

Sunfish Quality Report

2023



Building racing sailboats in bulk while following tight weight tolerances, keeping rejections to a minimum and making sure there are no invisible defects is no easy feat and no dinghy builder will deny this. It's a manual job that requires skilled workers with a lot of attention to detail, so quality assurance and quality control are of major importance.

In an age of economic uncertainty with busy lifestyles, the Sunfish, 75 years after its launch, is the perfect fit for this worldwide challenge of keeping the sport of sailing attractive to newcomers. Firstly, it's the most affordable adult world sailing class and secondly it's incredibly easy to rig, lowering its time to water to a minimum. To make sure these two core principles are maintained, the LaserPerformance team puts a lot of daily effort in keeping production efficient and finding the most competitive suppliers while making sure quality isn't jeopardized. This is a challenge given the steep growth of raw material prices in the last few years. To keep the rigging easy and fast, we just need to keep the boat simple and preserve its strict one design principle.

While the 2021 Sarasota Worlds boats had considerable issues, continuous improvements in manufacturing made the 2022 Garda Worlds hulls the best ever as class officials told the LP team in Italy. This feedback encourages us to continue working together with the class association to achieve the best boat possible, applying the same efforts to parts and rigging.



In 2023 we made several improvements



Hiking strap size and position

A few years ago, in order to standardize the hiking strap with the Laser, the position on the Sunfish was raised to just below the mainsheet block. This was a poor decision which made hiking more difficult.

This year, following feedback from the class association, we designed a new one, brought it down to its original size and position and added a shockcord to keep it tensioned.

We guarantee this improvement is possible to be retrofitted to any boat built in 2018 and after.



Gooseneck

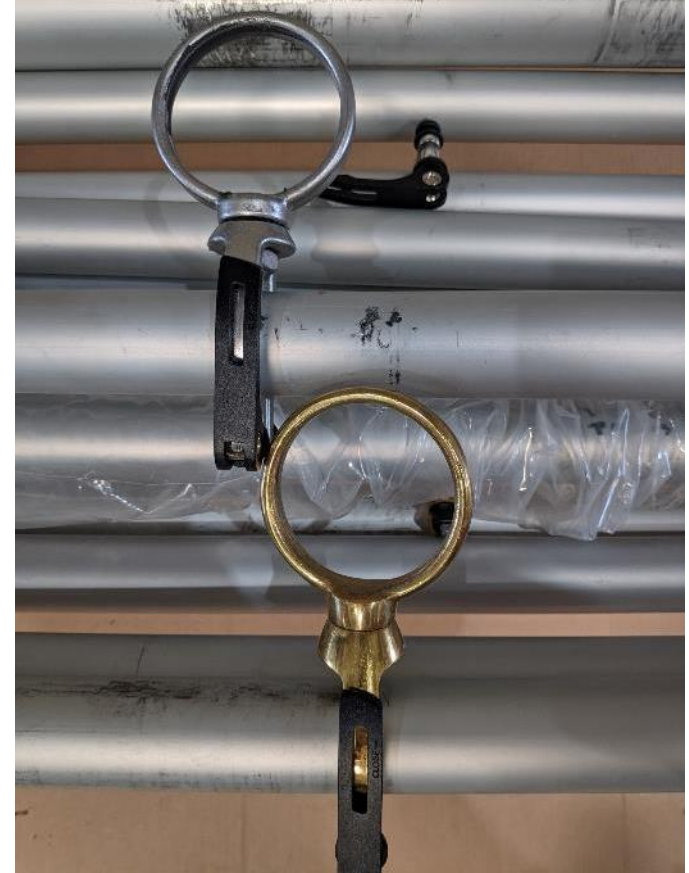


We are now supplying all our boats with brass goosenecks. While stainless steel is stronger, it damages the anodized layer of the aluminium tubes, leaving them scuffed after a few usages.

The new goosenecks are marked with lot numbers so we can track their quality and make sure any defective unit is quickly replaced under warranty with feedback passed on to our supplier.

As we now start gathering feedback we will strengthen the gooseneck on its weak points to make it stronger. We are also looking into a chromed version, which adds strength and resistance to corrosion. We have a unit being tested at our local club and the results are positive so far.

And finally, we lowered the price of the new gooseneck.



Swivelling boom blocks

Following a request from the class association, we have updated the lower boom spec, changing the forward block from fixed to swivel. The first batches of 2024 will start being supplied with 2 swivel blocks, as we use up the stock of fixed swivel blocks.



Where have we failed?

The halyard fairlead is still an issue. We changed the fairlead to a stainless steel reinforced one and added longer screws.

While marine plywood backing plates are very versatile, lightweight and used in many modern high-performance racing dinghies, top Sunfish sailors put very high loads on their halyards and the screws are still being pulled. This is an issue we should have already fixed. We are currently looking into adding either a stainless-steel threaded insert or using a high-performance composite backing plate. We are going to get samples and make tests. Once we are confident in a solution, we will put it into practice. 2024 world championship boats will surely have this fix in place.

Why not aluminium plates like in the past? Aluminium is a soft metal and the threads can easily be stripped when overtightened, so we are avoiding it.



What else has happened?

Boom Blocks

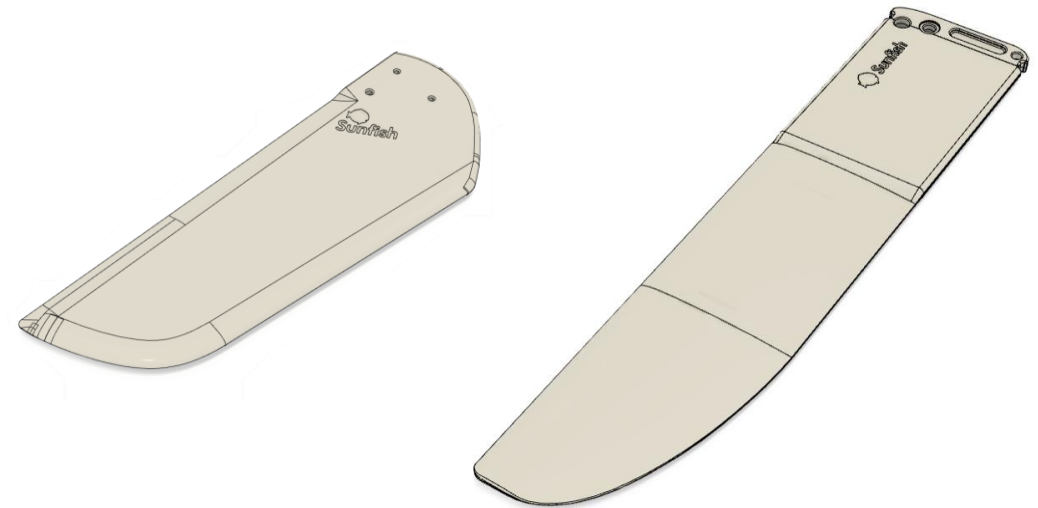
Earlier this year, we met with Sunfish class association board members and chief measurer John Butine and proposed a new style of boom blocks from German manufacturer HS Sprenger. It's an affordable and small ball bearing block that can take up to 10mm main sheets and it is easily user replaceable, unlike racelite blocks which are not ball bearing and require drilling rivets to be replaced.

The class asked us not to bring this forward because it adds another spec of block that needs inspection and measurement before races.

We understand this and will, therefore, respect the class's recommendation and continue to supply either Racelite or Holt/Nautos blocks that are swiveling and user replaceable, albeit only taking up to 8mm sheets.

Foils

We have invested in a new set of moulds to increase the production quantity and quality of daggerboards and rudder blades. We plan to invest in one more throughout the year of 2024.



What is to come?

Race Sails

We have heard the feedback about the LP supplied race sail. While some of it is not accurate (the material is the same as North's, just with a different name), we have improved the grommet position and are working to improve the slight differences in shape. Our sails are made by Pires de Lima Sails, a sailmaker highly renowned and recognized among Snipe and Finn class sailors.

Boom End caps

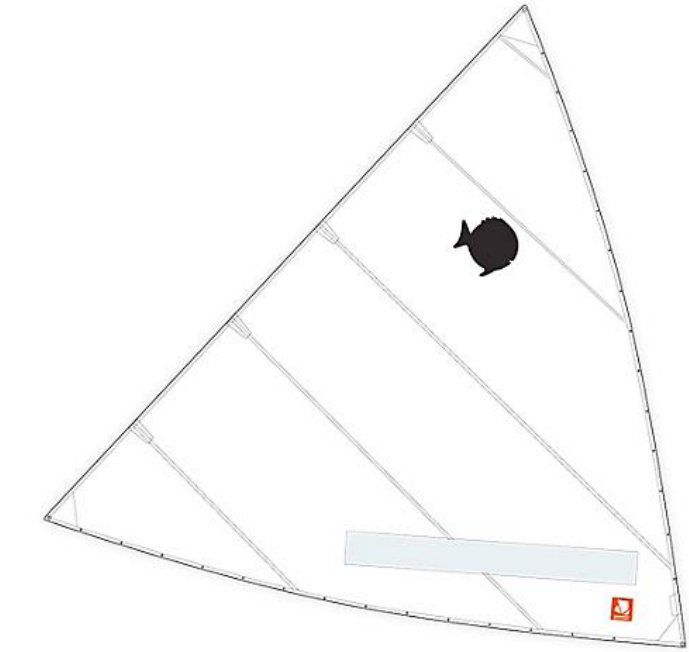
We are still using up stock of boom caps without eye.


After this, we will start supplying booms with 4 caps with eye. Instead of 3 with eye + 1 without eye, as requested by the class association.

Spare Parts Supply

We can't guarantee that things will never brake, and we understand that it has been difficult to get some of the parts. In this regard, we have been working to have as many parts as possible always available on our website for order.

We are also planning to increase our stock of parts in our USA warehouse for a faster delivery to our dealer network.



A group of Laser sailboats are racing on the water. The sailboats have white sails with black numbers and logos. The background is a steep, forested hill. The text "Fair winds and happy holidays" is overlaid in white. The LaserPerformance logo is at the bottom center, and the copyright notice is at the bottom right.

Fair winds and happy
holidays

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