

**Original Comment:**

14/12/99

Ref Bow thrusters

My wife and I sail two handed. We have experienced considerable difficulty in turning under control in marinas when the wind is blowing. The high top sides of our centre cockpit seem to make the boat very vulnerable. Is it right that the location of the prop on the sail drive provides little prop walk? We are thinking about bow thrusters and wonder if anyone has any comments or advice/experience.

*Harry Salmon (Lizbet of Hamble)*

**Replies:**

In theory the prop provides the same amount of prop walk as any other prop of the same size. As the boat pivots around the keel the distance from the keel affects the leverage the prop can exert. As a saildrive unit places the prop a lot closer to the keel than a conventional propshaft the 'walk' effect is reduced. It also accounts for the delay in the boat turning in forward gear as it takes that much longer for the 'jet' of water to reach the rudder blade. See 'Parking' in the Jan 2002 newsletter.

*Graham Smith (Sweet Memories)*

Harry

We have given serious consideration to fitting a Vetus bow thruster to our B34 to make life easy. If you have sufficient depth below the waterline at the bow, it can be done. I asked Opal had they ever fitted one in a 34 and was told that they had not. After careful measurement and checking with our Vetus agent, which model we would need, we have had to abandon the idea due to the lack of depth and the flat shape of the bow sections of the boat.

*Alan Burns (B34 Saloma)*

As a bow thruster cannot be fitted does anyone have any tips or advice on parking a 34 shorthanded on a breezy day?

I've been sailing for 35 years but find our Bavaria quite tricky after boats with more under the waterline. Unfortunately I don't have the Jan 2002 newsletter.

*Andrew Abram (B34 Bluesbreaker)*

We have a Bavaria 36 factory fitted with a bow thruster. It was an excellent investment. It has saved many of those occasions when the boat handling was not perfect and I particularly didn't want to put my wife off by getting into a mess in the early days of ownership of our first boat. The result is I have never yet sailed single handed because she is so keen to sail together. The Bavaria with saildrive handles very well both forward and astern without the thruster. It just takes a little longer for the water from the saildrive to reach the rudder. A 36 always kicks to the right as reverse is applied. We have a very tricky marina berth and I have to reverse in with about two feet extra width at the minimum point (we are on a bend). The secret is to start reversing as far away as possible to get some momentum (more speed necessary in a strong cross wind) and then put into neutral before starting the difficult turn. The steering is then easy and very responsive. We then use a rope attached to the end of the pontoon (looped on a stick for easy pickup) to slip over the midships cleat. This stops the boat 2' before the wall and pulls it alongside the pontoon. We can tie up without leaving the boat. We don't need the bow thruster until we make a mistake and then it is invaluable.

*Tony Sumner (B36 Melody)*