



Leaky Topper Upper Mast?

Topper upper masts are designed to be sealed floatation chambers that slow down a complete inversion in the event of a capsize. They work ok when empty but really make things difficult when they are full of water! Apart from speeding up the inevitable full inversion, once capsized, they increase the likelihood of a capsize by weighing the rig down and they make the boat pitch badly in any waves at all. There are two seals/bungs, one inside the bottom of the upper mast and one underneath the masthead crane at the top of the upper mast.

The Cause?

The 'bungs' are a push fit and generally work fine but once disturbed they need re-seating. Pushing the burgee in too far will cause the bung to either puncture or to be twisted.

The Cure?

See diagrams above:

- Remove the masthead crane by drilling out the rivet and carefully driving it out (a gentle tap on the front and then the back repeatedly is the best way).
- Drive the old bung sideways and either hook out or leave twisted but drive further in.
- Drive the replacement bung in square with a wooden stake of the right diameter (ish!). There is a lip on the bung, which does the sealing - it will go! Use a little lubricant if necessary; washing-up liquid is good. Some people use a sealant as well but I have not found this necessary.
- Do the same to the lower bung.
- Replace the crane