

OSTAC TRAMP SAILING MANUAL

Your TRAMP is designed for sheltered water cruising, such as bays, harbours, lakes, river etc., and for limited coastal sailing. It is not intended to be an ocean going craft.

Used as intended, your TRAMP, being unsinkable, and with enormous stability, is one of the safest trailable yachts afloat.

LOADING

Trimarans are more like aircraft than trucks, and when it comes to loading, should be regarded as an aircraft. Overloading any boat is dangerous, and care should be taken not to carry unnecessary items.

For good weather and day sailing up to 6 persons can be carried, and for extended cruising or bad weather, carry no more than 4. In general, to maintain good performance and easy handling, it is preferable to limit the crew to 4 adults, with 1 or 2 children.

Heavy items should be stored in the aft section, with only light items in the bow.

OUTBOARD MOTOR

The TRAMP is designed for a 4 to 6HP motor, with a long shaft. If a separate petrol tank is required, this should be left on the cockpit floor, with the fuel hose fitted through the outboard well side. The motor should always be tilted when launching or sailing, and some motors will require an elastic strap to hold them in the tilt position.

TRAILING

The total towing weight (including trailer) is approximately 930kg not counting personal gear, stores etc. Your towing car should not, by law, weigh less than this. For easy, no sway towing, the trailer should be balanced to give a 30 to 40kg load on the towball.

Safety chain and lights should be connected. Before getting underway, the 4 beam locking pins (retain floats in folded position) should be in place, and the floats tied down to the trailer at the tie down points.

Centre hull side supports should be hard against the hull as should the forward float supports. The aft float supports should be 50 to 80mm (2 to 3") below the float hull. These are primarily to prevent the floats touching the wheel guards while launching or retrieving. They can be moved up against the float, for additional support, on long journeys.

While towing, always allow extra distance for stopping and watch for low bridges. Overall height on the trailer is approximately 2.8m. Should a low bridge be encountered, then overall height can be reduced by unfolding the floats. To do this, the trailer float supports will have to be lowered.

When reversing, you may find the override brakes being activated. To prevent this a swivelling metal tab is located on the brake unit, just behind the towbar, and this can be used to deactivate the brakes. Don't forget to remove when normal towing is resumed.

RIGGING

Before rigging, always check that there are no nearby powerlines that the mast could touch.

First remove the float tie downs. Now, climb onto the deck using the float bows as stepping points, and undo the mast / rigging ties. Lift the forward end of the mast and roll it aft until the mast base will pass through the cabin roof slot, after removing the mast retaining pin. Fit the mast base on to the pin in the mast step.

The lower shrouds are now connected to the mast, these simply plug in with a half turn to lock in place.

Stand on the aft deck, check that the aft beam bolts are pushed flush with the beam (so as to not catch the top shrouds) and then lift the mast and walk it forward. The average person will find this fairly easy to do, and a second person can pull on the forestay if wished. If you find the mast too heavy, then the trailer winch wire can be passed over the bow roller and hooked on to the forestay. The mast can then be winched up.

Once the mast is fully up, and enters the cabin roof slot, the mast retaining pin is fitted, thus allowing the mast to stand on its own. The forestay is then connected and done up very tightly. The whole rigging operation can be done by one person.

Top shrouds should be very tight, while lower shrouds should be left slightly slack to allow the mast to bend forward in the middle. For more bend, and hence a flatter sail, loosen the lower shrouds. Once the shrouds are set, they are locked by the lock nuts, and not loosened during the future rigging or derigging. Only the forestay needs to be disconnected.

Hank the jib on to the forestay, use a long D shackle at the tack, and another to connect the jib sheet swivel blocks to the clew. Boom is pushed on to the gooseneck pin and topping lift connected. If the vinyl roof is up, the boom can lay on this and the topping lift not used. Mainsail is made ready for hoisting, with all battens tied in place, and the mainsheet is connected to the traveller. If the weather looks like deteriorating, the jiffy reefing lines should be fitted for the first reef.

If the spinnaker is to be used, the sheet lines should also be fitted now, but note that they will probably need slackening off when unfolding. The rudder and outboard motor should be tilted up, and you are ready for launching.

LAUNCHING

Back trailer down the ramp, again watching for powerlines, until the water just reaches the wheel rims. There is no need to submerge the trailer or wheel hubs. Use a good long bow line, and to launch simply push off. Tilt can be used, but it is usually not necessary. It is good practice to walk down the trailer, with the boat, to prevent any damage from the trailer, once the TRAMP is afloat. Float bows, in particular, can easily come into contact with the trailer.

TRAMP can be unfolded at the beach, but more usual procedure is to board, again using the float bows as stepping points, and to unfold while motoring or sailing away (with jib) even in choppy conditions. To unfold, simply remove lockpins at forward and aft beams, grasp the top of either beam (not necessary to hold both) and firmly pull inwards and down, checking also that there are no ropes lying across the beam recesses, and the tiller is clear. Kneel on the beam and do up the bolts firmly.

RUDDER

The rudder has 2 control lines, one to pull up and one to pull down, the pull up line being red. Both will kick back should they touch bottom, the pull down line pulling through the cam cleat.

When manoeuvring in confined areas, always have the daggerboard down, where possible. This promotes very quick turns and prevents any sideways motion. If motoring, but with very little speed up, always turn the motor for a quick turn rather than the rudder. At low speeds the rudder is less effective, whereas the motor gives an instant response and much smaller turning circle.

To pull the rudder blade up requires a firm pull on the pull up line and it is easier to do this before the rudder touches bottom.

SAILING

TRAMP is sailed just like any other yacht, the most notable difference being the lack of heel, and the response to the tiller. There is never any danger of losing control. You will find that the TRAMP can point very high, but for superior speed it is better to free off just slightly. Tacking is very quick with little speed loss.

Reaching (across the wind) is the fastest point of sailing, with the sails being let out to about 45 degrees from the boat centreline. To improve the jib setting, a barber hauler can be set up, which is a line hooked to the jib clew, running to the forward eye on the floatdeck wingnet rail, and then back to the middle cam cleat and deadeye on the cockpit coaming. This gives a wide range of sheet adjustment.

When sailing in heavy weather, the primary rule is to always reef early, for safe and enjoyable sailing. Any trailer yacht can capsize and the TRAMP is no exception. But fortunately, capsizes are very rare and easy to avoid, providing a few simple rules are followed:

- (1) Always listen to weather forecasts before venturing out, and also during the day.
- (2) If bad weather is approaching, reef early. Sailing should be enjoyable and early reefing makes it so.
- (3) When very rough, always hold mainsheet in hand, ready for instant release.
- (4) Monohull trailer yachts capsize most frequently after broaching, while running downwind. The TRAMP with much superior directional control, is unlikely to have any problem in this regard. The only real danger would be being caught side on to a severe gust, with sails sheeted in tight. Be particularly wary after tacking in heavy weather, not to bear off too much on the new tack, with the mainsail still sheeted in tight.
- (5) If in very bad storm conditions, then try using the jib only, which makes handling very easy and safe, or as a last resort, take all sail down and lay a hull (side on) or even anchor. With no sail, the TRAMP will lie naturally side on, and with the enormous beam, waves big enough to capsize her would be near impossible in the usual trailer yacht waters.

Probably the TRAMP'S most important safety feature, apart from the unsinkability, would be the submersible floats. These are a recent development in trimaran design and have proved very successful in avoiding wind capsize.

The main advantage is that the floats give a definite visual indication of how the TRAMP is being pressed. If the lee float is consistently on the verge of submersing, then reefing should be done, or the sheets eased. The beauty of the system is that even if the float submerges fully, there is still a large safety margin before capsize, as the wind will spill from the sails with the increasing heel angle, and the TRAMP will still right herself even from a 50 to 60 degree heel angle. The theoretical wind speed to submerge the lee float, with full sail, is approximately, 32 knots, giving a very large safety margin.

Sailing can be done with the vinyl cabin roof up, making the TRAMP a delight to sail on hot summer days as the whole cockpit area is shaded. All sail controls are still readily accessible, and visibility is unaffected. If raining, the roof will give some shelter, and if wished, the cabin sides can also be fitted.

REEFING

TRAMP has jiffy reefing, with 2 reefs, fitted as standard. You should familiarize yourself with its operation, and occasionally have a practice run. To set up, the 3:1 reefing tackle is shackled to the eye of the mast, just below the gooseneck, and the stainless steel hook attached to the first reef tack cringle on the mainsail luff.

At the aft end of the boom, the reefing line is tied to the anchor pin on the stainless steel cheek block, passed under the boom, up the sail and through the first reef cringle on the leach, back down to the cheek block, and then forward to the cleat on the boom.

To reef, first ease the halyard to a pre-determined position, and then pull on the reef tack downhaul, then the reef clew outhaul. The cringles on the foot of the sail can now be used to secure the sail along the boom.

SPINNAKER

The optional spinnaker is a very easy sail to use on the TRAMP. Because of the extreme wide beam, and level sailing, there are no control problems, and the spinnaker becomes a very practical and safe sail for family sailing. It can be used either with, or without a pole.

To use without the pole, single blocks are shackled to the eyes on the float and also to the outer ends of the aft beams. A brace line, with a single block at the bow end, is passed through the float bow block, and back to the forward cam cleat on the cockpit coaming, on each side. The spinnaker sheets are now passed through the blocks on the brace lines at the bows, back to the blocks on the aft beams, and then to the aft cam cleats on the cockpit coaming.

The spinnaker can be hoisted from either the forward hatch, or the cockpit. For running downwind, both the brace and sheet are used for setting. On a reach, the windward brace is let right off, so that the aft beam becomes the sheeting point. To jibe, simply let right off the windward brace, and pull on the leeward one, adjusting the sheets as required.

To use with the pole, only the sheets to the aft beams are required, but for better adjustments, the braces can be fitted to the forward beams.

ANCHORING

Trimarans tend to be lively at anchor, gently sailing from one side to another. To prevent this, a bridle can be used from the float bows, or alternatively anchor from the stern, except of course, when very rough.

SAFETY POINTS

Always carry full safety gear, life jackets, flares etc., as required by your local regulations.

The TRAMP has a total of 7 major separate compartments, plus foam buoyancy, so is virtually unsinkable. One important point to remember though, should a float ever be holed, do not open the inspection hatch. This should be airtight, and removal would allow the float section to flood. With the hatch in place, there is an airlock and water cannot enter the float. Even with the float keel completely ripped out, and airlock would still be maintained and the float remains bouyant. Heeling the TRAMP the other way, will of course, allow water to drain out.

RETURNING TO RAMP AND RETRIEVING

The floats are best folded before arriving at the ramp, and this allows the float bows to be very useful step off points. To fold, undo all bolts, grasp the handle on the rear and lift upwards, taking care not to let the float swing too fast against the centre hull. Insert the beam / hull lockpins, and the TRAMP is now ready for the trailer. If the float does not fold fully, the usual cause is the wingnets catching on the aft cockpit coaming. To fix, simply push the wingnet lashing down so that it will slide under the coaming.

As with launching, there is no need to submerge the trailer, the water should just be touching the wheel rims. Connect the winch wire to the bow eye, straighten the boat up and commence winching. The tilt can be used if wished. Check that the keel comes up on the centre of the rollers, and make sure that the float bows do not hook under the float supports. If the float bows touch the wheel guards, it usually means there is too much tilt.

DE-RIGGING

Is basically the reverse of rigging. Remove the jib, mainsail and boom, and disconnect the forestay. Stand in the cockpit behind the mast and remove the mast retaining pin. Gently allow the mast to fall back on to the mast support at the transom, walking back with it to the aft end of the cockpit. Disconnect the lower shrouds from the mast, lift the mast off the step and up through the cabin roof slot. Walk it forward until the spreaders are between the cabin roof and the forward well. Tie it securely and it's ready for trailing. The rudder can be left on or off; if left on it should be tied to one side and the blade lifted up. Don't forget the float tie downs, nor to replace the trailer lights.

MAINTENANCE

After every sail, always wash the boat and trailer down with fresh water, and check floats and main hull bilge for any water. Sails should be rolled or folded up, and dried if wet. Do not leave them in the sunlight. Seat cushions (if fitted) should be stored under cover.

All folding system bolts and nuts should be occasionally checked for tightness, as should the float to beam holding nuts. The stainless steel beam bolts should periodically have their threads lightly oiled.