

## **Rigging and Re-rigging a Proctor Boom and Pole Launcher System**

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When I get a new boat, there are a few changes that I make to the Boom and Pole systems to help them run more easily. The Changes are:

### On the forward end of the boom

- Get rid of all hog rings on the outhaul system and tie knots
- Cut off the two ugly loop things on the front top of the boom
- Take the vertical sheave (for shockcord) out of the front of the boom, and shackle on a small Harken block on the same pin. The new sheave in the block will be 90 degrees to the old sheave, and will not have the friction of the shockcord rubbing on the front bottom surface of the boom. You'll have to re-run the shock cord with a lead line to do this.
- On the front of the boom, you'll want to rig the shock cord so that you can adjust the tension while sailing. Remove the shock cord from where it is currently tied off, and ream out the hole at a 45 degree angle (or a good angle that won't cut shockcord). Ream the angle so that the aft edge of the angle is at the top of the boom, and the forward edge of the ream is at the front bottom of the boom. I run the shockcord through this smoothed hole, and tie a stopper knot in the shock cord here. The advantage is that as the cord gets old, I can pull the knot down and tie a new one there tighter in between jibes.

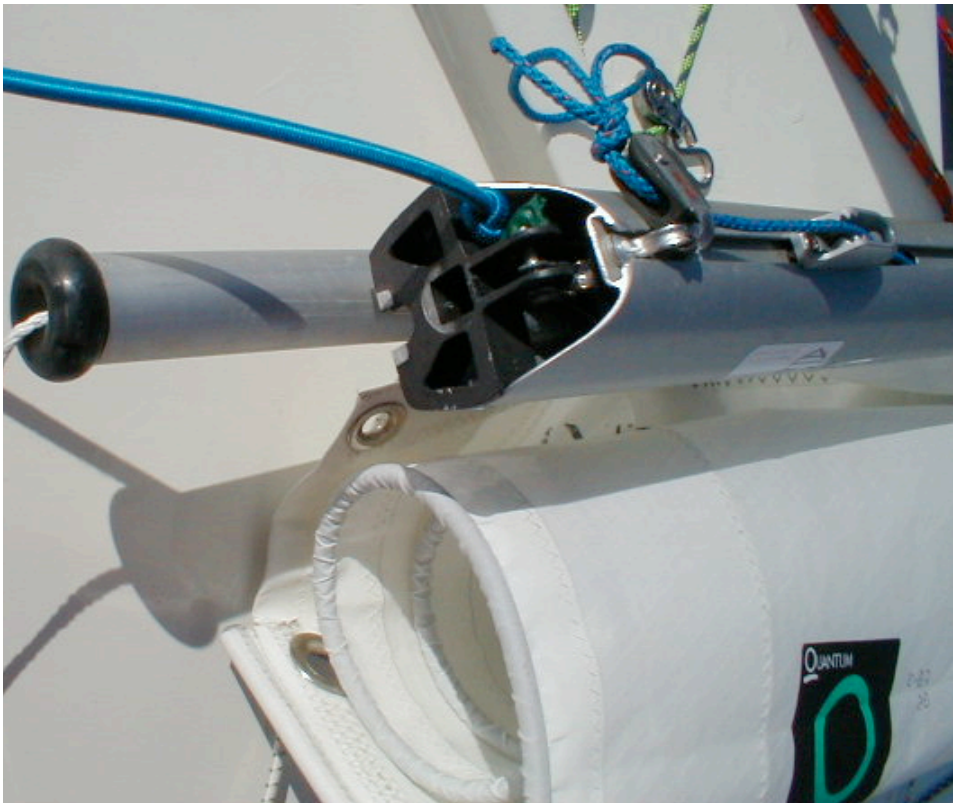


Photo: George Szabo, Quantum San Diego

### On the Aft end of the pole

- At the aft end of the whiskerpole, take the shockcord out of the pole end, and run from the side of the pole through to the back of the pole. You'll want to round off the sharp edge on the pole fitting so it won't cut the shockcord. Running the shock cord this "other way" keeps the line facing away from the boom when the pole retracts, and reduces friction of the line getting caught between the pole and boom.
- In the same pole end fitting, pop out the roll pin, and get rid of the plastic sheave. Replace with the ball bearing sheave that you took out of the front of the boom.



Photo – [www.apsltd.com](http://www.apsltd.com)

### Tweaking the Pole Collar

- The collar wants to ride loose to keep the pole working easily, but you want it to stay snug against the mast to stop any swinging upwind. I like to keep the pole high as well so that when you launch it, it will not get caught underneath the pole line when launching.
- To rig the Collar, I start with a short piece of line (an old tack line works well) and I hand sew a small eye into the end of the line. The other end of the line passes through this line creating a noose, or lasso. I pass this over the collar, and pull it tight.
- The other open end of this line is passed through the eye on the mast. This is the same eye that is used to hold the pole line block. Once through the eye on the mast, I tie it to a short piece of 3/16" shock cord that is tied to the top shackle for the vang. This is tied as loosely as possible to keep the pole snug to the mast, but able to shock cord away from the mast easily as needed. Years ago, I tried shockcord only in this application, but the shockcord had to be replaced every three regattas due to chafe.



#### Tying the pole line block onto the mast

- I've tried numerous blocks, and prefer the Harken bullet block, HK082. I tie this on the mast with thin spectra (to allow the block to rotate as needed). The length of the line is critical. The shorter the line, the longer your pole, but the more difficult to launch your pole. The longer the line is, the shorter your pole gets, but the easier it is to launch. I like to tie it on the mast so that when I pull the block back towards the sail track, the rivet of the block will overlap the back of the mast. Any shorter and I have problems – you may find that a touch longer is easier.

#### Pole launcher line and attachment

- I prefer to use a tapered pole launcher line. The smaller size offers less windage and less friction, and the fatter tail end is easier for the crew to pull.
- The front end of the line should be tied with as small of a bowline as possible to the clew of the jib. If you tie too big of a knot, your pole will be effectively shorter if the clew is not at the end of the pole.
- After the pole end is tied in, sheet your jib in all the way on port tack – so the clew is on the starboard side of the boat, and on the side opposite to where the pole is stored. If a small amount of slack is left in the pole line, this is the longest amount of pole line that you will need. Tie a knot, and cut the line here.
- Some people prefer to keep the line a bit longer and rig a shockcord system to the spreaders to keep the line out of the way when sailing upwind. I find that if I tie the line short enough, this is not needed. Also, by adding a ring or other item to

- hold the line to the shock cord, the pole is often shortened by the width of the ring.
- Another variation is to tie the jibsheet to the jib with the pole line. I don't care for this system because when the pole line unties, you lose your jibsheet and your pole line at same time. Lolo, had a very, very difficult to re-rigging the sheets on a planning reach in 20 knots while balancing on the bow in San Remo one year.

#### Deck Hardware

- Some prefer to have a straight cleat on the deck. My preference is to have a cleat, and then a block after the cleat. By having the block after the cleat, you can pull the pole line from any angle. And, the cleat acts as a ratchet block, allowing the pole line to come in, but not go back out, so if your skipper pulls the jibsheet back too quickly, and over loads the pole line, the crew can let go, and is not forced to hold the extra load. The act of cleating the line is removed as an extra process in each jibe.

#### On the Water Rethreading

- When you do end up pulling your line through the pole, you'll find it easier to re-lead a tapered line. I like to stuff a pole length of line back into the pole. Then, I'll dip the entire pole into the water until it is filled with water. Once raised, the water flowing out the end of the pole will often pull the line through the pole end with it. On land, a hose will do the same trick.

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