

Technical: Travelling with your GP14

This can be a daunting prospect, when packing up to travel for the first time. Hopefully the tips below will help. More detailed information can be found in the cruising section of the website. So where to begin...

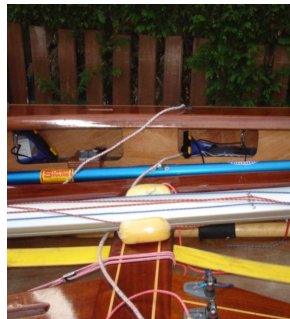
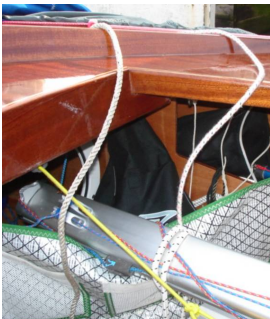
Importantly check your trailer particularly tyres and bearings and also the lighting board prior to packing up your boat. It is also a good idea to carry a spare wheel for the trailer.

Note most trailer boards aren't fitted with reversing lights, however these can be added. If you are using the "continental" 13-pin connector system it already includes the reversing light circuit, but if you are using the older 12N system it doesn't, so you also need the 12S (i.e. Supplementary) plug and socket in order to add that circuit.

How to pack the boat.

Starting with things inside the boat. Loose gear needs to be stowed in a way which prevents it moving around and either becoming scratched or doing worse damage. Put the **rudder**, which ideally is being protected by a cushioned rudder bag, in the bottom of the boat, so it is wedged and can't move around. (Alternatively, it can go in the car.)

The **boom** rests on the thwart, suitably cushioned by a sponge, pulled downwards at the forward end (by a heavy shockcord attached to a fitting on the cockpit sole, in this case one of the toestraps eye plates), or simply use the control lines for the Cunningham over the top of the boom, pulling it down and cleating; this forces the after end up hard under the aft cockpit crossbeam, where again it is cushioned by a sponge. *The boom could alternatively be strapped to a side bench and/or the thwart, again with suitable padding.*



Most other kit that is normally carried aboard while sailing can travel in its usual position without special preparation. Making sure that the **spinnaker pole** is either clipped or tied so it can't move around.

Sails, ideally in their bags, can then be placed in the boat. Sails, e.g. spinnaker could be left in situ and the main could be left on the boom, but especially the latter is not recommended.

Boat Covers

Some owners like a full cocoon cover, specially designed for travelling, however the majority of sailors have a separate under-cover and top-cover.

Other owners leave the underside of the boat uncovered and in normal circumstances it shouldn't suffer from anything worse than mere dirt...

For the top cover, some owners tow using the overboom cover which they also use in the dinghy park, but this isn't ideal to travel with. Far better, for towing, is to use either a flat cover or a "trailer cover" (which the latter has no aperture for the mast and no split forward of the mast gate) which is used solely for road use.

Securing the boat to the trailer.

If you have a combination trolley/trailer, simply pull into place, remembering to lift out and then slot back in place, the pin. Then tie the boat on the trolley to the trailer.

The fundamental requirement is lashing down amidships, supplemented by a second one at about the location of the forward chock or cradle. It is perfectly viable to use rope; but modern ratchet straps are quicker, easier, kinder to the boat (because the load is spread over a broader surface) and nowadays they are probably also cheaper than buying the necessary rope of the right size and quality. Provide a heavy duty means of cushioning them and make sure that the metal hardware is well clear of the boat. The photographs show the ratchet straps in place and the interior of the boat fully stowed for towing; boom secured, sails aboard, spinnaker pole and oars and masthead buoyancy all in place, etc. NOTE in these photos this sailor puts his top cover on after tie down, however most sailors put top cover on before using ratchet straps and/or ropes, however the same principles apply. The



padding under the midships strap in these photos is offcuts of carpet, with the pile towards the boat and another soft mat at the forward strap.



The forward strap may tend to drift forward, to the point where it has the shortest route and therefore it loses tension in doing so. If your boat is used primarily for cruising, she will probably have a mooring cleat on the kingplank, which can be used to forestall this, as in these photos; if she is used only for racing, she probably won't have such a cleat and you will then need to devise some other means of addressing this. Possibly identify the shortest route at outset and tension the strap in that position, or possibly rig a retaining strap joining the centres of your two ratchet straps to each other (for example), thus restraining the forward one from moving forward.

The bow snubber will normally be adequate to prevent the boat charging forward on the trailer when braking, even in emergency braking, or when descending hills; however you will probably need some means to prevent her moving aft when accelerating or when going up hills, although the forces there are much smaller than in emergency braking. The painter may be one way of restraining movement aft, (photo), but only if you have a means of securing it to the boat **and also** have anchor fairleads on at least one bow. A possible alternative is a line diagonally aft from the trailer axle and secured to a point on the boat.

Fix the **lighting board** to the transom pintle and gudgeon, ideally padded. It is perfectly possible to mount the mast before fitting the cover if you so wish. (see photo).



Securing the Mast

It is easier to tie halyards etc, when de-rigging when the mast is in the boat. Put loose shrouds through metal loop on mast and pull rope halyards tight, tying off where possible so there are less wires and ropes moving around as you lift the mast from your boat. It is sensible to tie back the rigging to the mast using shock cord or Velcro straps for example, but don't use tape. Don't forget to remove all those ties before you step the mast on arrival; otherwise you may find only after you have stepped it that the rigging is tied to the mast somewhere that is now out of reach, up high, and you have to drop the mast again to untie it!

Lift the mast on to the trailer, securing at both ends. To prevent the mast whipping around laterally as you drive it is a good idea to now add a taut lashing up from one side of the trailer, round the mast close to the spreaders (one complete round turn) and down to the other side of the trailer. The tension for this does not need to be large, so a non-ratchet strap is perfectly adequate; it is simply there to restrict sideways movement.

Don't forget to plug in your lighting cable, remembering to check the trailer lights before you move off. It is also useful to stop after a little while to check all ropes are secure and doing their job and to once again check tyre pressures.

Finally, driving with the boat in tow. Allow for the extra length and the reduced acceleration at junctions, and again when overtaking. Take tight corners a little wider allowing for your extra length and also for the trailer tracking slightly inside the track of the car.

Be aware of the lower speed limits when towing; in the UK these are **50 mph on single carriageways** and **60 mph on dual carriageways and motorways**, except where a lower limit applies to all traffic anyway. **Never even be tempted** to exceed the 60 mph limit; your trailer tyres are almost invariably rated for 62 mph maximum, so exceeding the higher of those two legal speed limits also means you are exceeding the speed rating of your tyres. Also remember on a motorway you can't go in the outside lane.

As part of our Training Programme we are aiming to support our newer sailors, hopefully giving them the confidence to join the travelling circuit cruising or racing. Recently Chris and Gill Beddow visited Trimpey Sailing Club to offer some expert advice. If you think that sailors at your club would like support from the Association do contact the office. I have no doubt that there will always be someone to offer help as we all know GP14 sailors are simply the best. ☺

Ann Penny (Taken from an article written by Oliver Shaw in the Cruising section on the website)