

# Two ways to efficiently stow the spinnaker pole

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At the 2004 Midwinters in Sarasota, I saw two ways that are used to stow the spinnaker pole which are a big improvement over what I have used in the past.

The problem my wife Kathy and I have encountered with our current system is the amount of time it takes during a spinnaker douse to remove the spinnaker pole from the mast and topping lift and stowing the pole in the cuddy. Additionally, in the event of a capsize, the pole is likely to be separated from the boat. Kathy has been asking me to improve the way the spinnaker pole is stowed on the boat, and being mindful of the wishes of my crew, I was very interested to see the two systems that I describe here. Both keep the pole attached to the rest of the boat at all times through the topping lift, and the pole is stowed on the boom when not in use, near the spinnaker ring where the pole is set when going off the wind, thus reducing the time required by the crew to stow and unstow the pole.

The first system I saw on Don Perry's boat, *Red Hot*, #14061. I also had the opportunity to use it as his crew. It is simple in that it requires very, very little hardware and little modification. (See figure 1) *Red Hot* has a short length of small line attached to the sides of the boom on either side with sheet metal screws or rivets, creating a sling where one end of the spinnaker pole rests when not in use. At the forward end of the boom, a small length of 3/16" rope is run through a hole drilled in the bottom of the boom and a stopper knot tied in the end. The spinnaker pole jaw is attached to the length of line, holding the forward end of the pole near the boom. The topping lift at all times remains attached to the pole, but is slacked to avoid placing force on the main. Normally the pole is stored on the starboard side of the boom, although stowage on the port side as easily accomplished.

When setting the spinnaker, the pole is unclipped from the rope, pushed outboard out of the sling and attached to the spinnaker guy and mast ring. The topping lift is adjusted as required.

During a jibe, the pole is still able to be jibed in the end-for-end manner commonly used.

Stowing the pole is done by detaching the pole from the mast ring, bringing the guy inboard and detaching the pole from the guy, then slipping the aft end of the pole through the sling and attaching the forward jaw to the small line.

With a little practice I was easily and immediately able to use this system and quickly moved up the learning curve. By the end of the regatta (12 races) I was very proficient.

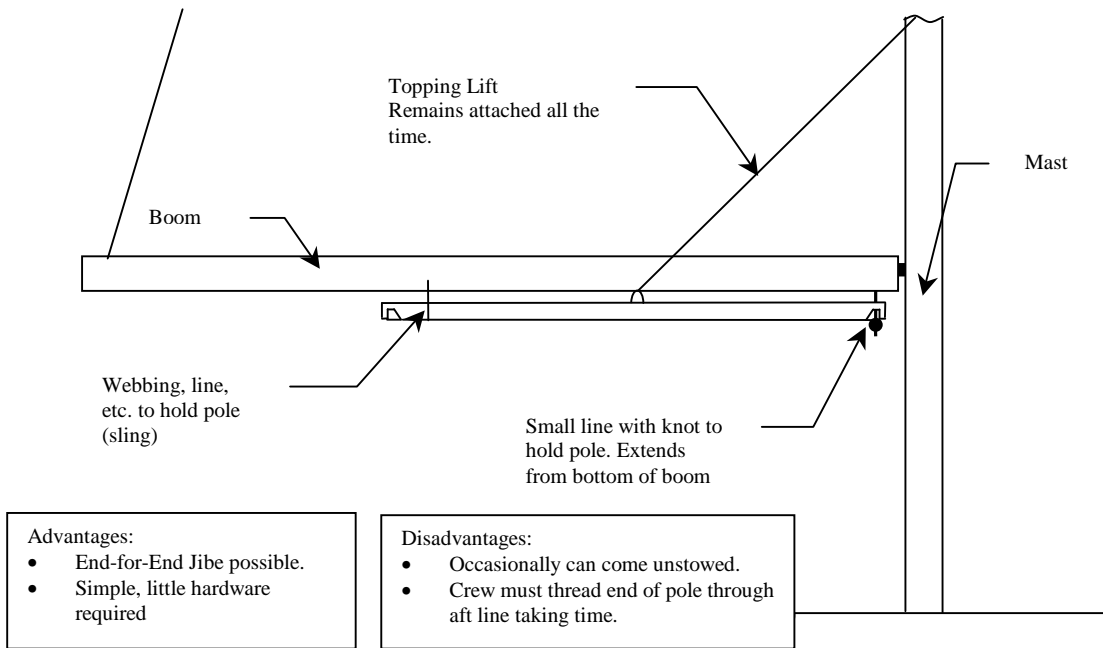


Figure 1

Spinnaker pole stowage as found on *Red Hot* (#14061)

The second system I have only looked at, not used. I saw it on Phil Stute's *Katkantskratchit* (#13155). In this system (see figure 2) the topping lift is attached at one end of the pole, not the center. This requires that this end of the pole always be

the outboard end. A small block is attached to the opposite end of the pole. Two small bales, like those used to attach swivel blocks are attached to the boom on opposite sides at a distance slightly less than that of the spinnaker pole. A shock cord, or bungee cord material is run from one bale, around the mast, reeved through the block on the spinnaker pole and tied to the other bale. The shock cord is given moderate tension.

At the forward end of the boom, two PVC pipe caps are secured to the sides of the boom using sheet metal screws. The pole end is placed in this cap. The shock cord should provide enough to hold the pole secure in the cap. When setting the pole, it is pulled aft to remove it from the cap, allowed to go forward and is clipped to the guy and mast. When jibing, the outboard pole end must be brought inboard and swung through the fore triangle, then pushed outboard clipped to the new guy.

Stowing the pole is very simple, simply disconnect the pole from the guy and mast pull it back and place the outboard end in the cap.

Both systems have their advantages and disadvantages, but both are an improvement over stowing the pole in the cuddy. I should mention that other boats also use these or very similar systems, but I don't know who first devised them. I used Don and Phil's boats as examples of boats I know well and I don't mean to deny credit to the persons who came up with them. Thanks to Phil and Don for showing me their ways.

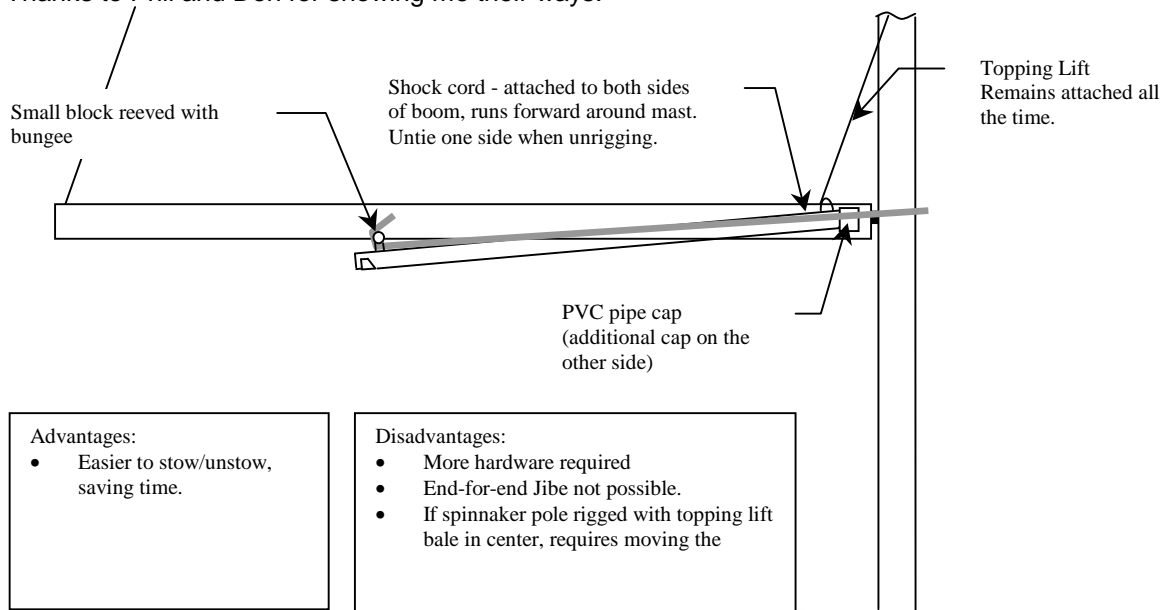


Figure 2  
Spinnaker pole stowage as found on *Katkantskratchit* (#13155)