



Capri 13

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The new owner of my Capri-13 recently asked me if the boat came with a rigging instruction manual. I replied in the negative but volunteered to write one for him. In fact, I offered free sailing lessons with the boat next season. Although he gladly accepted my seemingly charitable offer, it was simply a shameless attempt on my part to get myself back on my old boat. There are now other boats in my life but I'll always have warm feelings for my first.

In preparation for next season and the on water sailing lessons, I've written a brief primer on rigging. A Capri-13 can be rigged in ten easy steps. Like any good sailor, I couldn't help tweaking till I got a nice round number.

1. **DRAIN PLUG:** Insert the drain plug. Of course, this means you should have some spare plugs in case of accidental loss. The smaller and more important something is, the more likely it is to get lost. Failure to remember the drain plug will lead to an undue amount of time in the water rather than on it. This is not good for boat speed.
2. **BOWLINE:** Tie a bowline to the bow. This is not a must but makes it possible to secure your boat to a dock or other floating objects. For example, I have found it useful for tying up to the larger yachts of my neighbors at anchor to toast the sunset on warm summer nights. In this regard, the advantage of a handy bowline should not be underestimated. The bowline is not for towing. If the boat's being towed, secure a line around the mast and forward through the deadeye in the bow.

3. **THE CENTERBOARD:** Insert the centerboard in the centerboard trunk. Be sure to tie a line from the centerboard's handle to the hiking strap or mainsheet block on the cockpit floor. This is to prevent loss of the centerboard in the event of a capsize. Unless you're planning on never capsizing, this is a critical precaution. However, as many aficionados will attest, dinghy sailing is not a dry sport. Alternatively, you can tie a bungee cord from the eye in the bow to the centerboard handle. This helps keep the centerboard in place on all points of sail and also gives the appearance you're deadly serious about squeezing every last fraction of a knot of speed out of your boat.

4. **TILLER AND RUDDER:** Slip the tiller and hiking stick underneath the traveler and then mount the rudder. If the tiller is mistakenly placed above the traveler, you will only be able to sail on one point of sail. Not being able to tack or gybe can be particularly vexing if you took the trouble to bungee cord your centerboard in the aforementioned step in order to give the appearance of potentially blinding speed and heart stopping sailing proficiency. Next, insert the pintle ('gizmo') into the gudgeons ('whatzits'). Don't feel badly if you confuse these two rudder parts. I always do.

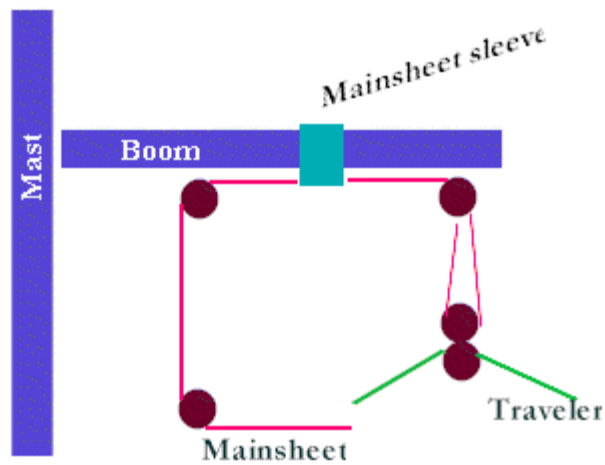
5. **HOISTING THE SAIL:** Insert the battens into the batten sleeves in the sail leech. Connect the two part mast and insert the mast into the sail sleeve. Please take note that this is best accomplished while the mast is in the horizontal position. This may not be entirely self-evident to the uninitiated. Finally, raise the mast to the vertical and insert it into the mast step. If possible, it helps to be walking into the wind when carrying the mast to the boat. Do not be discouraged by the lively discourse and exchange of money by the on-lookers. They're often found making bets whether or not you can insert the mast on the first attempt.

6. **BOOM:** Insert the boom onto the gooseneck. The crowd of spectators usually wanes at this juncture. The prospect of any mishap diminishes after inserting the mast. Of course, if you failed to put the tiller under the traveler, there may yet be entertainment worth waiting for.

7. **BOOMVANG:** Attach the boom vang to the mast with the shackle. The other end of the boom vang slips into a slot on the boom. Yes, there indeed is only one shackle. Like the drain plug, I've lost enough of them to make sure I have extras readily at hand. The so-called inspection ports are really for people like me that tend to lose anything smaller than a Danforth anchor. I store nothing but extra small parts in the itty-bitty orange bags.

8. **MAINSHEET:** Tie a bowline with the mainsheet around the becket of the block at the end of the boom. Run the mainsheet to the block on the traveler and back around the block on the boom, through the strip of cloth, e.g. mainsheet sleeve, around the middle of the boom, forward through the forward boom block and down to the block attached to forward portion of the cockpit. If you can rig the mainsheet according to the above text without looking at the illustration (see figure 1), there's a Nobel prize in your future. Lastly, tie a figure eight knot at the bitter end of the mainsheet. Watching an unknotted mainsheet run through the block downwind on a run is one of life's lesser epiphanies.

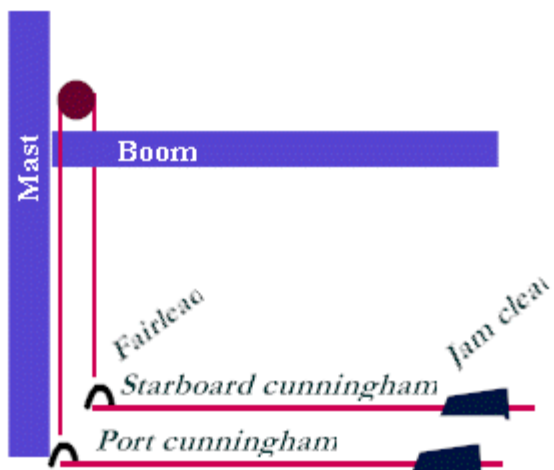
Figure 1: Rigging the Mainsheet



9. BRUMMEL HOOKS AND OUTHAUL: The Brummel hooks can be found hanging from a short line running through the clew. Attach the Brummel hooks to each other around the boom. Kind of neat, huh? Those Brummels were pretty bright. Make sure the mainsheet is outside the loop formed by the Brummel hooks. While you're at that end of the boat, you may as well rig the outhaul. Secure a line with a bowline from the clew of the sail to run through the outhaul fairlead of the boom to the cam cleat in the middle of the boom. For greater leverage, the line can be tied to the outhaul fairlead first, run through the clew, and back again through the fairlead. I've tried several more turns thinking that if a couple were good more would be better. In reality, if there are too many loops, the outhaul becomes impossible to move at all. That kind of defeats the whole purpose of having an outhaul in the first place, but it does look rather neat.

10. CUNNINGHAM: Finally, for the Cunningham, run a line from the jam cleat on deck, through the fairlead on deck just aft of the mast step, through the hole at the tack of the sail, around the sheave on the boom, back through the hole in the tack of the sail, down to the other fairlead on the deck, and finally through the opposite jam cleat on deck. If you made it this far you probably didn't learn from step 8 that you should always look at the pictures first -- in this case, Figure 2. Which brings to mind a question that's never been answered to my satisfaction: who's been hiding the comics section in the Sunday New York Times? I can't ever seem to find it.

Figure 2: Rigging the Cunningham



Congratulations! Your Capri 13 is all ready to go. You've got your PFD (personal flotation device). You're wearing your favorite swimsuit. You remembered the sunblock. You got your coolest set of sunglasses on. The nifty Catalina Yachts cap you got at last year's SailExpo is perched on top of your head. Now, all you have to do is wait for the ice to thaw and the summer to come.