

The WORKSHOP

Adventures in ingenuity. Nick Coppin presents the infinitely adjustable footrests and wooden boat builder Adrian Noyes fights the Dragon and wins.



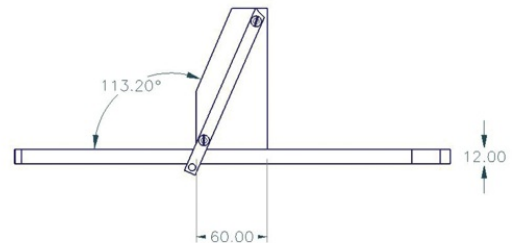
Nick Coppin's adjustable foot rests for sail and oar dinghies

If, like us, you enjoy rowing as well as sailing your boat, here is an idea for a fully adjustable footrest that is comfortable to use. When rowing a reasonable distance, it is nice to be able to rest your foot from the heel up to the ball rather than just hooking your heel onto a skinny square or round stretcher. It is also good to be able to choose the distance the footrest is from the edge of the thwart, rather than relying on a position determined by the designer. You may be tall or small and resent having to bend your knees or slide off the back of the thwart. Conversely, you may have to stretch your toes to reach the footrest or slide off the front of the thwart.

This design depends upon having reasonably strong floorboards that are not too wide. Having said that, in our Tammie Norrie the floorboards are yellow cedar which is fairly soft and not renowned for its strength! The principle is the same as a mastic gun or those wonderful Solo clamps. When the footrest is tilted forwards, it comes loose and can be moved to whatever position you desire.

When returned to its normal position, the bar under the front of the footrest which runs beneath the floorboard locks the foot rest. The harder you push against the footrest when rowing, the tighter it is locked to the floorboard. In three years, I have not had a footrest move under pressure.

The wooden block needs to be a little wider than the floorboard. If the footrest is not wide enough, when the



Tilting the footrest towards the bow slackens the grip of the stirrup on the bottom board, allowing it to slide along the plank. Once it is in the right position, foot pressure locks it firmly in place.

