

Hobie Cat

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May 1, 1996

TriFoiler Tuning Tip - Sail Link Length

We have been setting the length of the sail links so that the sails are paralell. The length of the sail link has been 205 inches from pin to pin. Each sail should be sheeted in equally. However, there are other things to consider. We have discovered that if the sail link is shorter than 205 inches it sheets the leeward sail a little tighter than the weather sail and the boat will stay in irons better. If the sail link is longer it will come out of irons easier. A couple of years ago I was concerned that pilots would have difficulties getting the boats out of irons so we kept the sails paralell. Now I think it is more important that the boat stay in irons better so the sail link should be a little shorter. I recomend a total of 3 inches or 1.5 inches off of each end.

When you consider the position of the battens, the difference can be more dramatic. If you recall from the owner's manual that if both sails are curved in, the boat will not stay in irons. If the sails are curved out, the boat will not come out of irons. If we shorten the sail link, it will increase the chances of the sails curving out.

Some of the early boats maybe short to begin with. If your sail link is already 202 inches or if you have any questions please give me a call. To shorten the sail link - remove the end caps from the ends by drilling out the rivets. Use a 3/16" or 13/64" drill bit. Once the rivets are completely out of the way then pull the cap off. Now cut the proper amount of tube off to make the pin to pin length equal to 202 inches. Reinstall the end caps with a couple of 3/16" stainless steel rivets.

There maybe a performance advantage as well for several reasons;

- 1) The flow around the leeward sail is probably deflected slightly by the weather sail which will reduce the angle of attack of the leeward sail. It would make sense to sheet in the leeward sail a little more so that they have the same angle of attack.
- 2) It is probably better to error on the side of sheeting in the leeward sail more than the weather sail. The leeward sail will lift up slightly as opposed to the weather sail which will push down slightly.

Good sailing.

Sincerely;

Greg Ketterman Ext. 203