

Summer and Winter for an Ensign at SLSC

or Where They Go, How They Got There, and How They Stay There

Ensigns at the Saratoga Lake Sailing Club are assigned a position in the mooring area by the Rear Commodore. Recommended ground tackle includes a 150# mushroom anchor, and an appropriate length of galvanized chain, depending on water depth, leading to a mooring float. Mooring floats are recommended throughout the mooring area in order to safely accommodate the maximum number of boats in the limited area. A nylon pennant attached to the foredeck cleat secures the Ensign to the mooring chain. A dinghy or a club rowboat is used to reach the Ensign from the shore. Use of a private dinghy allows the Ensign owner to set sail directly from the mooring. At times, it is more convenient to motor the Ensign to the dock area to pick up day sailing guests. In either case, the Ensign is always ready-to-go without the need to push a trailer to the hoist and use the crane for a launch and retrieval procedure each time you would like to use your boat.

End of Season

In preparation for winter storage, the Ensign mast must be unstepped so that the boat can be moved to its winter storage location. Fleet 72 has developed a gin pole from an old 470 mast which makes this task simple and efficient, and can be done by two people. In actual practice, mast unstepping becomes a fleet activity so that the entire decommissioning procedure is accomplished with many helping hands. The mushroom mooring anchors are also removed so that the ground tackle can be inspected and the anchors stored on shore. Boat owners in the mooring field have developed a mooring hoist which is used in conjunction with the small Boston Whaler. Again, Fleet 72 functions as a group to see that all Ensign moorings are accommodated.

Winter Storage

Ensigns can not be removed from the water at the Sailing Club due to crane capacity and shallow water depth at the shoreline. Ensigns motor to the state launch ramp north of the 9P bridge. The unstepped mast can be left at the club. If the Ensign has a custom trailer, the owner backs the trailer down the ramp, and the Ensign is pulled onto the trailer. For the Ensign which is stored on a cradle or stands, a professional boat hauler is used to provide haul out services in much the same manner. The boat hauler will then transport the boat back to the Sailing Club, and position it for winter storage in the designated areas. Most Ensign owners use the mast as a ridge pole supported by tripods and cover the boat with the typical blue poly cover for snow and ice protection.

Start of Season

Maintenance work on the Ensign can be performed any time before launching. A light duty anti-fouling paint is all that is required in the fresh water of Saratoga Lake. The boat is transported to the State 9P ramp for launching and motored to the Club. The mast is stepped using the gin pole and the boat is ready for a summer of sailing pleasure.

[Contact us](#) if you'd like to learn more about Ensign sailing.

