Top Tip #6

A capsize (or two) in the early months of the year has given my new sail that slightly used look, as a dunking in Littleton mud often does. On observing my efforts to sponge the sail off, Mike Wilkie (Solo #4772), suggested Milton's baby bottle steriliser, which he says works a treat in such a situation! Now Mike's boat is always one of the smartest in the boat park, so I suggested to him that he might like to put pen to paper and share a few more of his tips for keeping sailing kit bright and shiny.
Thank you Mike for the following contribution.

Rig Care
With regards to the sail, the 1st thing that I would do is check out the shrouds, There is a massive fall out of kerosene from Heathrow that finds it way on to the shrouds, try some cotton wool with some white spirit, just run it up and down on the shroud and see what comes off. Then drop the mast and give the shrouds a good cleaning with the cotton wool and spirit, I clean mine every time I go out but that's just me. That will help to keep the shroud marks away from the sail. With the mast down why not give the mast a good clean, When was the last time that you cleaned your mast? I use a metal polish called Autosol with cotton wool, With marks removed I finish off with Turtle Wax Silver, again with cotton wool, why cotton wool? It saves washing yellow dusters, and you get a better result with cotton wool and don't forget the boom, give it the same treatment!

When it comes to marks on the sail itself, e.g, marks that come from the pontoon: when you lower the sail it sometimes catches the pontoon and leaves a mark, launching catching a tree, mud from the dinghy park, *(or mud from the bottom of the lake – VY)*. I tend to use fresh water and a sponge, then when I get home open up the sail over my boat and remove the offending marks with Milton (mild bleach that Mums use for baby sterilizing) I tend to leave it on for about 10 / 15 minutes, I use cotton wool and work it into the weave, when the offending mark /marks have gone I wash off with fresh water.