

Congratulations!

You purchased the best known and best built pocket cruising vessels available.

We invite you to spend a few moments with the following pages to become better acquainted with your new West Wight Potter.

If at any point we can assist you, please call 800 433 4080

Fair Winds

International Marine

Standing Rigging

The mast is a 2" aluminum extrusion with a slot on the aft side to which the sail's boltrope or mainsail slides (options item) enter when hoisting the main sail. Attached to the mast will be two side stays, called Shrouds, and a Forestay. These three stainless cables represent the standing rigging of the West Wight Potter 15.

The attachment points for the shroud adjusters are on the side of the deck. Looking at the boat you will find 1/4" U-Bolts mounted through the deck on either side of the boat and the adjuster goes over these U-Bolts. Once the shroud adjuster slides in, the clevis pin inserts through the adjuster and is held in place with a lock ring.

When both side stays are in place we move onto the mast raising.

Mast Raising

First, remove the mast pin holding the mast base in the bow pulpit. Second, move the mast back towards the mast step on the cabin top of the boat and pin the mast base into the aft section of the mast step (the mast step is bolted onto the cabin top of the boat). The mast crutch on the transom of the boat will support the aft end of the mast. The mast is now hinged at the base and will rise from this point.

Before starting, ensure the forestay is free and clear and not fouled around any objects. Also ensure the shrouds are free and clear before raising the mast.

A good position for lifting the mast is to put your forward foot on the centerboard trunk and your aft foot on the bridgedeck just outside the companionway door.

Option #1 - Two Person Method

The person on the boat will lift the mast up into a vertical position. The assistant will walk the forestay adjuster to the bow and then attach the forestay adjuster onto the stemhead fitting on the bow of the boat. The forestay will fit onto the largest hole at the most forward part of the stemhead fitting.

Option #2 - One Person Method

Tie the jib halyard to the stemhead fitting and make several yards of slack on the bow. Lift the mast into the vertical position and then take the slack out of the jib halyard, put tension on the line, and then cleat the halyard off at the base of the mast. Exit the boat and go to the bow to attach the forestay onto the largest hole at the stemhead fitting.

Running Rigging

The Running Rigging for the West Wight Potter 15 is attached to the bare boom when packed for shipping. Below is a picture of the boom with labels to help identify which lines are intended for which function.



Item A = Main Sail Downhaul

Item B = Reefing Line

Item C = Jib Sheets (Usually Blue and White)

Item D = Boom Vang Line (Hanging off the Boom Vang Block)

Item E = Reef Ties (Thin white lines)

Item F = Main Sheet Line

Boom and Main Sail Rigging

Take the mainsail out of its bag and find the battens for the sail and insert the battens into the appropriate pockets within the mainsail. Then place the mainsail and the boom inside the cockpit along with the standard hardware package.

First, place the gooseneck of the boom into the sailtrack and allow it to drop down for now (See Figure 1). While in the cockpit of the boat, attach the topping lift snap shackle to the topping lift line (the thin white line on the mast), then attach the shackle to the eyestraps at the aft end of the boom and cleat the topping lift at the mast. This supports the aft end of the boom while you rig the boat (See Figure 2 Item C).

Second, rig the mainsheet by attaching the traveler with a Bowline knot to Pad Eye on either side transom. Then route through the 29mm Block on the base of the 40mm Ratcheting Block and down to the Pad Eye on the opposite side of the Transom. The height of the Traveler above the Transom should be about 6-8 inches.

Next step is to attach the Mainsheet to the 40mm Ratcheting Blocks fiddle with a Bowline knot. Then route the Mainsheet up through the Forward side of the 40mm Block that is attached to bottom/aft side of the Boom. From back of that block back down to and through the back side of the 40mm Ratcheting Block, exiting through the Cam Cleat mounted on the front.



Mainsheet Rigging Pictures

Third, connect the tack (bottom forward corner of the mainsail) to the gooseneck.

Fourth, find the outhaul (See Figure 2 Item A) and tie the outhaul line to grommet in the clew of the mainsail (aft bottom grommet). Then lead this line through the block on the aft, starboard side of the boom. Tighten the line and tie it off onto the small black cleat (See Figure 2 Item B) forward of the block.

Fifth, find the head of the mainsail and attach the main halyard to the grommet of the sail directly or if the Fast Rig Package was ordered, tie the main halyard to one of the halyard snap shackles and attach the shackle to the head of the main.

Sixth, insert the bolt rope of the main or the Mainsail Slides (if ordered) into the sail track and raise the mainsail while feeding the bolt rope or slides into the track. Then tie the mainsail off to the cleat on the mast.

Finally, pull down on the boom with the downhaul (See Figure 1 Item C) which is a 4' line under the gooseneck and secure this line to the cleat at the base of the mast. This will create a taut luff on the mainsail.



Figure 1

Item A = Sail Track Opening
Item C = Main Sail Downhaul

Item B = Gooseneck

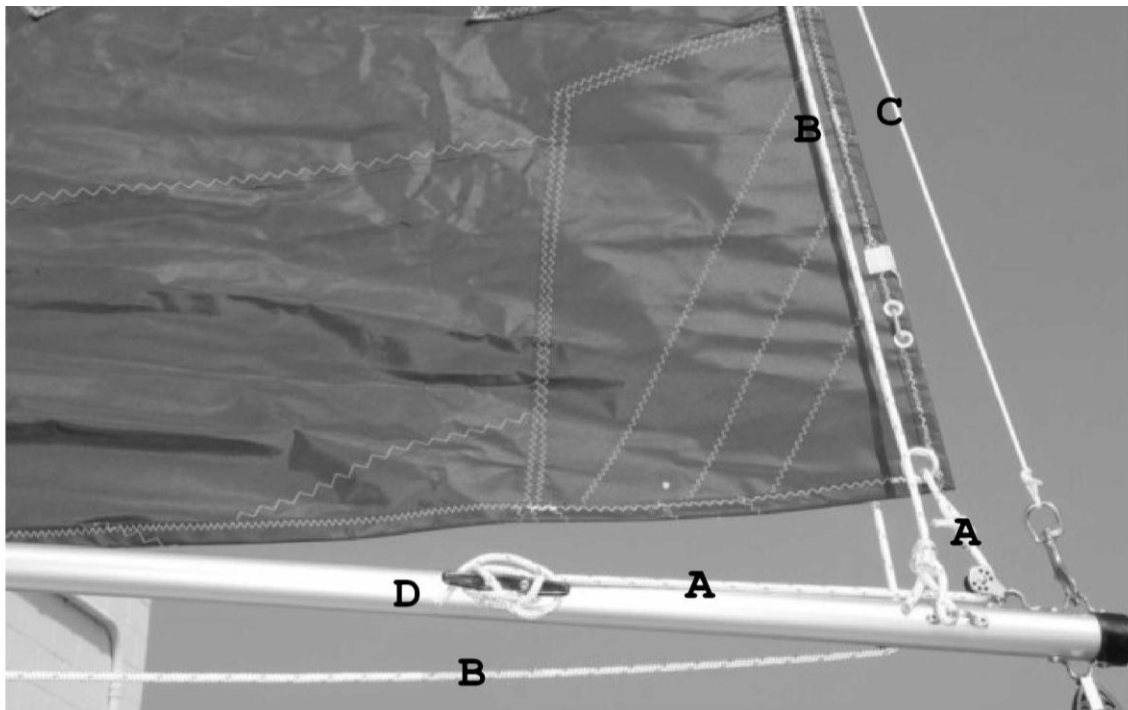


Figure 2

Item A = Main Sail Outhaul
Item C = Topping Lift

Item B = Jiffy Reefing Line
Item D = Main Sail Outhaul Cleat

Jiffy Reefing

Looking at the main sail with the sail raised, you will see two large grommets and two small grommets running in a line across the sail about 1/3 of the way up from the foot. This is the standard reef included with the boat. A second set of reef points (if ordered) will be 2/3 up the mainsail from the foot.

Next looking at the boom at the forward end, attached to the gooseneck is the reefing hook (Item A in Figure 1), following along the port side of the boom and under the aft reefing grommet is a pad eye used to tie on the reefing line. Following around the boom to the starboard side the next component will be a cheek block (Item C in Figure 3), this will be opposite the pad eye; moving further forward you will find the final component which is a horn cleat, just aft of the goose neck.

First step is to rig the boat for reefing, take the reefing line, which will be tied on the horn cleat on the starboard side of the boom. Tie this line to the pad eye on the port side of the boom, and then thread it through the aft reefing grommet down and around cheek block (Item B in Figure 3), and forward to cleat off on the horn cleat. At this point the reef line should be 'slack' enough that there is no downward pull on the aft reefing grommet. The boat is now rigged and ready to reef when needed (See Figure 4)

For the actual Reef itself, step one in the reefing process is to loosen the main halyard and drop the main sail far enough to slip the reefing hook into the forward reef grommet. Next step would be to tighten the reef line sufficiently to draw the aft reef grommet down close to the boom. After which you can bunch the foot of the sail and using the reef ties that run through the small grommets to tie off the bunched sail foot. The main sail is now reefed and you can go back to sailing a much easier to control Potter. **Caution: Do not tie the rolled portion of the main sail to the boom.**

The old adage is 'the time to reef is before you need it'; this is before the wind rises to the point where the boat is difficult to control. If you are out for a sail and the winds increase to the point where you are having difficulty managing the boat. At that point you must 'heave the boat to', that is head the boat into the wind; backwind the jib to port and put the tiller over hard to starboard. This will allow the boat to stabilize and give you time under controlled conditions to put in the reef.

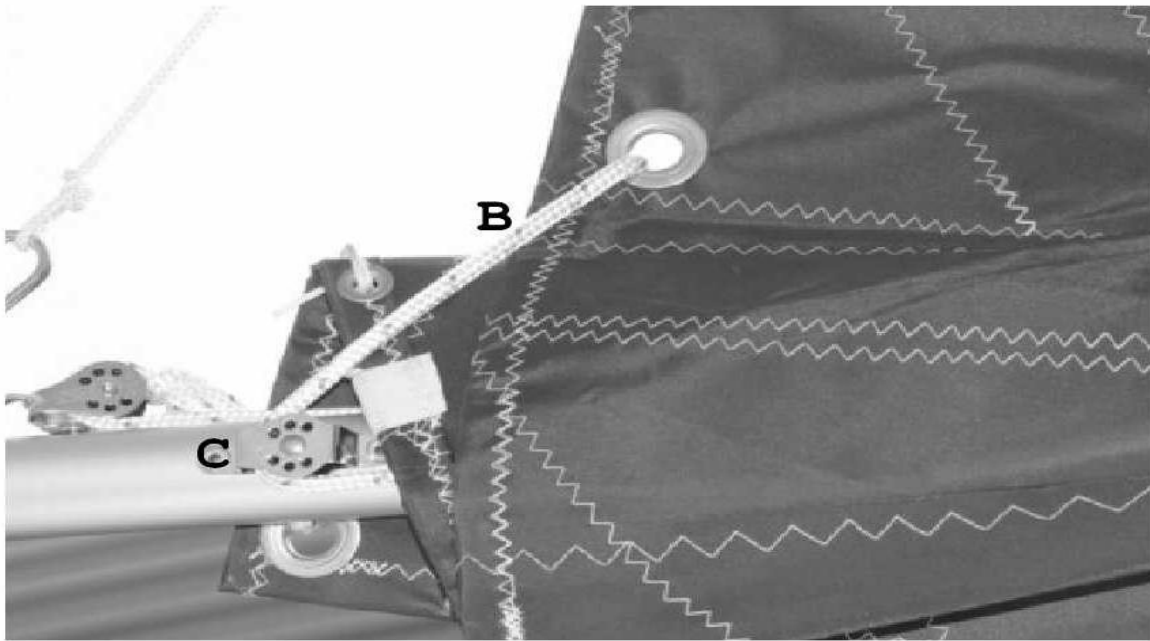
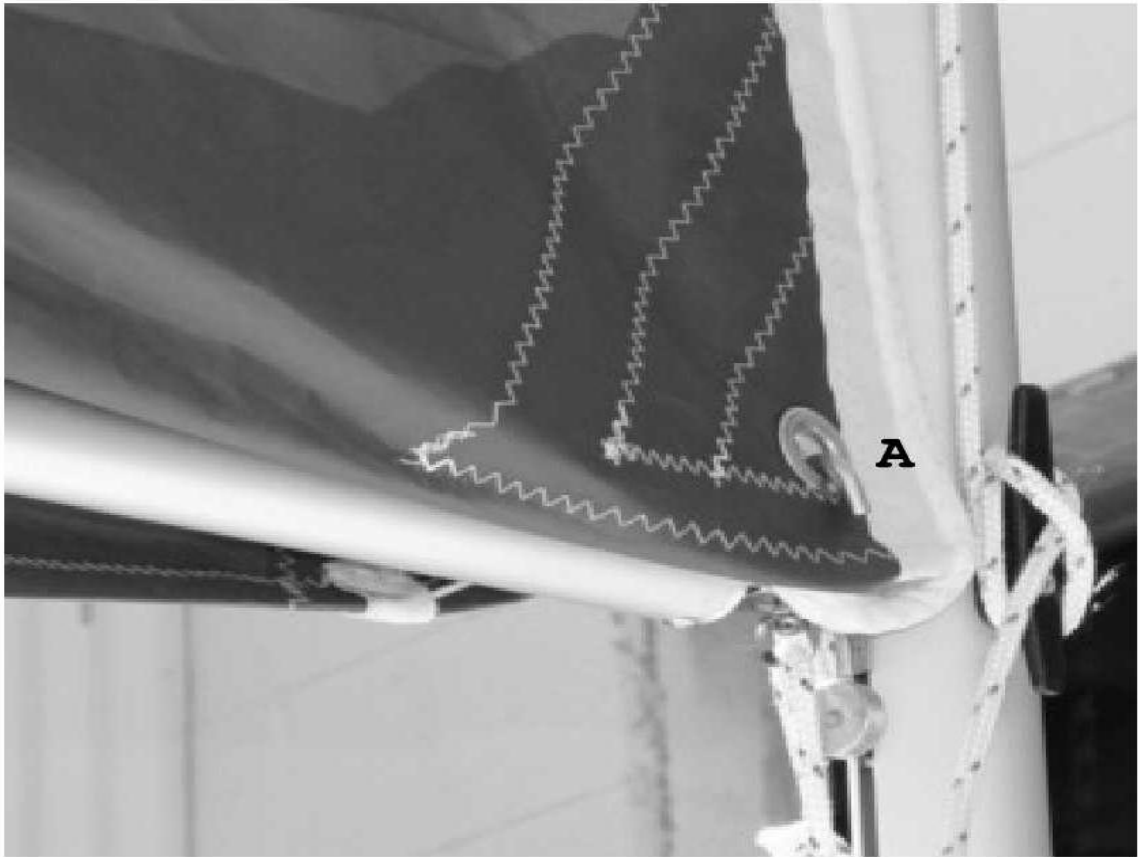


Figure 3



Figure 4

Item B = Reefing Line

Item C = Check Block for Reefing Line

Item D = Cleat for Reefing

Headsail Rigging (Jib, Lapper, or Genoa)

Locate the head of the jib and tie the jib halyard to the grommet of the sail directly or if the Fast Rig Package was ordered, tie the main halyard to one of the halyard snap shackles and attach the shackle to the head of the jib. Then hank the jib onto the forestay while pulling up the sail with the halyard.

If the jib downhaul was ordered (part of the Singlehanders Package), run the jib downhaul through every hank and tie it off to the grommet at the head of the jib while raising the sail. Run the jib downhaul through the block on the port side of the bow pulpit and back towards the cockpit to the cleat on the cabin top.

Next, find the jib sheet line and locate the middle of this line. At the center of the line, double it over to form two equal halves and pass the doubled line through the clew grommet of the headsail which leaves a loop extending out from the clew grommet. Then pass the two opposite ends of the halves through the loop and pull tight. This leaves two equal length sheets running from the headsail. Finally, run the jib sheets outside of the shrouds and to the cam cleats at the forward end of the cockpit.

Boom Vang Rigging

The Boom Vang system consists of three items:

1. A block attached to the boom - 2' 6" from the mast
2. Boom Vang Block - located in the box of equipment
3. Boom Vang Line - tied to the block mentioned in item 1

To rig, tie a bowline knot to the Becket of the block attached to the boom and attach the Boom Vang block to the pad eye at the base of the mast with the V Jam down. Next, run the line around the block furthest from the mast inside the Boom Vang. Then, continue to run the line around the block on the boom and back to the Boom Vang but this time to the block closest to the mast and then down through the V-Jam of the Boom Vang block.

If the boat comes with the Fast Rig Package, then a small carabineer (hiking clip) will come in the box of equipment. Use this to attach the Boom Vang block to the pad eye and then you can leave the Boom Vang threaded by un-clipping the system and leaving it attached to the boom when stowed.



Safety Considerations

The United States Coast Guard requires you to have the following safety equipment on your boat. This is the minimum safety equipment needed but there may be other laws (state, local, etc) that require other items or common sense may dictate additionally equipment. Check with other law enforcement agencies in your area such as the local parks and recreation for other requirements. Also, if you sail outside of the United States, there may be different requirements. The United States Coast Guard sets the standards for minimum equipment for recreational boating and they publish free literature which outlines these requirements in detail.

- a) Life jackets – One type I, II, III, or V wearable PFD (personal flotation device) for each person on board. Must be Coast Guard approved.
- b) Life Ring – One Type IV (throwable) PFD
- c) One orange distress flag or one electric distress light – or – Three hand-held or floating orange smoke singals and one electric distress light – or – Three combination day/night red flards: handheld, meteor, or parachute type.
- d) One fire extinguisher (USCG approved)
- e) Horn – Some means of making an “efficient” sound signal – audible for a half mile for 4 to 6 seconds
- f) Navigation Lights – Required to be displayed from sunset to sunrise and in or near areas of reduced visibility

The following list will gives you a general idea of other potential items needed before sailing:

- Anchor and Rode
- Bailing Device (pump, bucket, etc)
- Boat Hook
- Compass
- Emergency Drinking Water
- Fenders and Docklines
- First Aid Kit
- Flashlight
- Local Charts, Tides, and Current Tables
- Mirror (signaling)
- Oars or Paddle
- Radio (handheld or fixed with antenna)
- Shear Pins
- Spare Parts Kit
- Tool Kit

Safe Operation

WARNINGS: Carefully follow all of the following warnings. Failure to follow these warnings can result in serious injury or death.

Your Potter is a very safe boat, but all boats pose some dangers. Following these warnings will help keep you safe as you use your boat.

Do not raise the mast near power lines, or take the boat near power lines when the mast is up. The mast can conduct electricity. If the mast touches power lines, or even gets close to them, you could be electrocuted. Electricity can jump through the air to the mast from very high voltage power lines. While most power lines do not have this high voltage, play it safe and keep the mast a minimum of 10 feet from all power lines.

Always wear a lifejacket. While we recommend that everyone always wear their lifejacket when out on their Potter, it is especially important for children and non-swimmers to wear one. It is also very important to wear one when operating in cold water, when operating in rough conditions, and when you are sailing alone or with inexperienced crew. If you fall off the boat, you will NOT be able to catch it by swimming. Unless someone onboard can sail the boat back to you, you will be all alone in the water as the boat sails merrily away from you.

Only sail your boat with the centerboard fully down and locked in that position. Your Potter is a very stable boat, and part of this stability is due to the weight of the centerboard. Your boat can tip-over more easily if the centerboard is not locked in the down position. It is OK to motor (or paddle) your boat with the centerboard up. But, the sails need to be down anytime the centerboard is up.

If you are motoring with the centerboard up, your maneuverability will be very poor. With the centerboard up, your boat will slide sideways a lot. This can make it difficult to control the boat when turning, or if there is a wind blowing. Keep the centerboard down as far as possible even when motoring your boat. Even a few inches down helps with maneuverability. If you must motor with the centerboard up, then make sure you have lots of room to make maneuvers.

When raising the sails, raise the main sail first. If you raise the jib first, it can make it impossible to keep your boat pointed into the wind. If the wind is strong enough, it can turn your boat sideways to the wind and then tip your boat over on its side.

Safe Towing

A normally equipped Potter 15 on a trailer will weigh about 750 pounds when empty. Adding things like water, anchors, coolers, supplies, etc will increase the weight. Make sure your tow vehicle and hitch are rated to tow the full weight of your boat, trailer, and gear.

Before towing, make sure the following things are in good working order:

Make sure the trailers hitch is properly seated on the trailer ball, and latched and locked (see Fig 1-1). It is possible for the hitch to be latched, but not actually gripping the trailer ball (see Fig 1-2). This usually happens when you have the trailer too far forward when you try to attach it to the trailer ball (even a 1/2 inch forward can cause this problem). It can also happen when the hitch is not fully open as you lower it onto the trailer ball. To avoid this problem, open the hitch fully and, most importantly, make sure the trailer ball is slightly off-center to the FORWARD side of the trailers hitch before you lower the hitch onto the ball (see Fig 1-3).

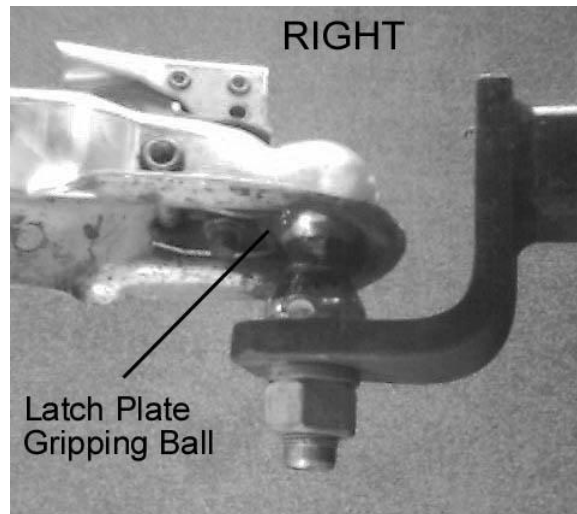


Figure 6

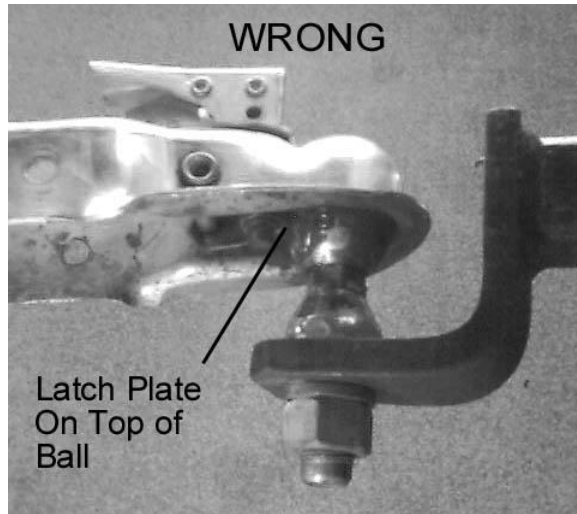


Figure 7

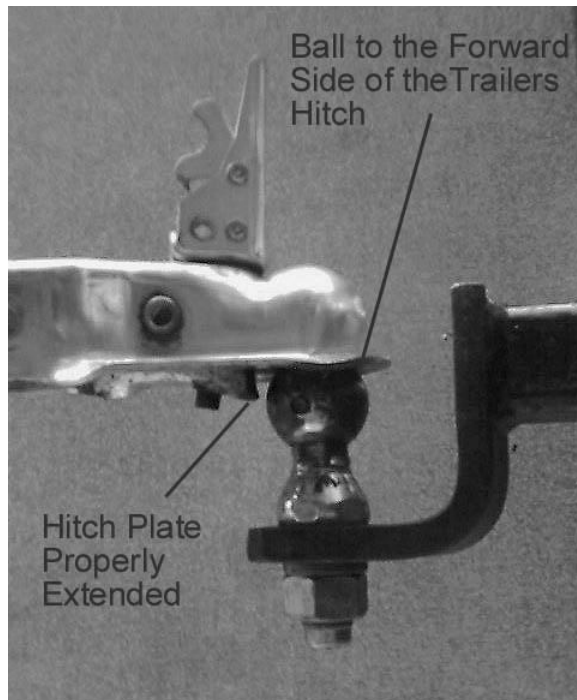


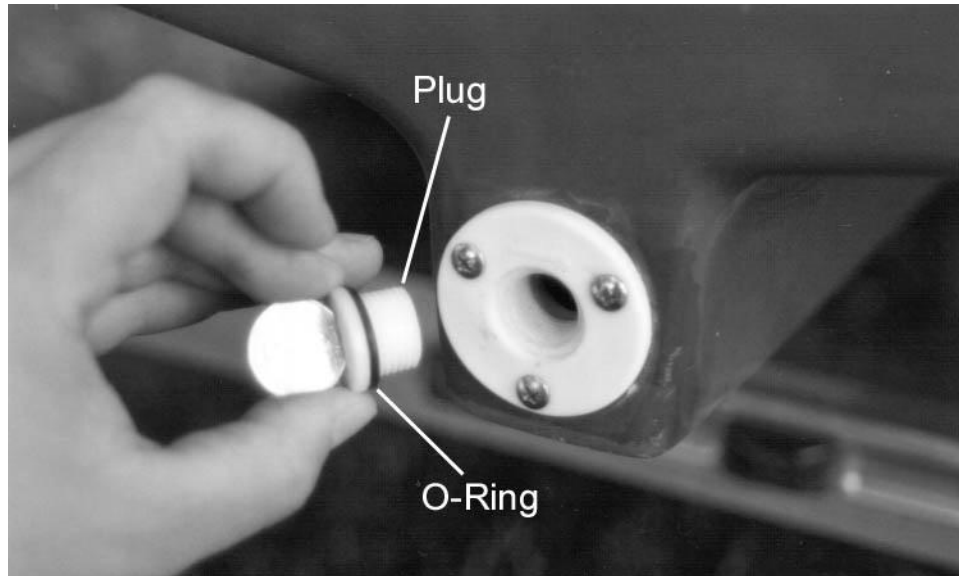
Figure 8

Important Things to Check Before Towing

- Make sure the safety chains are attached to the tow vehicle.
- Make sure all the trailer lights -- turn signals, break lights, and running lights (parking lights) -- work.
- If you have trailer brakes, make sure the break-away cable is attached to the tow vehicle.
- Mast in Down position and firmly attached to the Mast Crutch and the bow pulpit
- All shrouds and the Forestay tied down
- Ratcheting tie-down strap on and firmly tightened down
- Trailer winch connected to the boat's towing eye and firmly tightened
- Rudder detached and stowed in the boat or vehicle
- Motor detached and stowed in the boat or vehicle

Final checks before Launching

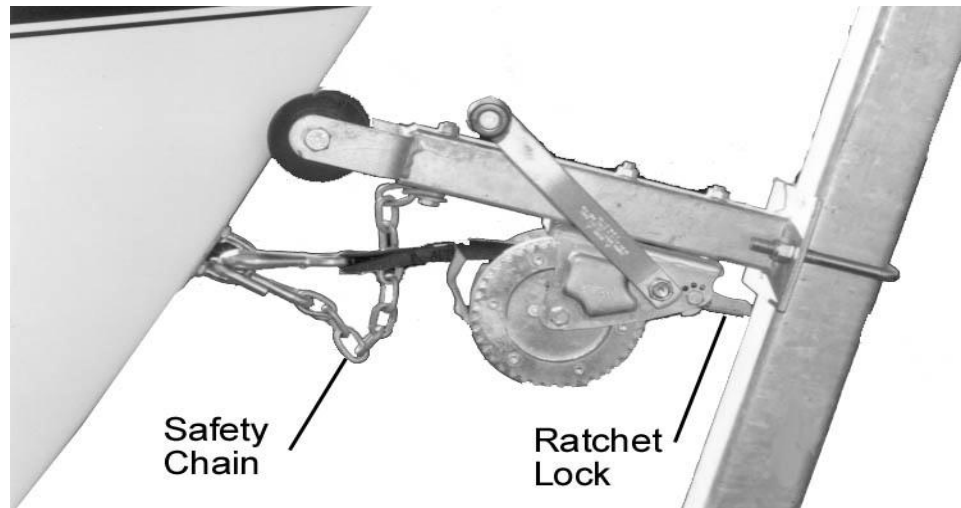
- Make sure there are no power lines, trees, or other obstructions between you and the launch ramp.
- Make sure the drain plug is installed in the back of your boat (see Fig 4-1).



- Attach mooring lines to the cleats on the boat deck.
- If you will be tying the boat to a dock, then hang fenders on the side of the boat to protect it from the dock.
- Remove the tie-down straps that hold your boat to the trailer. We recommend you keep the winch strap attached to the bow of your boat, and the winch locked. While boats will usually stay on the trailer without the winch strap attached, if the ramp is steep and you stop fast the boat might slide off. If you spray the trailer bunks with a lubricant, or add plastic sliders to the trailer bunks, then the boat is very likely to slide off the trailer if you don't keep the winch strap attached.
- Unplug the trailer's lights and let them cool before backing into the water.

Launching the Boat

- Back the boat into the water. Back it in until most of the boat is floating, with just the bow still touching the trailer. With the Baja trailer, this is often about where the top of the trailer fenders submerge in the water. However, this depends on how steep the ramp is -- experiment to see how deep you must go for the boat to come off easily.
- Set the parking brake AND put your car in park (or turn-off the engine and put it in gear if you have a manual transmission). You really don't want to be one of the people that loses their car into the water!
- Have someone hold the dock lines to control the boat once it is off the trailer.
- Let the winch strap out (this may require you to get your feet wet). Make sure you are holding the winch handle tightly when you release the ratchet lock on the winch (see Fig 4-2). The boat may want to pull on the winch strap and spin the handle. Let the strap out until it is slack, and then disconnect it from the boat.



- If the boat doesn't float off the trailer by itself, then push on it gently. If it still doesn't come off the trailer, then back the trailer further into the water if possible. If you can't back the boat in deeper and you must push on it hard, then push on the fiberglass hull. The bow pulpit (the railing) is not designed to be repeatedly pushed on hard; doing so can cause cosmetic stress cracks in the gel coat of the deck.
- Once the boat is clear of the trailer and secured to the dock or shore, then drive the trailer out of the water. If you don't have the boat completely clear of the trailer, then the boat can catch on the trailer as you pull the trailer out of the water. This can damage the boat or the trailer.

Preparing to Sail Away

First lower the keel into the full down position to ensure stability while boarding the boat. Loosen the keel line from its cleat on the starboard aft side of the keel trunk. While grasping the keel line firmly, feed the keel line out slowly and watch the keel arm move slowly aft until the keel is completely down and the arm is at the back of the keel trunk in a vertical position.

Once the keel is down, secure the keel line back on the starboard cleat, then wrap the line around the arm once or twice and secure the line to the port side cleat. This will prevent the keel from retracting into the boat during a knockdown.

Remember that letting the keel fall freely by letting the keel line go can cause damage to the keel trunk so lower it slowly and under control.

The easiest way to raise the sails is to point the boat into the wind. Some sailors will raise the sails at the dock if they are pointing into the wind, others will motor to a clear and uncrowded location, turn into the wind and raise the sails.

Tips on Handling Your Potter

I designed the Potter at the very outset with leisurely pottering in mind as the boat's sole purpose. She is under-canvassed by many people's standards. Generally, however, I sleep at nights!

The Potter's sections were designed for maximum initial stability, and she should not be allowed to heel more than about 10 degrees. If she does, her sections will not allow an increase in speed, rather they will impede her. Also, her peak of stability is exceeded.

In all ways the boat handles beautifully in reasonable conditions--fast and exhilarating in a fresh breeze, close-winded and hard to get "into irons."

About Force 4 one should consider reefing. She handles well and remains dry with full fores'l and reefed main. Downwind in these conditions a jibe is not something to fear, although of course, one must beware of over-confidence. If one is caught out in over Force 6 she can be handled and even brought "through the wind" with reefed main alone. But this needs careful handling and experience, particularly if the wind is unsteady.

When all fails and the boat can only be taken downwind, it is sometimes a comfort to know that she can be sailed onto a beach! I am alive because the Potter draws a mere seven inches with the swinging plate and rudder up!

In light airs, the best tip I can give you is to have her listing slightly to leeward. The lee chine will do a good job of gripping the water and help you up to windward. Never have your sails penned in hard in any conditions.

I have always found the boat goes better, and performs properly, with weight in the cabin. Never be afraid to load her with gear and equipment. She was designed to carry masses of people and their gear. But do remember she will be badly handicapped if this is placed too far aft. The forward third of the lee chine must be allowed to do its job.

Warnings

(1) A light 15ft. centre-board boat can only be a freak if you can tramp about the foredeck without fear of turning her over. Be careful. If you have others on board and need to go forward on deck, see that they move well aft in the cockpit so that the stable sections aft can do their job.

(2) Remember always that the Potter is a 15ft. centre-board dinghy, with a cabin. Sail her with your main-sheet free to let run, pass it under the cleat at the aft end of the case by all means, but do not make it fast unless you are very sure of the conditions.

(3) Keep the plate down always when you are on board, unless circumstances definitely dictate otherwise. If you do have it up in such circumstances, never forget that it is up, and let it down again without fail when circumstances allow.

Stanley C. Smith

Designer and Original Builder of the West Wight Potter 14/15