

Getting a few bumps and scrapes while **Sprint 15** racing is pretty inevitable whether it be your fault or someone else's, but just now and then you get that BUMP that requires more than a bit of gelcoat and a quick rub down, as was the case for myself at the **Sprint 15 Sport Nationals** at Instow.

A quick look at the damage made it clear that some major surgery was required. The hull had been pierced almost through to the other side, and anyone who saw the damage at the event might have thought a new hull was required. The great thing about the **Sprint 15** is, it was built to be repaired - no sandwich foam, and three separate decks that can be individually removed to get into the hull when required.

Whilst at the **Windsport** boat repair workshops, we prefer to repair other people's boats and get paid for it, but just now and then we have to repair our own (well Ian Fraser's in this case) and bring the boat back up to scratch, so this is how we do it :

The damage had holed the boat on the port hull, broken away the spacer, dislodged the storage unit and put a nice Sprint 15 shaped vee in the hull side.

No chance to carry out a repair externally meant the deck had to come off, so all riveted fittings and the trampoline track came off with the aid of a drill and a punch.

Next, the deck had to part company with the hull. We used a special vibrating knifing tool to separate the deck flange from the hull flange, but with care you can do it with a flat chisel, knife and wedges.

With the deck off and the storage box out, the internal repair was started by cutting out the damaged area and laying up a temporary mould on the hull to replicate the hull shape. Using the same lay up as when the boat was built, a replacement section was moulded and laminated into place with a small overlap flange to the original hull edge.

With the inside hull work done, the flanges for holding the spacer in position were rebuilt and a

new spacer fitted. The boat was then ready for re-decking, although the deck and hull flanges needed a bit of attention so that they meet neatly.

With the storage unit glassed back in position to the underside of the deck, a dry fit for the deck /hull join is a must. Originally the deck was attached whilst the hull was in a decking jig that could move the side of the hull in and out to match the deck line. That was not an option for us but careful use of Spanish clamps (well that is what we call them) had the desired effect and are simple to adjust.

With everything ready to go, the wet fit is made using a mix of gelcoat and resin as the bond. Timing of the mix is important, as you don't want to be chasing a mix that is going hard too quickly, and still fiddling with your Spanish clamps!!

With the deck join finished and the clamps cleared away, the deck join line was cleaned up and the fittings riveted back on, making sure all the rivets were sealed.

Back to the outside of the hull, the damaged area needed fairing in, using gelcoat to build low areas, until the hull was smooth and fair from all angles. A good tip here is to use a felt tip over the area which gets rubbed off as you cut it back, something you can do with smaller repairs.

With the hull faired in, we ran a layer of spray gel over the area, blending it into the original. Colour match is tricky on any boat, unless it is very new, but white hulls have the best chance of making the repair invisible.

A final light cut back with 1200 paper, buff and polish, and the job was a goodun. It takes a few hours to do all this, and I would rather be sailing, but sometimes you just have to get on with it.

**If you need a bit of advice when doing some work on your hulls this Winter, give us a call and we will try and help where possible.**

**The Windsport Boat repair centre carry out all types of repairs on performance dinghy and catamaran, hulls and foils. We will even lend you a hull while yours is being repaired if we have one available. [www.windsport.co.uk](http://www.windsport.co.uk)**

## **Key to Stages of repair below :**

Fig.1:- Deck off , damage cut back , ready to start rebuild

Fig.2:- Internal work done , ready to fit and replace deck unit.

Fig.3:- Deck joint curing , while the "Spanish clamps" hold the deck line in position.

Fig.4:- Hull fairing taking place before final finishing.

Fig.5:- Hull back on , and the boat ready to start racing again.



Fig.1



Fig.2



Fig.3

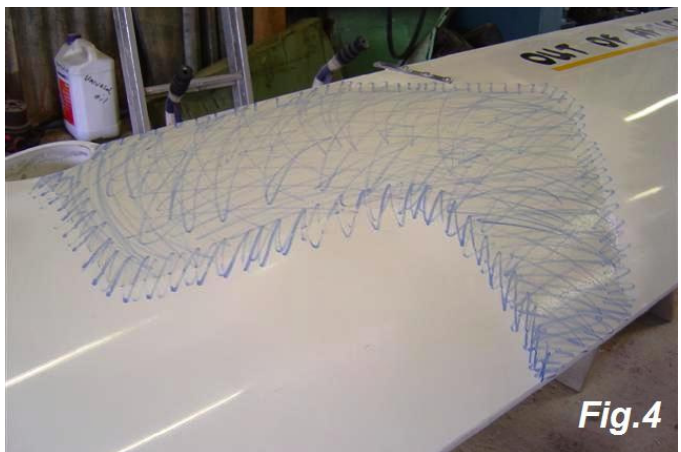


Fig.4



Fig.5

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