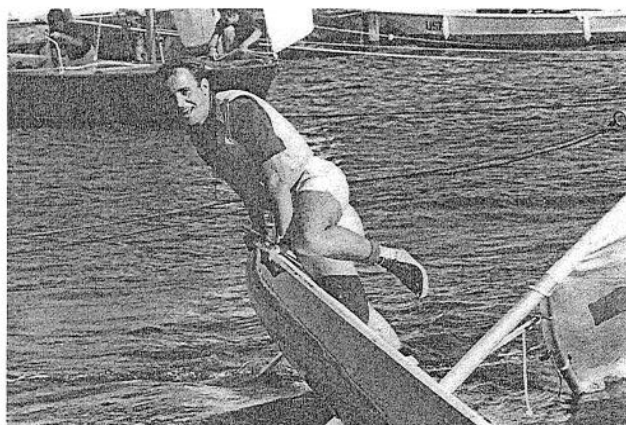




7-14. Navy's All-American sailor Paul Van Cleve scrambles to prevent his Laser from capsizing after attempting a roll tack in a stiff breeze. In heavy winds it is not necessary to roll tack. Simply put the tiller over, trim the sheet, and hike out quickly on the new windward side as the boat comes through the wind.

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boat gets up on a plane, shift your weight aft to keep the bow out, but do not bury the stern.

Sail Shape—Keep the shape basically the same as for light air. Tighten the outhaul and Cunningham to flatten the sail slightly. Keep the draft in the middle of the sail.

Traveler—Tighten the traveler as much as possible to keep the leech straight. Just before a jibe many good sailors ease the traveler to allow the traveler block to move freely across the boat.

Centerboard—Keep the board all the way down when going to weather unless the water is becoming sloppy, in which case move the board up about 2 inches. On a reach adjust the board to keep the boat *tracking* (holding a steady course). On a run the board should be all the way up.

Heavy air

Helm—Respond quickly to wind shifts and puffs. When going to windward keep the boat pointing. If you cannot keep the boat flat in the hardest puffs, head up slightly to gain distance to weather rather than allowing the boat to heel excessively (review feathering in chapter 5). If the boat is stopped by seas, bear off slightly and foot.

Weight—Hike hard and keep the boat flat. On reaches and runs, shift your weight aft when on a plane.

Sail shape—Get all sail controls as tight as possible. You can twist the vang to get extra tension and mast

bend. The sail should be flat with the draft well forward.

Traveler—Have the traveler as tight as possible. Again, it helps to ease it slightly before a jibe.

Centerboard—Put the board all the way down when going to weather. On a run it may be necessary to put the board down slightly while planing to help the boat track. Be sure to get the board down less than halfway before a jibe.

Capsize—It is not necessary to lower the sail on a Laser in order to get it upright after a capsize. The following technique will get the boat upright and sailing without spending time swimming the boat head to wind. Step up on the centerboard as shown in figure 7-16. As the sail clears itself of water and the boat begins to come upright, step off the board and “hug” it hard with both arms. Go under the boat holding on to the board. Swim out on the weather side, crawl aboard, trim, hike, and sail away. Another method, perhaps easier, of righting a Laser is shown in figure 7-16.

Miscellaneous tips for Laser sailors

- Keep the mast step clean. Soap chips make a good lubricant.
- When hiking on a long leg, cross your feet under the strap to give one leg a rest.
- Rig a short piece of shock cord at the after end of the hiking strap to keep it up. This makes it easier to hook your foot after a tack. Also rig a short “backup” securing line to the strap in case the primary securing line breaks.
- Wax the boom and mast to ease outhaul and Cunningham action.
- Use tape around the tiller to prevent any “play” in the rudder head. Use tape and twine to make a grip at the end of the tiller extension.
- Make sure that the battens are exactly the correct length and that they are sanded smooth or fitted with plastic end tips.
- Get extra purchase from the Cunningham by rigging a loop in the line as shown in figure 7-12.
- Install telltales. These may be ribbons taped to the sail or yarns threaded through the sail so that telltales show on each side at a distance of about 18 inches abaft the luff a little lower than halfway up the sail and also slightly higher than halfway up. In addition, yarns or ribbons are often attached to the leech at each batten. These telltales will indicate when the sail is stalled or when it is on the verge of