

Wayfarer Modifications W 9657 Mk III

When I first obtained W9657 and brought it up to Thunder Bay and Lake Superior in late fall 03 it had the standard Abbott MkIII cottage boat outfitting. There were a lot of modifications needed and considered... the website WIT and various pictures were examined and I had numerous email questions and received a lot of good advice. Rigging for spinnaker usage became those hesitant first holes to be cut in mast and boat, but from there it got easier taking a drill to things. Many of the most needed rig alterations have since been undertaken but this year a few modifications addressed some other issues.

In case some of these fixes and changes might be of interest or help someone else here are a few pictures:



Provision of storage space in front buoyancy compartment.

Wayfarer MkIII bow floatation tank interior as found ... and a desire to utilize this forward space for cruising storage and shift weight out of the rear compartment as is possible with the other W versions. There is about 12" of height between the hull and fixed foam floatation. Discussions with the MkIII designer and manufacturer Abbott identified no reasons why the area couldn't be used and larger access holes placed through the bulkhead.



For access two 6" dia watertight inspection ports were installed in the forward bulkhead to replace the original single 4" dia inspection port. I hoped to use 8" dia ports but it seemed the bump-out for the seat support might obstruct this size. 6" dia doesn't sound like a big change but it certainly now allows smaller items (spare rope, tarp, beer, stove fuel bottle, etc..) to be put into and retrieved from the bow tank. And although I didn't care by this point it is still in compliance with that puzzling Class Rule 21.3 listing the MkIII maximum size as (5" +/- 1/4") i.e. 6 1/4" max.

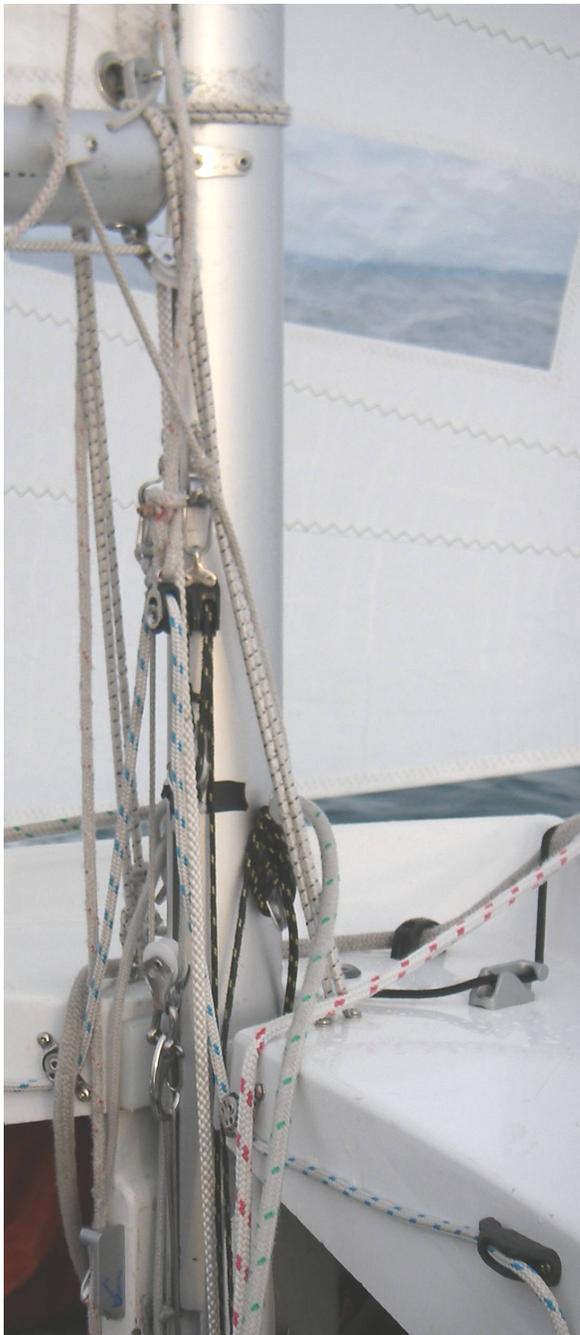


However what ultimately made the larger ports and improved access a 'must do' was repair of a suspicious looking crack, and to allow overall stiffening of the forward hull to address the very annoying oil-can noise and vibration that occurred with every wave impact. A layer of thick fibreglass mat was put in on each side, with a piece of 1/2" dia plastic tubing additionally glassed over to form a rib for extra stiffening. Somewhat a struggle to accomplish through the openings cut for the inspection ports but well worth it as it dramatically reduced forward hull flexing and completely eliminated the noise issue in waves. The boat now doesn't sound like it is about to come apart. And the bow storage capability is nice too.



The jib sheet arrangement was modified to add a ratchet block to lessen hand held sheet loads in heavy air. The original fairlead slider was altered to suit an eye-strap attached turning block which directs the sheet to a switchable ratchet block on the thwart support. A bit overkill maybe, but 5:1 holding power is more crew-friendly than the original setup. The fairlead track was also moved inboard to the inner seat plank. Also shown is the vang (purple line) which routes from mast base (see previous mast photo) along each side of

the C/B case to underside of thwart, out to side and up through, to a camcleat on the thwart support. Many dinghy classes route control lines to an outside deck edge, and it allows the vang to be right at hand when hiking without having to lean or even look into the boat to reach and adjust it.



The Cunningham (white and blue line) goes directly from the deck coaming clamcleats through cheek blocks near the mast and up to a single block (it does not first route down and back up the mast partner) and then through the sail cringle (white line with red tracer) for an overall 4:1. The tail end is held down on the port side mast partner with a “spinnaker guy type” cleat. In this cluttered photo the block with black line, the white pulley and wire hook provide 6:1 jib halyard tensioning. The shock cord keeps jib sheets out of the halyard cleats and stops the boom falling off gooseneck when sail is lowered.



The Cunningham setup was also intended to double as a tack reef by being re-led through the sail reef cringle from the other side (i.e., port), wrapped forward around the mast (to provide restraint to rearward sail pull) and back down to the partner cleat again. Works well and is easy to implement and adjust in both roles.

The MkIII Wayfarer rear hatch sealing unfortunately has less than optimal integrity and needed improvement to ensure capsized buoyancy. After considering a number of options including semi-permanently bolting it shut, a less drastic approach was to add another rubber sealing strip to supplement the existing one on the cover underside. A rectangular shaped ring of ¼" thick fibreglass plate was bonded to the underside of the existing hatch sealing flange to extend the support flange inwards. It also stiffened up the somewhat flexible rear deck edge.



A thicker and softer rubber strip was placed on this hatch flange extension and seals well against the hatch cover. When the cover is off the seal rubber also nicely creates a raised lip to prevent water dripping off the rear deck and into the compartment. New hold down latches were added to provide seal compression along the previously unsecured front edge.



It hasn't yet been capsized tested this year, but I am far more confident the rear compartment won't end up full of water. I am still considering adding an inspection port into the wooden cover to allow quick access to smaller items when underway.



Capsize righting lines were added to the deck edge and attached using an eyestraps on the underside of the gunwale held with the through bolts used for the spinnaker guy cleat at the shroud. The line is held out of sight in the convenient recess formed by the inverted U-shaped deck / hull joint of the Mk III and tensioned via a shock cord run from the transom corner. If ever again I am standing on the centreboard, they will be quickly accessible to grab, lean out on, and provide additional righting effort to lessen capsize time and risk of turtling.



Another less than ideal aspect of the MkIII is the lack of substantial fibreglass thickness around the centreboard case area for secure screwed attachment of

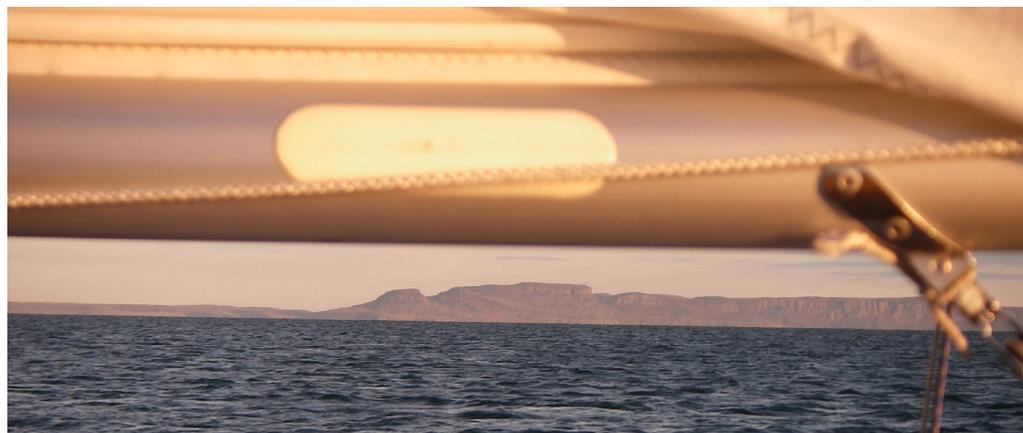


blocks for routing of vang (purple), and outhaul, etc. It is impossible to access the MkIII double hull here for through bolted fittings and I was sceptical of the holding power of just a couple of screws in a thin fibreglass layer. To improve attachment security I shaped a piece of 1/4" thick fibreglass plate (laminated with a gelcoated piece cut from the bulkhead), and used 3M-5200 adhesive and a number of additional screws to fasten it to the centreboard case under the thwart. It shouldn't come off anytime soon.

I got tired of placing the removed rudder in the bottom of the boat only to inadvertently stand on it. A plastic clip buckle and a bit of webbing attached to top and bottom of the seat post and the rudder is stored against the post and out of the way. The thin line on the rudder trailing edge is useful to pull the blade up when entering shallows.



The very chunky plywood blocks originally provided for the floor seat post restraint were re-fabricated out of fibreglass pieces that now allow water to drain out and won't rot. The height was significantly reduced and these will be more comfortable to sleep on too. The lowered base did require adding a fibreglass shim piece to the post end... but that now completely keeps the wood out of any moisture.



and because there is room for one more picture....

Thunder Bay sailing...
- the Sleeping Giant across from the city and sailing club.

Andrew Hail W9657