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### Fitting Enlarged Inserts to Toppers - the Sailing Solutions way



Toppers use inserts to make fastenings to the hull. They are generally very reliable but just occasionally the small ones pull out. The small inserts are rather like rawplugs; they are pushed into a drilled hole and grip by expansion and by having barbed teeth on them. **The larger inserts are not the same!** They simply have a knurled surface on them and are slightly tapered, being bigger at the bottom than the top. Fitting them into *a slightly undersized hole does not work.*

### The technique for replacing the small inserts with the larger one is:

- Remove any broken parts of the small insert. Use a small screwdriver and don't worry too much about damaging the edge of the original hole because the new insert will sort this out.
- Screw the fixing bolt into the oversized insert so that it protrudes from the bottom by about 3mm. It maybe be as well to use a locknut to keep it in place. (See photo)



- Hold the head of the bolt with mole-grips and then heat up the brass insert with a blowtorch until it is hot enough to melt the hull plastic.
- Push the insert into the hull making sure it is reasonably vertical. *Please note that you do not need to drill a bigger hole.* The plastic will be pushed out of the way by the insert and on cooling will grip tight. Some plastic will be forced out of the hole and that is fine. Push the insert in deeper

than you might think - the plastic forced out of the hole will tend to make you think that you are in deep enough when in fact you may not be.

- Hold the bolt still for a couple of minutes whilst an assistant sprays the area with cold water.
- Wait 3 or 4 minutes before removing the bolt and a further 15 minutes before refastening and tensioning the bolt.