



7-16. Righting technique for Laser.

world, J-24s are raced seriously in about every major yachting region in the United States and in many foreign countries as well. This boat might be called a midget cruising-racer, as it is primarily a racer with the accent on speed and maneuverability, but it has minimal cruising accommodations for overnighting or weekend cruising. Normally, it completes either as a one-design or in the MORC (Midget Ocean Racing Club) class against boats of similar type no longer than 30 feet overall. Occasionally, it races against boats of greater difference in size and design, as in the PHRF (Performance Handicap Racing Fleet). There is an active J-24 cruising one-design fleet on the Chesapeake with presently 17 seasonal races sanctioned by the Chesapeake Bay Yacht Racing Association.

Designed in 1974 by Rodney Johnstone, the J-24 prototype, named *Ragtime*, was home-built in the designer's garage. Soon after her launching in 1976, she began to dominate MORC racing, and the following year the design went into production. Tillotson-Pearson at Fall River, Mass., the builders of the new Navy 44s (see chapter 9), were the original builders of the J-24, although the boats are now being built elsewhere in the United States and in Europe, South America, Australia, and the Far

East. Their construction is fiberglass sandwich with a core of end-grain balsa. This offers stiffness with light displacement, which provides speed and ease of handling when it comes to warping (moving the boat with lines) or fending off during a fast landing at a dock. Her displacement is 2,600 pounds, of which 950 pounds are consigned to lead keel ballast. Her other particulars are: 24 feet LOA, 20 feet LWL, 8 feet 11 inches beam, 4 feet draft, and 261 square feet of sail area.

The J-24 has a five-sixths sloop rig with the upper shrouds as well as the jibstay secured to the mast a distance of about one sixth of the above-deck mast's length from the masthead. Both the upper and lower shrouds attach to chainplates slightly abaft the mast, and the spreaders are swept back so that the uppers will be straight from the *hounds* (where they join the mast) to the chainplates. This arrangement obviates any vital need for running backstays to control jibstay sag. A permanent backstay, attached to a sizable masthead crane aloft and controlled with rollers on a bridle and a four-part tackle at the lower end, makes it easy to bend the mast and flatten the upper part of the mainsail in a breeze. The most successful J-24 racing sailors usually agree that rake should be maximum with the shortest mast and