biggest enemy of metal especially where the stainless steel fittings are attached to the mast. After use in salt water, wash the spars thoroughly with fresh water, paying particular attention to areas around the fittings. A light spray with an all purpose maintenance spray eg WD40 that has water repellent qualities may help stop corrosion.

Bad corrosion can be seen as small white crystals forming around a fitting. If this is seen, the fitting should be removed and the rivet holes inspected for corrosion and stress cracks. Critical areas are:

— the gooseneck fitting — rivet failure. Re-rivet using monel or stainless steel rivets. If holes have enlarged too much, remove all fittings and reverse spar replacement fittings according to the measurement diagrams in the class rules.

— kicking strap (boom vang) fittings — same as for gooseneck.

— upper mast collar — rivet failure and stress cracks. This is not so easy to spot and only needs to be checked if the upper mast is old and has not been looked after. If stress cracks are found, the collar should not be repositioned. Instead the upper mast should be reversed.

FITTINGS

Very little can go wrong with fittings. Check that the screws on the black plastic blocks are tight and if you sail from a place where you do not need to unclip the traveller blocks, it is advisable to wrap plastic tape around the clips on the block so that they are rigid and cannot capsize.



Make sure that all the blocks run freely and are washed regularly, particularly if you sail off a sand beach.

