

JSA Marlinespike Seamanship Competition

History:

Jacob Isbrandtsen was one of a group of NYYC America's Cup organizers who donated the Marlinespike Seamanship Trophy to the JSA in 1963. His son Hans won it four times through 1967, and at a recent JSA presentation Hans attributed his invitation as crew aboard The America's Cup boat Courageous in 1974 to a proficiency in Marlinespike skills.

Objective:

- Reinstatement of the Marlinespike Trophy Competition for summer 2013.
- To encourage junior sailors (age JSA 14+) to learn and be proficient in the art of marlinespike seamanship through a competitive test.

For 2013 it is proposed that the test to be taken at the 420 / Laser Championships August 2013 at American Yacht Club.

Each JSA club is encouraged to incorporate the marlinespike test into their curriculum. They will teach, test, and give their own awards throughout the summer. We want each club to have a "JSA Level 1 (JSA 9), 2 (JSA 10 & 11), 3 (JSA 12 & 13) Seamanship Award". The purpose of having this in place is to help build interest in the curriculum starting with the young Opti sailors. Ultimately the JSA 14 sailors will compete for the Marlinespike Seamanship award.

Reasoning:

Every sailor must have at least a basic understanding of the art of handling and working with line to ensure the safe and seamanlike operation of a vessel. Knots, lashings and splices that don't hold the expected load could potentially cause an accident.

JSA Marlinespike Seamanship Competition

Marlinespike Seamanship Competition:

The test should grade both subjectively and objectively each competitor on the demonstration of a selection of marlinespike seamanship skills. The test has been developed from the following categories;

1. Knot tying (graded on time)
 - a. Bowline
 - b. Figure Eight Knot
 - c. Rolling Hitch
 - d. Clove Hitch
 - e. Sheet bend

2. Splicing & Whipping (graded on time and quality)
 - a. Eye Splice in three-strand line
 - b. Whipping on bitter end
 - c. Brummel Splice (eye splice Modern High Modulus 12-strand plaited Line)

As a point of reference, the US Sailing Level 1 course requires that instructors show proficiency in a Marlinespike/Seamanship Practical Test: Demonstrate ability to tie the following knots and hitches: Figure 8, bowline, square knot, sheet bend, clove hitch, two half hitches, rolling hitch, cleat hitch. Also coil and throw a line.

This document was created with the input from: Hans Isbrandtsen, Peter Becker, Karen Quirke, and Bob Whittredge.

The Mobius Brummel Bury splice

A few important things you need to know before starting :

- 1) The length of the splice's tail needs to be at least 48 times the diameter of the rope. This means that for a 9 mm rope, the length of the splice's tail would be : $48 \times 9 = 432$ mm long.
- 2) When you open the braid, make sure that you have the same number of strands on each side of the hole so that the load is evenly distributed.
- 3) When separating the strands, make sure not to separate any fibers from the strands
- 4) When you « bury » the tail, make sure that it is perfectly tapered. A poorly tapered « buried » tail means that your splice runs the risk of breaking where the tail ends. When perfectly tapered, the line retains its breaking strength. This is a very important step which should not be taken lightly.
- 5) When you « bury » the tail, make sure you bury it 15% to 20% deeper than the tail's length inside the main line. With the tail inside, the main cordage has an increased diameter therefore it will shrink. For example, if your splice tail is 450 mm long, « bury » it between 520 mm to 540 mm inside the main cordage.

You are now ready to start



First, measure your tail and make a mark at its base.

* (see note 1 at the top of the page)

Now open the braid with a splicing fid at the base of the tail, where you made your mark.

* (see note 2 and 3 at the top of the page)



Next, feed the end of the tail through the hole you just made.



Continue pulling on the tail until the rope is completely inside out as shown in the picture above.



Now, wrap the rope around the thimble, starting from the inside out hole, to form your loop. It is important that you do not wrap the tail around the part but the other side of the rope; the longer side. Tighten it nicely and mark the other side of the rope where it meets with the inside out hole.



Again, open the braid with a splicing fid where you just marked it.

* (see note 2 and 3 at the top of the 1st page)



Feed the end of the tail through the new hole you just made.



Exactly as you did on step 3, continue pulling on the tail until the rope is completely inside out.



At this point, you now have two inside out holes, as shown on the picture above.



Next up, take the first inside out hole (the one closest to the tail's end) and un-invert it by pulling out the longer side of the rope (not the tail side of it)



Continue pulling it out until the second inside out hole goes through the first one, as shown on the picture above.



Next up, take the second inside out hole and un-invert it like the first one but this time by pulling out the tail side of the rope



Tighten it all up and you now have the eye of the splice formed.



Now, push the thimble inside the eye of the splice.



The next step is to « bury » the tail through the center of the line. You will need a splicing fid to do so. Start « burying » the line the closest you can from the noose of the splice and make sure you « bury » it far enough inside the line



« Bury » the entire length of the tail.
 * (see note 5 at the top of the first page)



You now have the entire tail through the line or « buried ». Pull the cover off, exposing the « buried » tail as much as you can.



Here is the most important part of it, the tapering of the tail. Unbraid strands from the tail and cut them to varying length to form a perfect taper. For example, if you work with a 12 strand rope and your tail is 480mm long, divide 480 by 12 and cut a strand every 40mm.



Shown here, a perfectly tapered splice tail.



All that is left to do is pull the cover back over the tapered tail and there you have it: the Mobius Brummel Bury splice.