

MASTHEAD BURGEE - LESSON LEARNED

by Brad Willauer

Buy a pig-stick at <http://bete-fleming.com/marine.htm>

Take it to Home Depot's PVC pressure water pipe section, and select a 12-foot pipe into which the pig stick fits snugly. White if you have a white mast.

Take both to wooden dowel display and buy 2 or 3 lengths of dowel which fit into the lower end of the water pipe, also snugly (these stiffen the pipe).

Buy six 1/2-inch #8 stainless steel screws to tap into the pipe to keep everything from sliding one way or the other.

Cut a hole in a tennis ball and slide it up 60% of the length of the 12-foot pipe. Tape in place with white tape – duct better than electrical, but both work.

Halyard must be good quality braid, not nylon, as stretching is not allowed.

TO HOIST:

Lying at anchor, hanging in the wind – hopefully less than 10 knots – tie the halyard with a clove hitch under the tennis ball and another at the lower end of the water pipe, and hoist.

Once aloft, tie halyard down to your chainplate or turnbuckle, using a trucker's hitch to apply 150+ pounds downward pressure, which prevents the lower end of the pipe from swinging into the mast and also prevents chafe at the cheek block, as there will be no movement or noise.

The bottom of your burgee will be about 40 inches above the masthead. If you need it to be higher, slide the tennis ball down a foot or so.

Take down every month to check for chafe at the cheek block; change the wear point 3 inches or so, and re-hoist.

