



Sailing Tips by Chris Kitchen

December 2011

Series 2 – A Mixed Bag of Small Tips

The following series of articles are aimed at improving Weta sailing throughout the fleet. Whether you are out there to win your nationals or to enjoy a sunny Sunday afternoon, it is always nice to know that you are sailing your boat to its full potential. Hopefully there is something here for everyone. These articles will also be published on the Weta Marine website. To finish off the series, we hope to answer any questions that you may have on info@wetamarine.com.

Series 2 – A Mixed Bag of Small Tips

On my travels between Weta sailing locations I pick up on a number of things that frustrate Weta owners (sometimes without them even knowing!) We want to make your Weta experience as easy as possible, so if anything comes up, drop us a line at info@wetamarine.com and let us know!

1. Furl it Right – Treat yourself for the New Year

Treat yourself for 2012 – upgrade your gennaker furler. A blatant advertisement for a product we sell – but I am willing to stick my neck out as I believe this will improve your Weta sailing experience immensely.

Until earlier this year there was a shortfall in the Weta design that ate away at Roger and myself– this was the gennaker furler. The old Harken unit does not perform the function as well as we would like it to. It requires special attention when rigging and if it is not done correctly or the unit jams your gennaker will not work correctly. It also adds to rigging time as you must spend time getting the turns just right.

After two years of development we now have two continuous furlers! The owners that have upgraded can vouch it is well worth it. Contact your distributor to choose between the Ronstan and KZ upgrades (stock dependant).





Standing up races can be fun and challenging



Chris doing a bit of product testing

2. Do Something Different with your boat

Why did you get a Weta? Chances are a big reason was the versatility of the boat. I often see that owners only use it for one kind of use. Sometimes it is good to try something different – you never know. Here are a few ideas to get your imagination going....

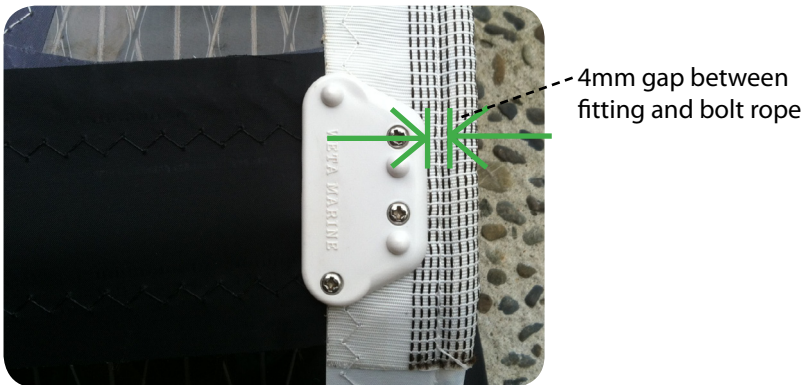
- Go for a destination sail. Call upon a crew (daughter, husband, friend, potential more-than-friend...). Scope out your local sailing grounds, pick something that is easy and realistic, and give allowance for change in the weather and tide. Pack a few sandwiches and a couple of drinks and set off. It doesn't necessarily have to be a long distance – but it is a lot of fun to explore new places from the water and give your sail a purpose.
- Join a local race. Whether it be with the local Weta fleet or the mixed fleet at the club – give it a go. Racing basics can be found at <http://www.sailingcourse.com/> and the best way to learn is to jump on in. For those you are yet to race you will be surprised at the sense of achievement you get from completing a race – not to mention the skills you will pick up along the way.
- Do some racing drills, make it intense! Do 50 tacks in a row and see if you can perfect the technique. Do 50 gybes and master the speed. Find a mooring buoy and see how long you can stay within 5 metres of it. Swap with your crew and see who can set the record.... Try sailing the boat without holding the tiller, trimming the boat using the sheets only. Check out Dave Bernstein's handy video here <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zegyWkjLJPA>
- Capsize your Weta. Pick the right day (temperature, wind, water depth preferably more than 6m, other boats out for assistance should things go wrong) and go and capsize your boat. Be sure to study up on the instruction beforehand! Do the drill so you are prepared should you accidentally capsize on a wild day. This is also fun as it can be difficult to capsize in less than 15 knots!
- Freestyle. Advanced – do some Weta freestyle. It is always fun to go out and see how far you can nose-stand without capsizing. See if you can sail a whole lap of a course on one side of the boat. Try sailing the boat on a headstand or acting as the rudder yourself hanging off the back. Another favourite is to sail upwind at the back of the main hull and see how high you can launch the bow off waves. I'm looking forward to hearing your stories!
- Give your boat some love. Spend a few hours cleaning your boat, tidying up the lines, inspecting worn parts and replacing what looks suspect. Even though the Weta is low maintenance, we strongly recommend that you check;
 - Ropes and shock chord for wear
 - Shackles and fittings on the mast for tightness and wear
 - Your halyard strop and splicing
 - The hull for leaks – follow instructions on page 49 of the Weta Manual at <http://www.wetamarine.com/weta-owners.html> A dry boat will last longer than a wet boat!
 - Hull and foil surfaces for cracks, holes leaks. Gelcoat can be easily repaired – it is good to know when you may next need a small gel coat refurbish

You don't win any prizes for losing a days sailing because something breaks! There are a few more tips on page 52 of the owners manual.

3. Tough Job Hoisting the Main?

This is a quick fix and is a must for all owners. If you are having trouble with the main here are a few things that may help...

1. When hoisting the mainsail make sure the boat is head to wind and the main is aligned down the centre of the boat. As soon as the sail rotates across the boat the bolt rope will 'lock' making it very difficult to hoist the sail. If possible get someone to guide the leech of the sail as you pull, so it is kept in line.
2. Check the batten end pocket protectors have sufficient gap from the bolt rope. There are occasionally some sails that have the batten end pocket protectors a little close to the bolt rope making it difficult to insert into the sail feeder. Chances are if you can feed it through the sail feeder then it is OK. If it is a little close and tight to pull up then you can remove the fitting and replace it 4mm away from the bolt rope to allow some room for the sail to rotate. This can take anywhere between 5 minutes and an hour to do so it is best to allow plenty of time!



3. You can also use a sharp knife to cut down the profile of the sail feeder if you see this being an issue. Above is a sample pic of the change you can make with some careful shaping!
4. Wash you mast track and sail bolt rope occasionally. Ideally you would do this after every sail – but we know it is not always practical. Even if you do not capsizes salt, dust and grit can build up on these surfaces and add unnecessary friction.
5. Spray the track and bolt rope with a dry lubricant occasionally. This will make a huge difference to the effort required to hoist the main!

4. Re-assess how you tie your boat on

It frustrates me to see some poor tie down methods, there are two culprits, tying it down to tight, or not tying it down at all!

Under Securing your Boat

Without going into names... I am aware of the following:

Weta (60km/h) vs Bridge (0km/h). Bridge 1, Weta 0

Weta vs Billboard. Billboard 1, Weta 0

Weta (50km/h) vs Road (0km/h). Road 1, Weta 0

Over securing your boat

Tying your boat down to hard risks damaging the light weight aluminium beach trolley. This has been designed to take the load of the boat only. If it is ratcheted down without precise support then it will bend and break. We have had a few reports of this happening. It can also happen if the boat is being supported by the beach trolley wheels and a bump is hit at speed (not your everyday bump!).

One strap over the Weta and beach trolley, just behind the jib swivels, tying the whole lot down to the road trailer is sufficient, no need to over crank this, you're not on Ice Truckers! Secure the Weta to the beach trolley as detailed in the owners manual (see below for the link), then tie the front of the beach trolley down to the front of your road trailer and you'll be good to go!

Clear instructions are written on page 43 of the Weta Manual at <http://www.wetamarine.com/weta-owners.html> Take the time to read through this and compare to your system. Obviously every case is slightly different and you will need to make your own judgement calls – but it is worth checking out..

5. Pulling the boat up the beach doesn't have to be a DRAG!

In some locations I have noticed unnecessary friction on beach dolly wheels making the boat much harder to pull up and down the beach than it needs to be. This could be due to the weather effects on the hub and some deterioration of the materials on your beach trolley.

The test:

1. On a flat, hard surface lift the trailer handle and push or pull your boat.
2. The force required to move the boat should be minimal. You should be able to do this with the strength in your wrist/shoulders – best case fingers.
3. If this is not the case then there is a good chance you are wasting energy!

The fix:

1. Remove the wheel from the axle and inspect both the inside of the hub and also the axle. If there are any notable notches or bumps you should file/sand these off. Also check that there is a washer on the inside of the axle to prevent the side of the wheel rubbing on the bare aluminium tube.
2. Use some dry lubricant (Silicone Spray, McLube etc) on both the bearing surfaces.

If you need to replace the axel....

The stainless axle insert for the axle is 1" in diameter and the aluminium sleeve has an inner diameter of 27mm. This has caused confusion in the past with the combination of metric and imperial systems.



Soft sand?

If you are in a location where you have very soft sand you may want to look for a wider wheel. There are a number of options, you can contact your Weta dealer for more information. An example is shown here of a modified Weta beach trolley using Wheeliez. These wheels require a lengthened axle however the diameter of the axel is the same.

Check out the Wheeliez <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VcsSG1jIRpU>

