

Parts of the Laser



The Laser is beautifully simple. It has the minimum number of parts, each carefully designed to do a specific job. However, there are a few things you can do ashore to make life easier when you go afloat.

The painter

Tie a six-metre length of rope to the plastic eye near the bow. This is long enough for mooring and for towing the boat. Tie the loose end round the mast when sailing.

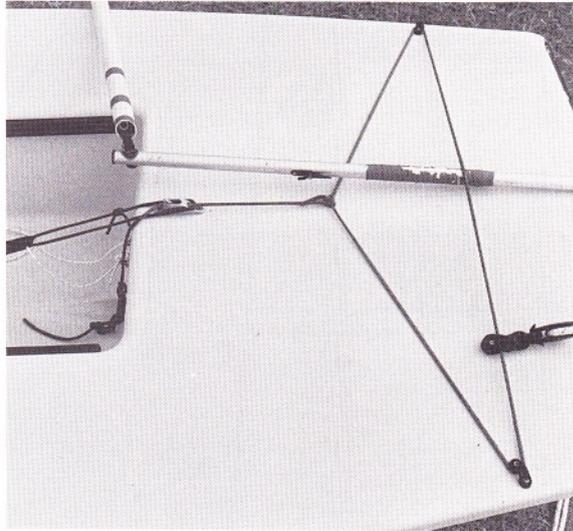
The centreboard

If you capsize and the boat turns upside down, the centreboard may fall out. To prevent this, pass a length of shockcord through the centreboard, through the plastic eye near the bow and back the other side of the mast. The two ends are held together with C-clips. Tension sufficiently to hold the board firm.

Drill two holes near the top of the board and fit a rope handle. This makes it much easier to raise.

The rudder

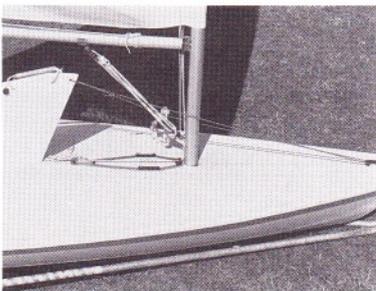
The rudder can also fall out if the boat turns upside down. It does *not* float, so make sure the rudderstop holds it in place. If not, loosen the screws and adjust it.



Tape the mainsheet and traveller blocks to prevent kinking. Cover the tiller with a piece of washing-up liquid bottle to prevent wear. Tie the traveller with a small knot, as far aft as possible.

Tighten the bolt through the rudder head. If there is any slack the cheeks of the head may buckle when you turn. You should be able to raise the blade – it will then stay up while you launch the boat.

Shockcord and a handle attached to the centreboard.

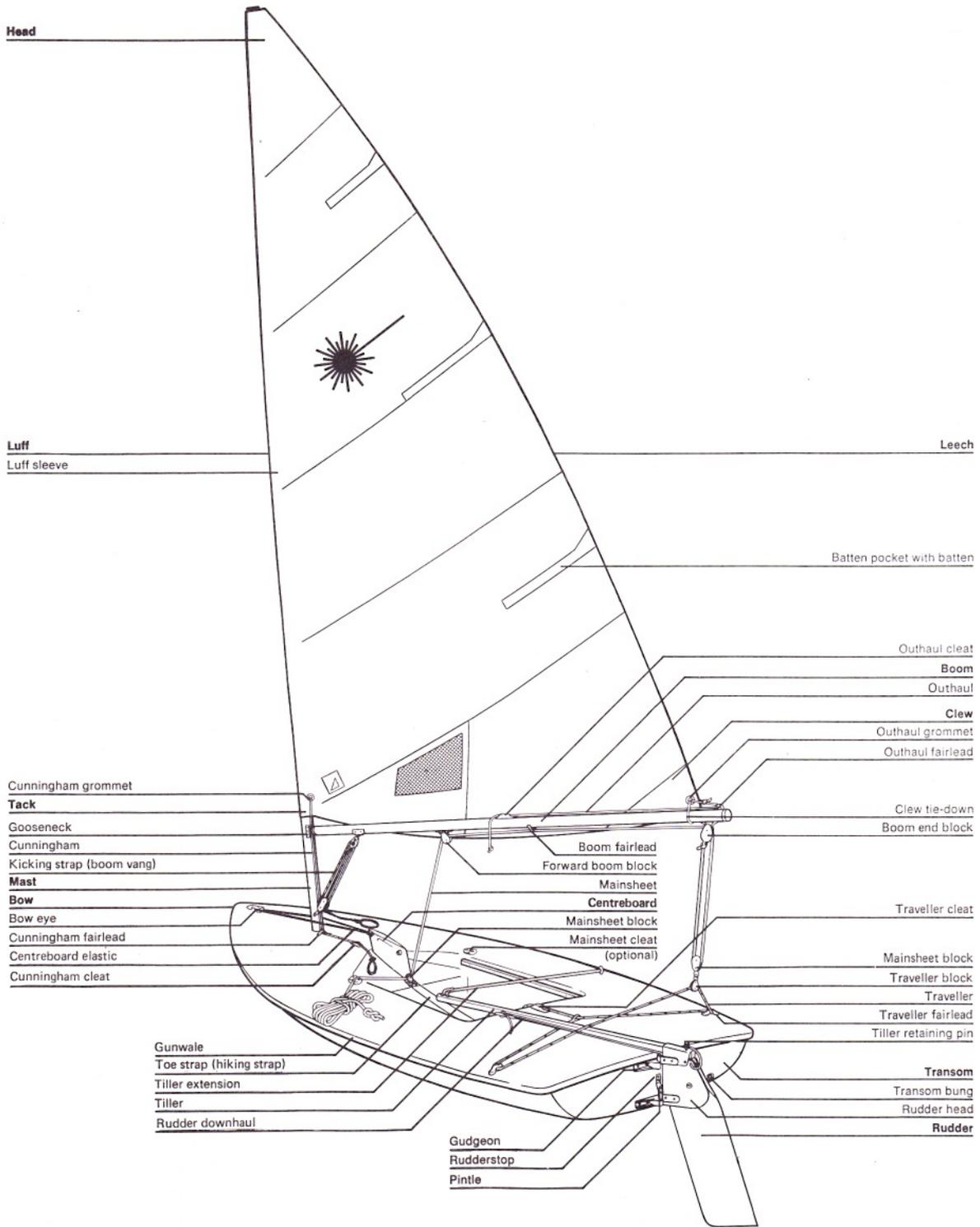


Adjust the rudderstop so it holds the rudder in place.



There should be no gap between the rudderstop and pintle.





The tiller

This corresponds to the steering wheel of your car – no slack is expected! If the fit of the tiller in the rudder head is poor, take the tiller out and squeeze the sides of the head in a vice until the slack disappears.

You may like to shorten the tiller so it does not project into the cockpit – this makes steering easier when you're sitting back on a broad reach or run.

Don't use the retaining pin in the stock – the mainsheet just catches on it.

The tiller extension

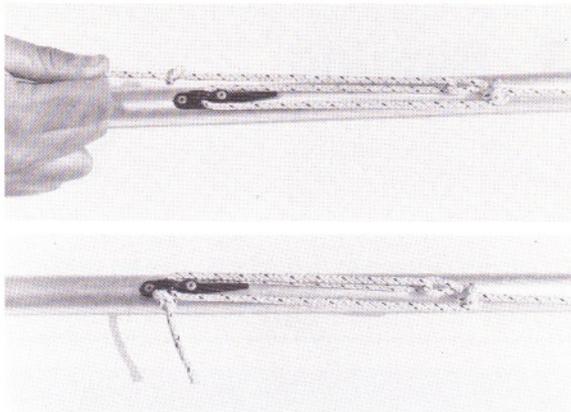
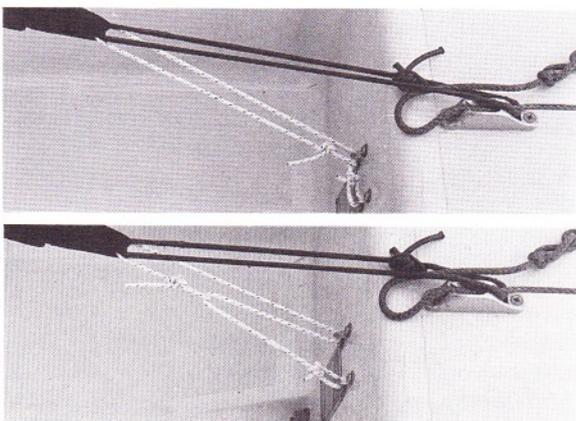
The metal tiller extension is quite slippery, so stick some tape round it every few centimetres. This makes a series of ridges which stop your hand sliding. You may find you need to fit a longer tiller extension; you must be able to steer easily when hiking at full stretch or when sitting forward of the centreboard in light airs.

Toe strap (hiking strap)

The photos show how to rig a rope so you can adjust the toe strap while sailing. Experiment until the loosest setting is right for beating (top photo) and the tightest is spot on for reaching (bottom photo). When hiking, your thighs should be on the outside edge of the deck.

Fit an elastic loop through the back loop of the toe strap and around the traveller cleat. This keeps the toe strap tight when not in use and makes it easier to hook your feet under it.

The toe strap elastic and adjusting rope.



Tie the rudder downhaul like this: the knot will pull off the cleat if the blade runs aground.

Self bailer

The Laser is not supplied with a self bailer, but one can easily be added. It gets rid of water more quickly than the bailing hole; the only thing to remember is to push it up when coming ashore, or it will be broken on the beach.

Gooseneck

The gooseneck bolt needs tightening after every few outings. Tighten it as much as possible – this helps prevent the gooseneck bending and stops the boom wobbling.

Burgee (flag)

The burgee must be balanced properly, or it will give misleading information when the boat heels. To balance a burgee, hold it with the stick horizontal: if the flag itself flops downwards, wind tape round the balance wire to give it more weight. When it is balanced, the burgee will stay level when you pick it up.

Put tape around the middle and bottom of the burgee stick. When you push it into the sail sleeve at the front or back of the mast, the tape will stop the burgee sliding around.

Side cleats for the mainsheet

These should only be used when you need a free hand for something else. At other times the centre ratchet block will take most of the mainsheet's load particularly if you have the kicking strap (vang) tight. You may even decide to take off the side cleats, as many sailors do.