

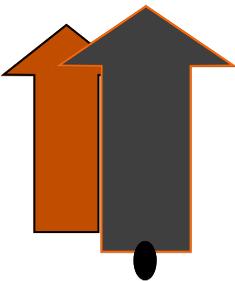
Towing and being towed

Sailors can sometimes go a very long time without being towed. In addition there are a number of methods and quite a few views and opinions on how it should be done. Ultimately follow the instructions of the safety boat doing the tow as they will have their reasons for doing it the way they

do, but to set the ball rolling here are a few common methods and ideas.

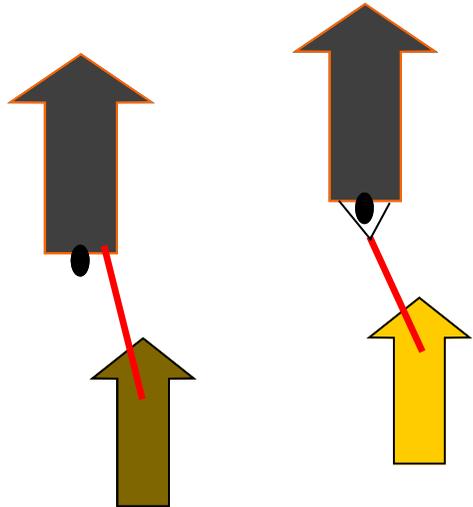
However, fundamental to everything is planning and everyone knowing what is going to happen and how things are to be set up.

Alongside



This could be as simple as holding the two boats together if for only a short distance. For longer tows this way expect the boats to be tied together

Astern



Here the tow line is likely to go from a cleat or post on the tow boat, or perhaps from a towing bridle.

Ideally both ends of the tow rope will be fixed to the relevant boat in such a way the tow can be dropped easily and quickly if there are problems.

In any event steer just to one side of the powerboat so that if it decelerates you will go to one side of it, rather than crash into the back risking damage to both boats.

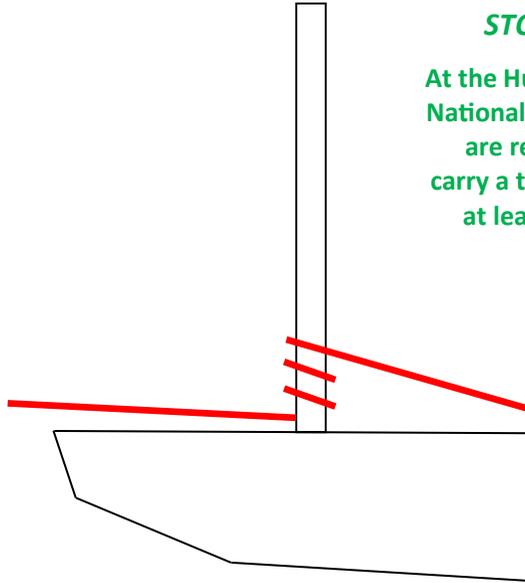
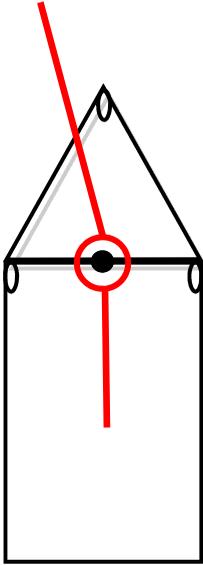
Sails

For a long tow expect to take the mainsail down. It is easier if it is rolled up out of the way.

Whether you roll the jib will depend on the crews willingness to go on the foredeck

Centreboard

Follow the safety boats instructions, they will most likely ask for either half board or board all the way up. (This is something about which there are varying views)



STOP PRESS

At the Hunstanton Nationals dinghies are required to carry a tow line of at least 10 m in length.

In the dinghy it is usual to wrap the tow line around the mast. Take the end that is going into the dinghy above the turn before so it can be easily released. If taken below the towline can “lock” the “free” end down. With two or three turns the rope should not slip and should be easy for the crew to hold without slipping.

The mast is used as it is strong in itself and is strongly attached to the dinghy. If the forestay, shrouds, or even the painter are

used there is a risk the fittings could be pulled out as the boat is jerked by the towline.

Note a decision has to be taken about which side of the forestay the tow comes into the dinghy. This will be affected by where the powerboat plans to attach the tow on the powerboat. It will also decide to which side of the powerboat the towed dinghy will steer.

Jerking

Being jerked by the towline is almost inevitable, however careful the powerboat driver is. The boats are moving in relation to each other and if on different waves will accelerate and decelerate differently. It is sensible for crews to stay seated, because if stood up a jerk could knock someone off their feet.

Paddles

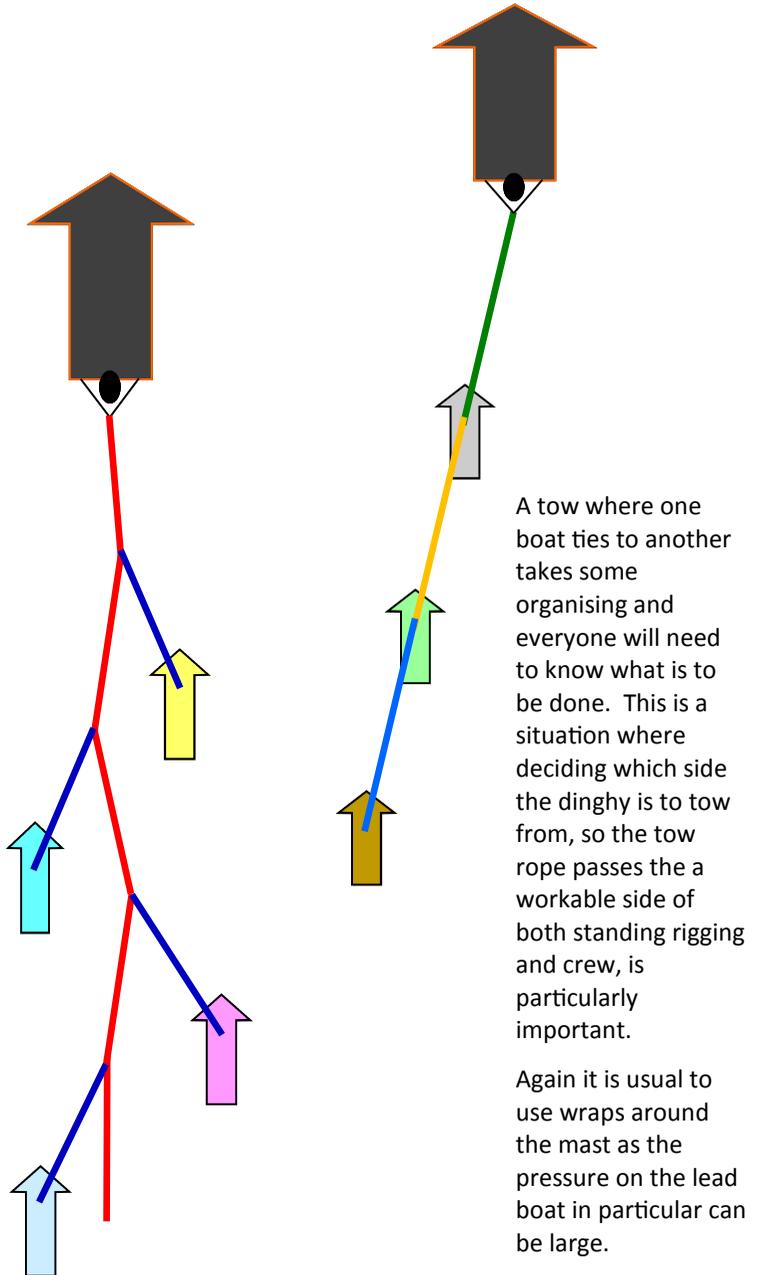
Something to paddle with can be useful to pick up a tow in light winds and at the end of the tow when the dinghy is released

Towing (cont.)

If the safety boat streams a line behind to tie onto it is usual for dinghies to be on alternate sides.

If there is a loop to tie onto a bowline or round turn and two half hitches can work. If it is the rope alone a rolling hitch is what is usual.

http://wikipedia.org/wiki/Rolling_hitch



A tow where one boat ties to another takes some organising and everyone will need to know what is to be done. This is a situation where deciding which side the dinghy is to tow from, so the tow rope passes the a workable side of both standing rigging and crew, is particularly important.

Again it is usual to use wraps around the mast as the pressure on the lead boat in particular can be large.