

Change from wheel steering back to tiller steering:

When I bought Bracer one of my questions was if the original tiller was there. The seller told me “ yes the original pin is there, but why do you ask that, she is wheel steered!?”

Sailing her home from Zeebrugge my feeling about wheelsteering was proofed to be the truth. I prefer tiller steering.

Some reasons to take the wheelsteering out:

- Space in the cockpit is too narrow, you cannot easily pass the wheel stand.
- You cannot read the motor instruments easily.
- You cannot operate the motor handles easily.
- The main sheet hits your back while you tacking.
- It costs space under the cockpit floor.
- It is needless weight on a wrong place.
- It gives a different feeling while you are sailing.
- A tiller looks smarter.
- Olin Stephens designed the Tartan with tiller steering.

The original pin was alright but I always like to make my own tiller, laminated in mahogany and ash wood with a knob on it. How to work this out:

- 1- Take length, width and thickness of the old tiller.
- 2- Take / buy planks of mahogany and ash wood 5 mm thick.
- 3- Make the almost correct shape (jig saw) in each plank (thick at the end of the bronze fitting and thinner at the knob end),
- 4- make a mold on your workblade (with wooden blocks fitted on the workblade) in which you can easily bend the planks as a bunch of individual planks.
- 5- Put some layers of old newspapers on your workblade to absorb the superfluous glue
- 6- Take enough (every 10 cm) clamping screws.
- 7- Put seawaterproof glue (take a very good glue) on the planks and fit the glued sides of all the layers planking together in the mold.
- 8- Screw the clamping screws and let the glue harden as asked on the glue instructions. (give it enough time)
- 9- Take sanding paper, rasps and plane to shape the tiller as you like it and make it fit to the fitting.
- 10- Drill holes so that the tiller fits into the (bronze) fitting.
- 11- Varnish it about 7 times.
- 12- Mount it all together
- 13- Enjoy sailing with your own made tiller!

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