

## **HOW TO RIG A DAYSAILER FOR SPINNAKER LAUNCHING**

**By Mark Schroeder Fleet 89  
(From the Day Sailer, Winter 2001)**

This is the first of two articles designed for the beginning racer who hasn't added the challenge and excitement of the spinnaker to their race. In this article I will go over the basic set-up. In the next article I'll go step by step through the process of launching and flying the "chute."

There are many ways of rigging the spinnaker, and if you have someone in your local fleet that is already rigged, you may want to go and see how they did it. What I'm providing is a basic set-up, using simple and relatively inexpensive blocks and cleats. You'll be able to use this plan on every model (Cape Cod, Sunfish Laser, O'day, etc.) of Day Sailer with the exception of stowage, which varies. With your boat rigged like this, you'll be able to launch your spinnaker successfully.

You'll need some parts:

### Parts List:

1 spinnaker pole (@\$100-140),  
1 spinnaker (@\$400-650)  
1 spinnaker pole bail (@\$10-15)  
1 halyard shackle (@\$5-15)  
Less than 45 feet 3/16 low stretch "sheet" (better safe than sorry).  
Less than 45 feet 3/16 low stretch "guy" (see above explanation).  
50 feet 3/16 low stretch "halyard" (measure first, may vary).  
3-4 Harken (or similar) H113 cheek blocks. (\$12 each).  
2 Harken (or similar) 082 bullet blocks (\$7 each).  
1 Harken #H166 swivel block for halyard (@\$12).  
3 cleats. Servo SVII or Harken H423 or Ronstan RF 5000  
(@\$15 each).  
4 "sister clips" (\$2 each).  
3 "eye straps" (\$1 each).  
Assorted stainless steel screws, nut, and rivets.

You see it's a rather expensive operation if you are going from scratch to a fully rigged spinnaker. There are ways to save money: You can substitute used blocks of a different type for the blocks I've suggested, especially if you have a collection you're not using. Single bullet blocks can be substituted for cheek blocks in many places. For example, Jim Skeen uses a bullet block on a line which he may then lay over the rail while hiking to help limit "fanny" bruises. Same with cleats. If you have some full size plastic Harken cam cleats laying around, use them instead. You can also buy a used spinnaker. You'd be a lot better off learning on an old used sail than buying a new \$650 sail and tearing it (I've done that), dragging it under the boat (I've done that), wrapping it around the rudder (I've

done that), flying it sideways (I haven't done that, but I've seen it done), or throwing it overboard (I've heard of someone doing that).

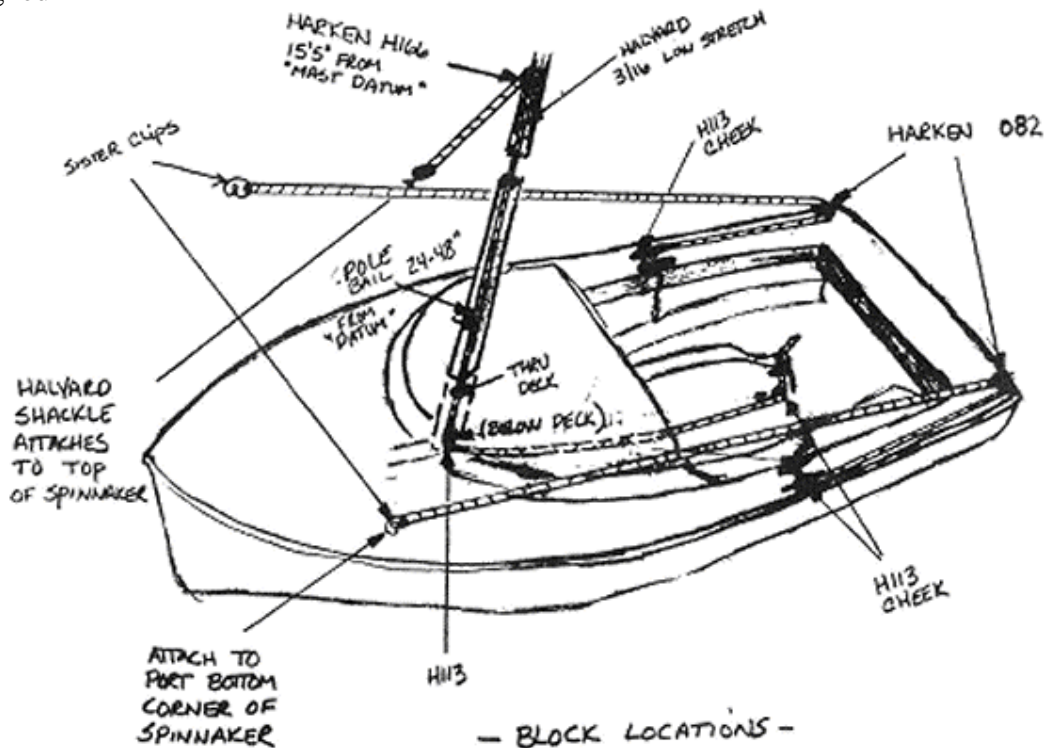
## BASIC RIGGING

Transom blocks.

You will need a block on the deck at each corner of the transom. Easiest is a fixed block, such as Harken #082, with a strap, through bolted. Swivel blocks are a little better (probably). Some use a through deck block because they like to have their rails clear.

Control blocks and cleats:

You will need to direct the control lines (sheet and guy) to the crew. A cheek block such as Harken #H113 work very well for this purpose. You also will need a cleat aligned with each cheek block. Small Cleats such as those listed, work well for this. Don't put an eyestraps on them so they may be released more quickly. Use the cheek block closely aligned



to the cleat to make dealing and uncleating easy and smooth. Place these blocks and cleats about one "butt width" from the corner of the cuddy. This will allow the crew to not sit on the blocks and cleats while hiking. (An advantage of the use of the through deck blocks at the transom leading to an upside-down cheek block and an exit cleat, upside down, is that it keeps the deck clear.) Before you screw in the blocks and cleats, check the position by sitting, as a crew member would, on the thwart seats or in front of the thwarts on the seat. String the spinnaker line through the blocks as illustrated. Have someone tug on the sail end of the line while you sheet, cleat, and play the line.

Find a position that is comfortable and one which allows you to cleat and uncleat the sheet easily and quickly. When you think you have a good position for the blocks and cleats, screw them in. Attach the sister clips to the ends of the spinnaker sheets (one will later be called a "guy" but for now, let's call both of these controls the spinnaker sheets).

You now have your control blocks and cleats set.

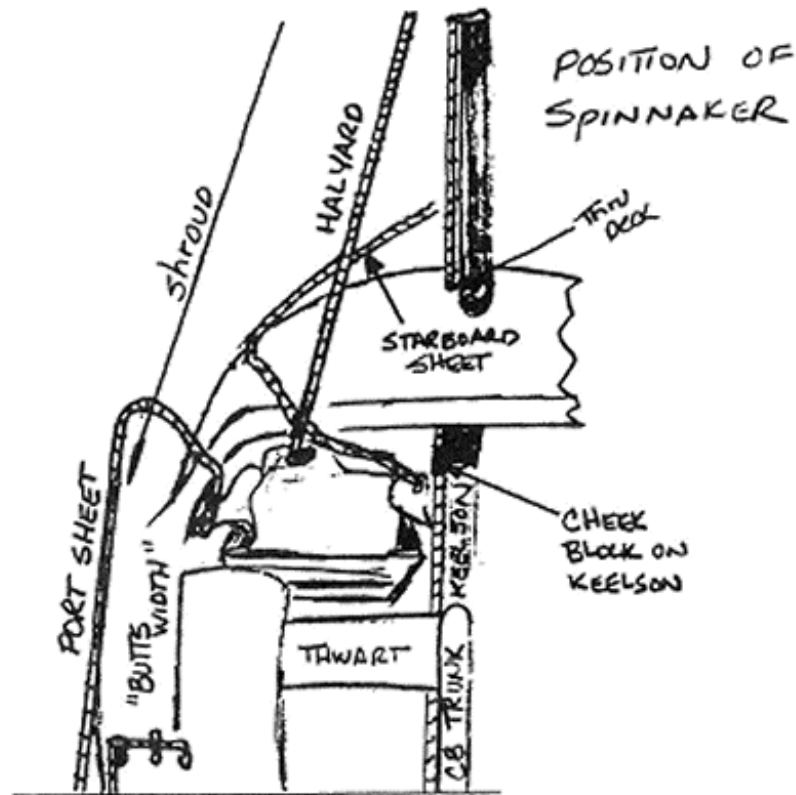
Launching equipment:

You will need the halyard, a block on the mast, a turning cheek block to direct the halyard, another cheek block and a cleat. You'll also need a pole and a ring on the mast. If you haven't had the bands put on your mast yet, see your fleet measurer about the position of the halyard block or check the Daysailer web site for the location of the "Mast Datum". Basically, this is a painted line that is not visible from the top of the cuddy when the mast is inserted. This line becomes the basis of the placement of your other blocks and rigging.

If you have your band 1 (Mast Datum) already painted on, you will attach the halyard block "no higher than 15'5" from the Mast Datum (center the block 15'4 1/2"). Use a swivel block such as HI 66 attached with an eyestraps. The halyard runs through the block, attaches to the top of the spinnaker (using the halyard shackle). The other end goes down the mast.

Now you have two choices: Run the halyard through the deck, or attach a cheek block to the side of the mast and run the halyard along the top of the cuddy deck. Both work.

If you go through the deck, follow the halyard down to the base of the mast. Attach another cheek block to the keelson and direct the halyard back to the base of the centerboard trunk. Here, you'll attach your last cheek block, redirecting the halyard up, along the end of the centerboard trunk. Screw a cleat onto the side of the centerboard trunk (make sure it doesn't go through into the centerboard well or, worse, into the centerboard). You're done. I put a ball on the end of mine and I don't use an eyestraps on the cleat, but you could. This rigging keeps the cuddy top clear, but all halyard adjustments must be done by the skipper. For beginners, I'd say this is the preferred choice.



If you rig your halyard cleat on the deck, put the cheek block on the side of the mast right above the cuddy and lead the halyard back to the top lip of the cuddy. I'd put a "bullseye" or an eyestrapp on the cleat to keep the halyard in place and string the halyard through the cheek block directly to the cleat.. The halyard may be raised and adjusted easily by skipper and crew in this position, but it has two drawbacks: it clutters the top of the cuddy, and it requires the crew to hand the halyard to the skipper prior to launching.

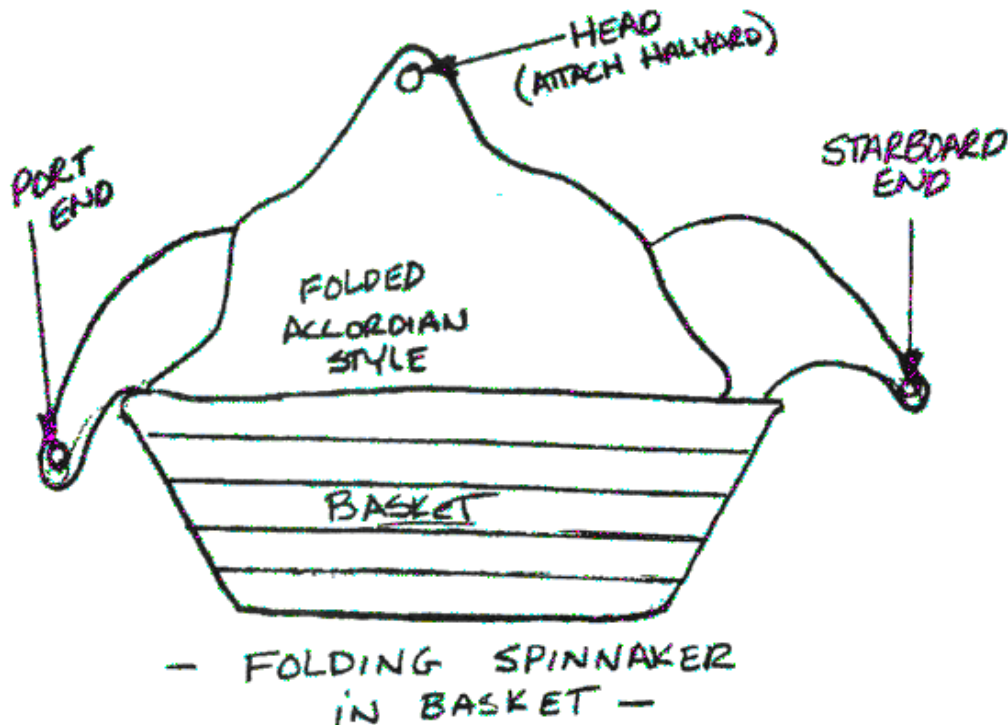
The halyard should be 45-50' in the length, depending on your cleat position and how you rig your halyard. This is the point where another boat (like yours) with spinnaker already rigged is helpful. In the diagram, I have suggested a way that allows the skipper to hoist the chute while the crew feeds it. It also used the most line. There are other ways: Some have the halyard cleat on the deck. Some have internal halyards. After you've rigged your halyard, measure the length needed, add a couple of feet and buy and thread that amount of line.

Next, grab the "sister clip" end of the starboard sheet and walk it around the bow of the boat to the port side. Put this end into the cuddy between the forestay and the shroud on the port side (see illustration).

Take the port side "sister clip" end, walk it forward until you get past the port side shroud. "Free up" (untangle) the halyard. Pull the halyard down until it too is about 18" below the lip of the cuddy on the inside of the port side. Now you're ready to stuff and attach the spinnaker to the halyard and sheets.

Finally, attach the spinnaker pole bail (with the ring facing the bow) to the mast using either rivets or stainless steel screws. The Handbook requires that the bail be attached "...no more than 48 inches and no less than 24 inches above Mast Datum." You may also attach two bails, but for beginners, I wouldn't. Attach one bail at a height that is easy to reach by your crew. It will probably be around 30-40 inches from Mast Datum.

Stuffing the spinnaker before launching is accomplished simply by using a laundry basket. Cheap, durable, and basic.



Basic stowage:

The chute needs to be folded in the boat so that it comes out without twists or knots. This is accomplished by putting the two bottom corners of the spinnaker in the laundry basket so that they are hanging out the sides of the basket (see illustration). Keeping the port and starboard edges of the spinnaker on the port and starboard sides of the basket, pull both sides of the chute into the basket, one fold at a time (about 2 feet). Grab another two feet, using both hands, one on port and one on starboard, and pull in another section. What you should see now is an accordion fold," leaving the two corners hanging out of the basket (see illustration). Continue this process until the entire spinnaker is in the basket. There are faster ways of doing this that you'll learn with more experience. But this is the safest, most basic way. Next, attach the spinnaker sheet and guy using the sheet sister clips (starboard to starboard, port to port). Attach the halyard. Place this basket inside the boat on the port side under the cuddy. Don't twist or turn it. Now you're ready to launch it. But that's best done in the spring (at least in Oregon). That process will be explained in the next article.