



Received: 03/01/22

**From<sup>1</sup>:** LUIS SOUBIE (SCIRA COMMODORE)

**Email:** luis@soubie.com

**Summary: MAST STEP**

**Affects:**

|                         |                             |                    |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Constitution            | <del>By Laws</del>          | <b>Class Rules</b> |
| <del>Deed of Gift</del> | <del>Rules of Conduct</del> | NoR or SI Template |
| Other                   |                             |                    |

**Objective:** discourage unfair racing and provide safer devices for adjust the rigging while afloat

**Proposal**

C.9.3 CONDITIONS FOR USE, MAST

...

(c) The mast spar shall not be adjusted at the mast step while racing. The butt of the mast shall be limited at the mast step by one transverse pin. Any mast step with a sliding adjustment system is allowed, providing that the position of the slider is fixed by a fast pin, a bolt and nut or, a screw, or any other device that prevent the mast to move while racing.

~~(d) The butt of the mast spar shall be attached to the mast step with a safety latch or any alternative fitting. Tight rig is considered equivalent.~~

...

**Reasons:**

This proposal is presented from three different angles:

- 1) Legal aspect: Our rules are clear. The mast step cannot be adjusted while racing (rule C 9.3(c)). This rule is cristal clear and is independent of what type of mast step we have installed on our boat.
- 2) Safety aspect: A few years ago, since the mast step pin position was made free (previously known as the 60 inches), various types of mast step have appeared on the market and while we have allowed for example shroud adjusters with nuts (sta master type) and fast pins, we did not the same with the mast step which is a device much more difficult(almost impossible) to adjust while racing than the

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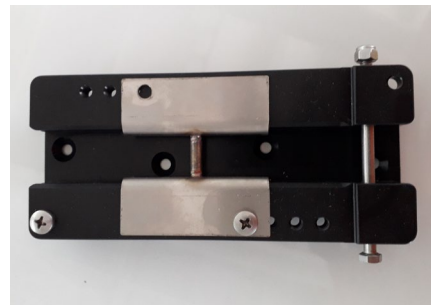
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shrouds adjusters, and the effects is hundreds of time smaller and the task much more unsafe to do.

There was a model with a fast pin, that was forbidden by the Board a few years ago, because it was "more easy to cheat" with this system. This system was not particularly safe or easy to modify.



And we required the addition of a screw instead a fast pin in order to approve it (this is the one in use today). This approved device adds a lot of time in terms of safety. With the mast in place is very difficult to use a screwdriver on that bolt, making the task to last for many minutes until the screw is in place. All this time, the mast is free at the base.



From the moment we allowed the mast step to be adjusted, it is our obligation to generate safety conditions so that the adjustment can be made in such a way that it is safe for both the sailors and the boat and does not force other rules to be broken.

Any sailor who tried to move the mast step in the water knows how hard and difficult and risky it is.

Currently, moving the mast step in the water requires a crew to go below the deck with a screwdriver to remove a screw, move the mast with both hands until 2 holes that he/she cannot see are in line and then reinstall the screw. During this operation that might take several minutes, the tension of the rigging must be completely loose (infringing rule C 9.3 (d)) ,the mast is totally free once the pin is removed and in the meanwhile searching for the new location, and the crew for sure will remove his lifejacket to do it, under the deck, because there is no room there, always a hard task. If there is a wave or unexpected movement of the rigging, the mast base can come off and the mast can seriously damage the boat.

Additionally, a crew doing this operation must put his entire upper body under the deck in order to grab the mast with both hands. Bellow a deck where in most boats it is very difficult to enter and much more difficult to get out, it is a very unsafe task



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that can cause a fatality in the event of a capsize during the operation if the crew cannot get out from under the deck. I understand is an optional adjustment, but still, if the position of the pin is free, that adjustment must be as possible as safe as we can produce.

A system that allows the modification without going so much under the deck, turning a handle to move the mast (as the Optimists have, for example as seen on the side photo), is much more adequate and safe.



The mast is never loose, never free, never allowed to move, and the crew is never so much under the deck but still much enough to be uncomfortable and impossible to be done while racing.

Is much faster and also does not require losing the whole tension (only maybe half) that provides security to all the rigging during the operation.

Also, reading at our rules, we can argue for hours if this system is not "fixed by a bolt or a not with a screw"...

3) From a practical and sporting point of view, getting under the deck during the race to modify the mast step is certainly impractical and almost impossible, the advantage obtained is minimal if there is some, and the task is very visible to judges and other competitors, exposing whoever does so to a protest under rule 2 RRS.

Is not the bolt or screw required in rule C 9.3 (c) what is preventing this from happening during racing. I cannot imagine a case in which moving the mast step while racing could be an option for any sailor, so limiting the mast steps systems is not really preventing any breaking of our rules and is very bad in terms of safety.

Under all this circumstances I ask the Board to consider approve a more easy adjustable device and require the installation of it on new boats.

Regarding the last part of the proposal:

### C.9.3 CONDITIONS FOR USE, MAST

...  
~~—(d) The butt of the mast spar shall be attached to the mast step with a safety latch or any alternative fitting. Tight rig is considered equivalent.~~

This rule has no sense for several reasons and I recommend to be erased

# SCIRA Proposal Form

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First, there is not a snipe in the world with a safety latch or any alternative fitting in the mast step. And also the mast are not prepared for it.

Second, there is not a snipe in the world that doesn't use a "tight rig".

Third, there is not a snipe in the world that doesn't sail half of the race WITHOUT a tight rig when releasing all the jib tension and sheets down wind.

So, we are adding nothing in terms of safety and every boat has what we like to call a tight rig even when is a tight rig only half of the time. So this might be open to a silly protest.

Besides what any common sense might say to us, and understanding the spirit of the rule, to race with no jib tension at any time appears to be against the present rules if we do not have an alternative fitting for the mast.