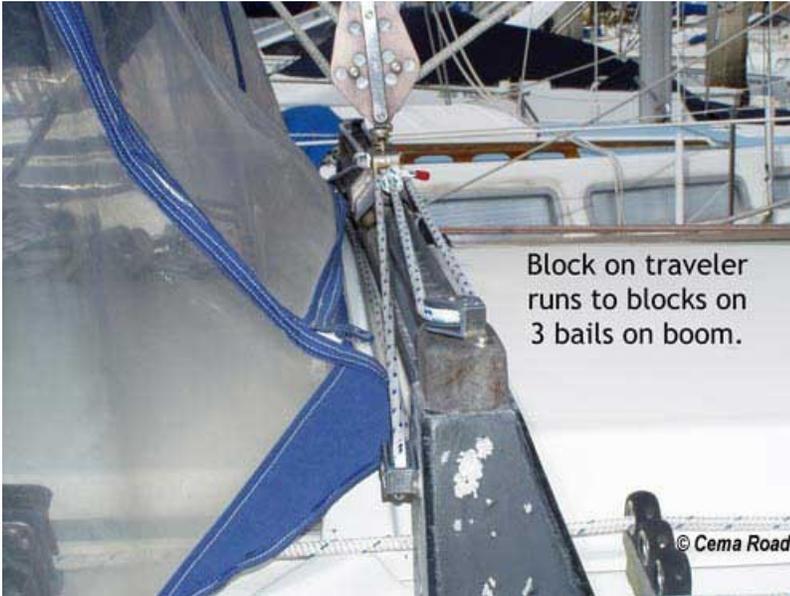


TRAVELER

Rick Lucas: *Ping*



Although practical for a variety of reasons, the original traveler position was simply in the way, laying forward in the cockpit just aft of the bridgedeck. A previous owner moved it to the cabin top just ahead of the dodger, apparently many years ago. This gets rid of a lot of clutter in the cockpit and minimizes the possibility that a crewmember will get garroted by the main sheet. The ability to easily adjust the traveler car is also a plus.

In the new position, the traveler sits atop a metal frame that is through-bolted to inside the cabin. This installation necessitated the [wood trim project](#). The bolts that hold the frame in place are backed by large washers. I think I might have fashioned a full backing plate instead, but this rig has worked for many years so I guess it's fine.

Three bales were attached to the boom. The middle one is in roughly the mid position on the boom. The other two are spread about 18" fore and aft of it. The main sheet runs from center bale on the boom to the block on the traveler car, to a block on the aft bale and back to the car, then to a block on the forward bale and down to a turning block on the cabin top. From there it is routed to a deck organizer on the port side and then straight back under the dodger through a rope clutch on the cabin top. There is a single-speed winch aft of the organizer which is only really needed when close on the wind. Would I like a dual-speed self-tailer? Yep, but I'm not going to change it out unless I plan to do a lot of single-handing.

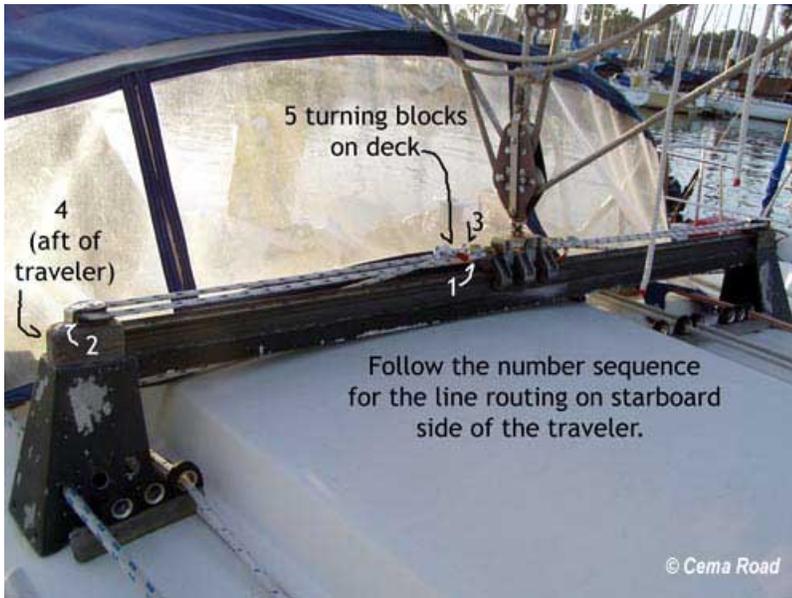


The traveler adjustment works equally as well. Lines on either side of the traveler car run to blocks on the top end of the traveler frame. They then route back to a block on the car, winding back to another block on the aft side of the traveler frame. The lines from both sides then snake to two turning blocks just to port of the companionway hatch and ahead of the dodger. Their journey ends in a pair of cam cleats at the edge of the cabin top.

This all sounds a lot more complex than it really is, and working it is even more simple than that. It is hard to move the traveler when sailing on a decent wind, but a technique I call "banjo-ing" gets around that. This is done by grabbing the traveler line between the turning block and the cam cleat and pulling it toward you, best done whilst standing on the companionway ladder. You

then have a crewmember take up the slack as you ease the line down. This is not unlike "jumping" a halyard.

To finish the project, the PO replaced the empty spaces left behind in the cockpit with two big pieces of teak that add a nice bit of color. After at least 15 years of use there is no sign of wear or weakness in this system, if you don't count the black paint flaking off the traveler frame.



If you're contemplating this mod, I'd recommend it. Just make sure to plan it carefully before you start drilling holes in your boat.

FAQ:

Q: How is the traveler mounted?

A: It's drilled through to the inside of the cabin and through-bolted. The swivel blocks have backing plates. Everything else just has washers.

Q: Does that leave holes inside the cabin roof?

A: Uh huh. The PO had covered them with white tape. I thought they'd look better covered with wood.

Q: Aren't the blocks on the end of the traveler kinda small?

A: Yes. I'd use bigger ones, with bearings.

Q: The traveler adjustment line runs a pretty serpentine route through a lot of blocks, is it hard to adjust?

A: Actually, no. A good grip and some body weight will move it. Better/bigger blocks and line would help too.

Q: How does it work?

A: Awesome!

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Things I'd do differently: I'd use larger blocks on the traveler ends to reduce the friction, although I'm not sure it would change it enough to notice.