

Mounting an Outboard Bracket

Practical Sailor reader Dick O'Reilly, of San Francisco, Calif., recently converted his 1968 Ericson 30 from inboard to outboard power and installed the Garelick 71092 manual-hydraulic lift bracket (*PS* September 2007). The bracket, which uses a manual-hydraulic pump and pressure release-valve to raise and lower the outboard, was one of the top-rated products in our test. It was also one of the most expensive manual units.


O'Reilly's experience with the product, including a do-it-yourself installation that featured no small drama, is humbly documented on his personal blog ericson30.blogspot.com. The account illustrates the difficulties of retrofitting a boat that was designed for inboard power to accept outboard power.

On any boat, the ideal mounting height can be dramatically affected by

trim. The Ericson 30, which still bears long overhangs common of boats designed to meet the old Cruising Club of America rules, offers particular challenges. With its fine bow and counter stern 14 inches above the water, the hull's fore and aft trim is sensitive to load placement.

A full tank in the bow can raise the engine several inches. Anyone contemplating such a project should keep in mind that the pitching motion of the boat in a choppy seaway may induce cavitation (when the propeller or part of it leaves the water). Whenever possible, it is worth appealing to the manufacturer or the designer for advice on this conversion. Frank reports from installations on sisterships will also be of value.

According to O'Reilly, the conversion was worth the effort, and his bracket is now working "wonderfully."



The third try was the charm for reader Dick O'Reilly, who adapted his Ericson 30 for outboard power.