

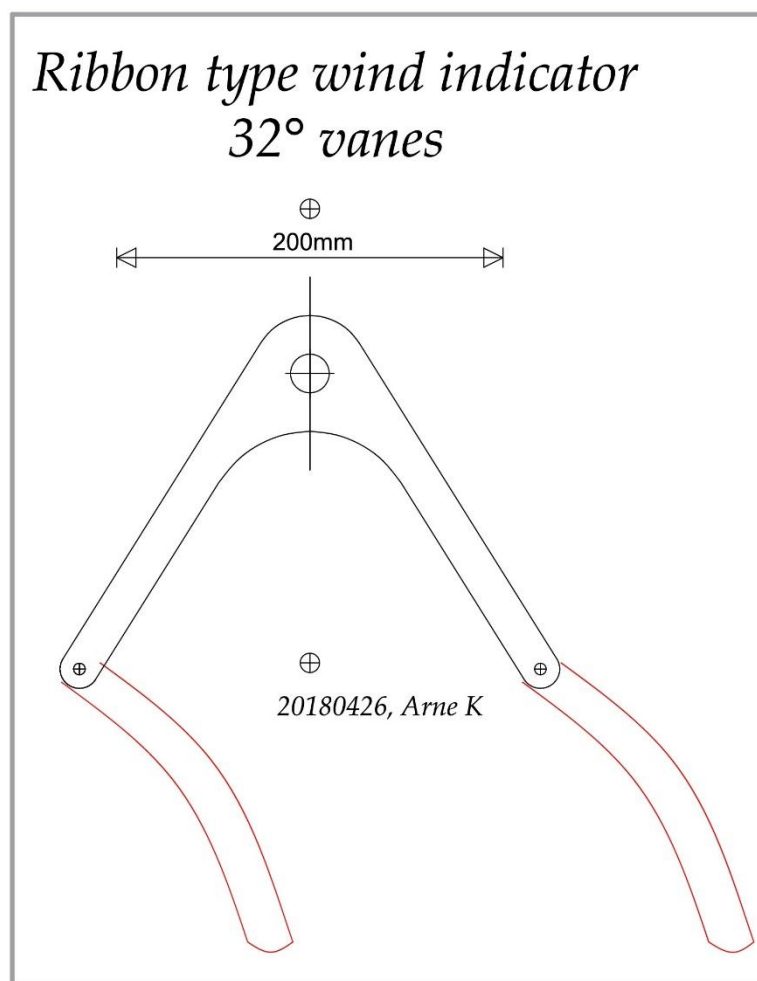
A DIY-friendly wind indicator

or..

when in doubt, make something from plywood...

There is something I never have had on any of my junkrigs, and that is a Windex in the mast top. I have sailed with them on other boats, but more often than not, one or both of the fixed vanes have been bent, broken or loose, kind of.

Recently I got the idea that I could make something better for my IF, *Ingeborg*, myself.

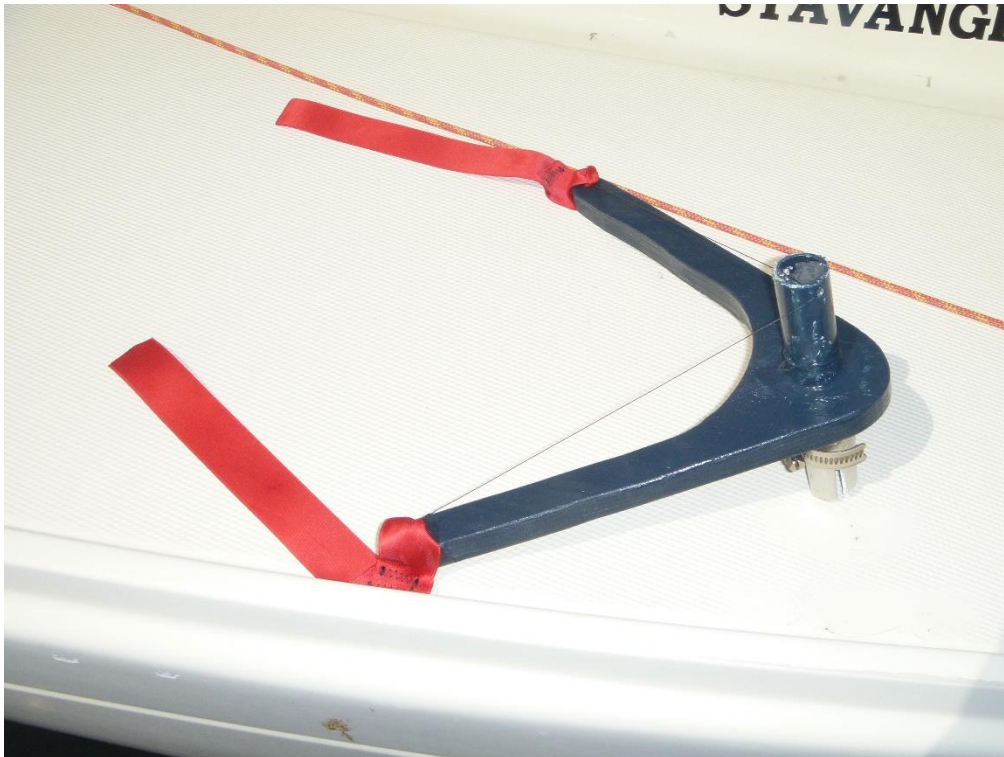


How it looks in 2-D, meant to be cut out of a piece of 15mm plywood.

As the diagram above shows, there is no mechanical arrow-shaped indicator. Instead, I decided to tie a piece of ribbon to the end of each of the fixed vanes. The idea was that when sailing fully close-hauled, the ribbon to leeward should fly in line with the vane it was tied to.

I decided for a vane angle of 32° from the centreline. *Ingeborg* is quite close-winded and I guessed I could point near that angle. The drawing above was printed out in 1:1 scale and the shape transferred to a piece of plywood, which was then cut out, sanded, drilled and painted.

The short lengths of ribbon were fastened to the end of the vanes, and fused at the ends. To fit the indicator to *Ingeborg*'s mast top, I added a short piece of 20mm aluminium tube (glued in place with TEC-7 putty). See next photo.



20180512 The wind indicator resting on *Ingeborg*'s side deck. Note the 'crow deflector' string.



20180512 The indicator in place.

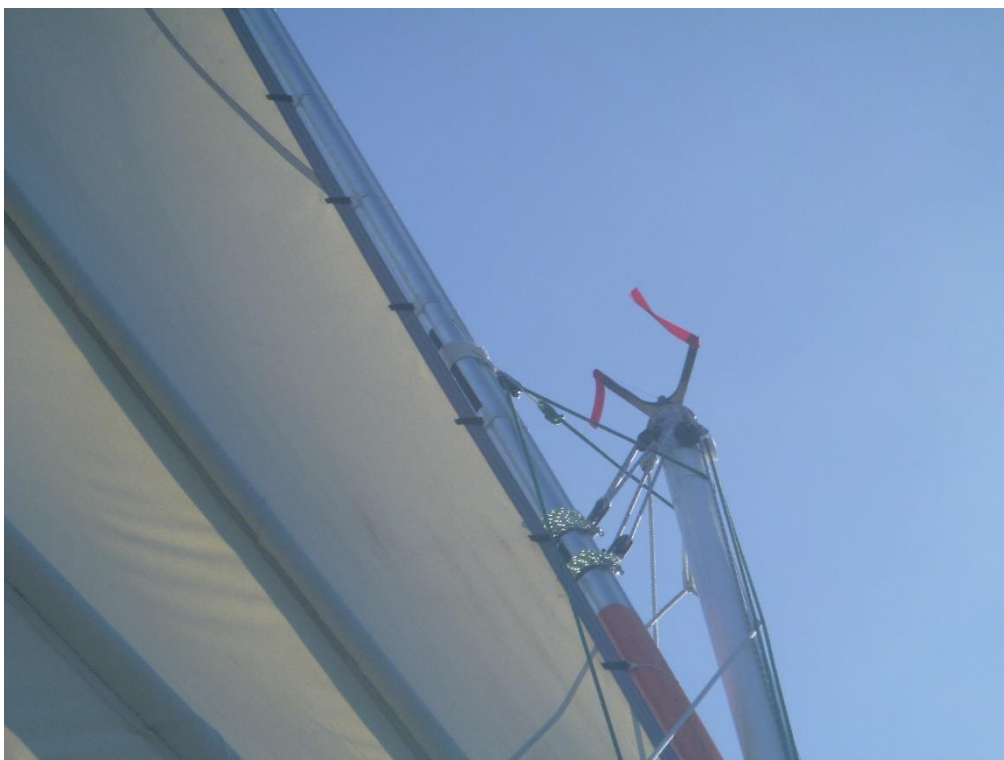
When I had loosely fitted the thing, I called a mate who was working at the mast shed. He came out, placed himself on the aft deck and helped me to get the vanes set with symmetry. Then, finally could I tighten the hose-clamp, which secures it to the mast top (.. there is a stub of 20mm tube welded to the mast cap...). Job done.



20180512. This is NOT a drone photo!

Testing, testing...

Today I took *Ingeborg* out for a little spin. The wind was 6-8 knots (maybe 10, at times) from west. This was perfect conditions for doing some upwind work on Åmøyfjorden, and play with my new toy.



20180519 The wind indicator at fully close-hauled sailing. The ribbon *to weather* is doing the job!

I soon got a surprise! The leeward ribbon would hardly fly at all, or it ran wild - clearly in the wake of the mast. However, the ribbon on the weather vane did a fine job, and I soon learned to read its direction compared to the lee vane. This outcome was just as good since the lee ribbon was anyway hidden behind the yard when sailing on the port tack.



20180519 Sailing into the sun. The ribbon type wind indicator was super-easy to read

Conclusion:

1. I found this ribbon type wind indicator to be great for quickly settling on and holding the close-hauled heading. It quickly became natural to use, and I believe it helps me keep a higher average speed upwind. We performed well against the larger boats today. Oh, why have I sailed for so many years without it?
2. Being close-winded, Ingeborg can easily sail at 32° to the relative wind, yet I felt it was worth falling off a little as in the photo above.

This version of a wind indicator should be easy to make from just about any available material. It is in my view much more robust than the flimsy Windex.

Good luck!

Stavanger, 19th May 2018

Arne Kverneland

(PS: As so often before, I sent this draft to Slieve for comments and advise. Thanks, Slieve!)